

The Issue of Teachers Retire Early

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Abstract

The issue of early retirement among teachers has gained significant attention, particularly with the National Union of Teaching Services (NUTP) reporting an increasing trend, especially among educators aged between 56 and 58. The persistence and escalation of this trend raise concerns about its implications. This study endeavours to discern the factors influencing the early retirement decisions of teachers. Employing a qualitative interview method, we interviewed four teachers from diverse school backgrounds: two from National Schools, one from a Chinese National School (SJK), and one from a Tamil National School (SJK) in the Gemencheh zone, Negeri Sembilan. The focus is on collecting and analysing data through these interviews to address the research objectives. The insights gained from this study aim to shed light on the underlying factors contributing to the early retirement phenomenon among teachers.

Keywords: Early Teacher Retirement, Primary schools, Teaching and Learning Malay Language, Factors Influencing Early Retirement, Effects of Early Retirement

Introduction

The Ministry of Education (MoE) recognizes the growing concern surrounding the phenomenon of early retirement among teachers, a matter underscored by the National Teachers Service Union (NUTP). Particularly noteworthy is the increase in early retirements among educators aged between 56 and 58. According to NUTP, the annual tally of teachers opting for early retirement exceeds 10,000, a stark contrast to the Ministry of Education's (MoE) reported 4,360 applications for optional retirement since January 2021 (Sinar Harian, 2022).

The escalation of this trend is alarming, with 2,777 teachers choosing early retirement in 2015, escalating to 3,591 in 2016, and peaking at 4,360 applications in 2021—equivalent to 1.06 percent of the total teacher population (Berita Harian, 2022). In response to this concerning trajectory, the Malaysian Ministry of Education is conducting an in-depth study to discern the underlying reasons behind teachers opting for early retirement. This revelation has prompted various stakeholders to contribute their insights and studies aimed at analysing the root causes of this issue.

Statement of The Problem

In an effort to drive development towards a developed Malaysian nation, education is one of the most important sectors, especially in the effort to build useful human capital in society. This is because a good education determines a good way of thinking and life for a nation (Norhana, 2020). It cannot be denied that the desire for early retirement has been a worrying issue among teachers until now. The issue of teachers wanting to retire early is increasing year by year and has had a major impact on the country's education system, especially when the education sector is increasingly losing experienced and skilled teachers. This issue needs to be addressed immediately because it also affects students and affects the future of students in our country. In this study, the focus will be on the main factors of teachers wanting to retire early and the impact on teachers and the education system. Four teachers from three schools with different backgrounds were selected as a study sample who have the desire to retire early from the world of education.

Objectives of The Study

The main purpose of this study is to study the factors that cause teachers to retire early in the world of education today. In addition, the purpose of this study is also to identify the effects that arise when many teachers want to retire early on themselves, the school and the world of education.

Research Objectives

1. Identify the factors that cause teachers to want to retire early.
2. Identify the effects that arise when many teachers want to retire early.

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study above, this study will try to answer some questions as follows

1. What are the factors that cause teachers to want to retire early?
2. What are the effects when teachers want to retire early?
3. Which party will be affected when teachers want to retire early?
4. What are the ways or steps that can be taken by all parties to overcome the problem of teachers retiring early?

Limitations of The Study

In conducting this study, there are several limitations of the study identified by the researcher. This matter will have an impact on the study that will be conducted. The following are the limitations of the study for this study:

1. The researcher has limited the study to three parts, namely:
 - i. Identifying the factors that make Malay teachers want to retire early. Identifying other factors that make Malay teachers want to retire early
 - ii. Identifying the parties affected by the early retirement of Malay teachers.
 - iii. Identify ways that can be done to deal with the problem of Malay teachers retiring early.
2. The researcher focused this study on three primary schools located in the district of Gemenceh, Negeri Sembilan, namely SK A, SJKC B and SJKT C.
3. The researcher used the face-to-face interview method to four Malay teachers who were selected as a sample This study follows criteria that meet the objectives of the study.

Literature Review

1. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss about the factors of Malay language teachers, the effects and methods taken to deal with the problem of teachers retiring early in the world of education in Malaysia.

2. Constraints in Teaching Services

According to previous studies, there are many factors that contribute to teachers' desire to retire early. Among them are the constraints when teachers are in the teaching service at school. In addition, lack of information technology skills, health problems, strong finances, the desire to live a family life, filling more meaningful time and the desire to venture into other fields are also among the factors that contribute to the desire for early retirement (Norhana, 2020). According to Shuib et al (2023), there are six factors that contribute to teachers' early retirement wishes, namely workload factors, pressure from the administration, social environment at work, bullying issues, student and community issues, self-efficacy and infrastructure facilities. This point also supports the proposal made by Ismail, et al. (2022) that there are 52.7% of academic officers at the Teacher Education Institute (IPG) do not reach the level of job satisfaction with the work environment they face. The work culture during the teaching service is seen as playing an important role in determining the teacher's desire to retire early.

3. Change in Leadership Pattern

Zainuddin et al (2022) stated that changes in leadership patterns also encourage early retirement among teachers. This is in line with the findings of Ooi and Aziah (2015) that stressed teachers have a significant influence on administrative leadership. Stress in the workplace can be overcome if teachers receive appropriate justice from the administration in distributing tasks to teachers in a balanced way, providing support and motivation to teachers, practicing policies openly, encouraging cooperation and being firm in dealing with student discipline issues. All the problems faced by these teachers should be looked at and researched so that solutions to these problems can be identified and provided by the responsible parties. This study is also needed to help the authorities to determine and ensure the best approaches for certain situations.

4. Increase in the number of teacher position vacancies and lack of Experienced teachers

This worrying trend can have various implications to the education system in Malaysia. Among them is that the number of teacher vacancies will increase dramatically and Malaysian children will experience a shortage of teachers with great experience in the field of education. And this will indirectly affect the implementation of teaching and learning of students in Malaysia (Tajul et al., 2023). The ratio between new teachers and experienced teachers in the school needs to be balanced so that new teachers have the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience from experienced teachers. In addition, this trend of teachers retiring early can also cause disruption to education policy planning (Zainuddin et al., 2022). Based on a preliminary survey of the issue of many teachers retiring early, this study was carried out to identify the constraints during teacher service, the factors of teachers retiring early and its implications for the administration, schools and students.

Research Methodology

1. Introduction

This study was conducted with the aim of identifying the factors that make Malay teachers want to retire earlier than the appropriate age. In addition, this study will also identify the effects and ways to overcome the issue of Malay teachers who want to retire early. A qualitative approach was used to conduct this study. This study was also conducted in three primary schools located in Gemenceh district, Negeri Sembilan. Research methodology and strategies have been organized in order to obtain data and information to achieve the objectives of the study.

2. Study Design

This study aims to identify the factors that cause teachers to want to retire early and the effects that arise when many teachers want to retire early, teachers and also the school. The research design is a qualitative study in the form of a case study that uses the interview method as a research instrument. Reflective interviews involving researchers and respondents are conducted verbally (conversation) and recorded throughout the process for the purpose of transcribing the text of the conversation to obtain relevant information. Interviews need to be reflective and can reflect life and the real situation of a phenomenon (Denzin, 2001). Qualitative methods are seen to be able to explain the information to be obtained holistically from the right sources without the existence of any manipulation by the researcher (Merriam, 2009). Following on from that, this study involves two different schools located in Gemench, Negeri Sembilan which refers to a single case multiple site study (Yin 2012: Creswell 2008). The following is a further explanation:

1. One case: Refers to the issue of retired teachers in primary schools in the selected study location. The main focus of this study is focused on exploring information from the aspect of factors that cause teachers to want to retire early and the effects that arise when many teachers want to retire early.
2. Various places: Refers to the location of the school chosen by the researcher to obtain and collect research data. In this study, the researcher has chosen three schools with different locations, namely in SK A, SJKC B and SJKT C. The researcher has identified Malay teachers who are faced with the issue of teachers retiring early from the primary school.

3. Selection of Study Participants/ Study Sample

Purposive sampling method, which is to take a sample from any individual in the population who meets the criteria to be selected as a study participant, has been used in this study to conduct an interview process to obtain information related to teacher issues early retirement among primary school teachers. The selection of purposive sampling methods will allow the researcher to obtain information about the subject to be studied accurately, holistically and meaningfully (Merriam 2019) The sample should show parallelism with the findings of the study to achieve the objectives of the study. The sample was carefully selected to meet the criteria necessary to ensure that readers understand the results of the study. Therefore, a total of four primary school female teachers were selected as study participants based on the research participant criteria that had been set. The following is a sample/study participant selected by the researcher to conduct the interview session:

Table 1

Profile of the sample/study participants

No.	Age Range	Gender	School Type
GBM 1	41-50 years	Female	National School
GBM 2	41-50 years	Female	National School
GBM 3	51-60 years	Female	Chinese National Type School
GBM 4	51-60 years	Female	Tamil National Type School

Data Instruments

The research instruments used to obtain data are semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis methods. Interview questions become the main instrument in the data collection process. Semi-structured questions can be modified and arranged according to a certain order so that the sample/study participants can understand well. The researcher looked at the research issue from the subject's perspective during the process of formulating the interview questions. Minimal persuasive arguments are used to obtain more information related to the issues discussed in the interview session. Reduction or increase in questions can also happen during the interview process. This multi-site case study uses interview data as primary data. This structured interview was conducted with four female teachers working in primary schools. The following are questions asked by respondents related to the issue of teachers retiring early in primary schools: Factors That Cause Teachers to Want to Retire Early

1. How long have teachers been teaching?
2. As a teacher with a lot of teaching experience, do you still enjoy teaching?
3. How many more years of teacher service in the field of education?
4. Now that the trend of teachers retiring early is increasing every year, do teachers also have plans to retire early?
5. What is the justification (reason) for the answer to question no.4?
6. In the teacher's opinion, why do many teachers want to retire early?

Data Analysis Method

After the process of transcribing the interview text, the research data analysis process is carried out on the descriptive text in more detail. Creswell (2008) and Merriam (2001) states that data analysis is a process to organize, structure and give meaning to the collected data. The results of the data analysis of the study include a variety of important information related to the issue of teachers retiring early in primary schools from the aspects of the challenges faced by Bahasa Melayu teachers and how the solution of the issue is arranged in an orderly manner to help the overall data analysis process.

Marshall and Rossman (2006) explained that there are several stages in the data analysis procedure which are managing the data, forming categories, themes and forms, coding the data, verifying and then writing the report. Qualitative data analysis in this study is a theme analysis that is more flexible because the data obtained can be maintained for the purpose of being saved, used or even discarded if it does not meet the requirements of the question. The process of analyzing data based on interview transcripts in this study is in accordance with the recommendations of Braun and Clarke (2006) who say that theme analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting themes with data. The process of analyzing the results of this research is done repeatedly to get the most accurate data that fits the researcher's research objectives.

Research Findings

In this chapter we will discuss the results of the study by analysing the results of interviews with 4 teachers who work in two national schools located in Gemencheh, Negeri Sembilan. The teachers involved are two SK teachers, one SJKT teacher and one SJKC teacher. The findings of this study will also discuss the factors that cause teachers to want to retire early.

The research sample involved in this interview consisted of 4 primary school teachers from a rural school. The teachers involved are two SK teachers, one SJKT teacher and one SJKC teacher. Teacher respondent profiles include gender, age, length of service and academic qualifications.

The number of teacher respondents involved in this study is a total of 4 Malay teachers, all of whom are from rural schools. The analysis also found that no male teachers were involved in these interviews. There are 4 female teachers. No teachers aged 21 to 30 were involved, teachers aged 31 to 40 were also not involved. While there are 2 teachers between the ages of 41 and 50 who are involved in this interview. Teachers aged between 51 and 60 years old are also two people involved. In terms of the highest qualification, all the teachers involved in this interview have a bachelor's degree. Teachers with 1 to 5 years of teaching experience were not involved, 6 to 10 years were also not involved while teachers with 11 to 20 years of teaching experience were one. There are three teachers with teaching experience in the range of 21 to 30 years. All these teachers was tagging like GBM1, GBM2, GBM3 and GBM4.

Factors That Cause Teachers to Want to Retire Early

The researcher interviewed 4 primary school teachers from rural schools in Gemencheh, Negeri Sembilan. The teachers involved are two SK teachers, one SJKT teacher and one SJKC teacher to get information on the factors that cause teachers to want to retire early. All the teachers have been made study participants to help the researcher prepare this interview.

All Guru Bahasa Melayu (GBMs) plan to retire early and do not want to wait until mandatory retirement. GBM1 has filled out an application form for early retirement this year and hopes that his application will be approved and he will be able to retire next year. While GBM2, GBM3 and GBM4 have plans to retire early, but not in the near future because maybe the feeling of love for the world of education is still thick in them and the love for the students is a factor that is still holding them back.

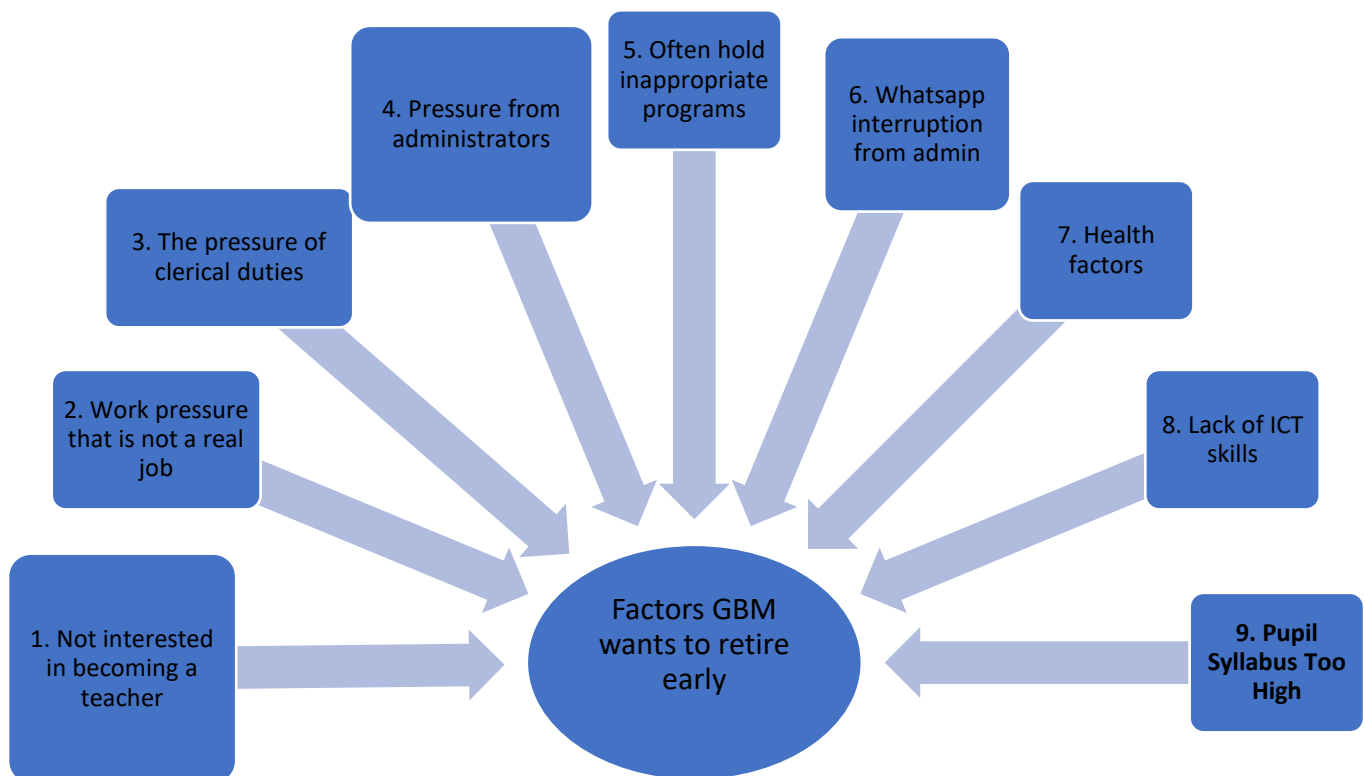


Figure 1: Factors of GBM Wanting to Retire Early

Based on Figure 1, GBM gave various justifications for stating the reasons why they wanted or planned to retire early. Among the factors is that teachers are no longer interested in becoming teachers. This has been stated by GBM1. He is not interested in becoming a teacher because there are too many non-essential tasks that need to be done. Although he really likes to teach and serve the students, nevertheless, the burden of other duties caused him to apply for early retirement.

- *No longer interested in continuing to serve as an educator (GBM1)*

GBMs also stated that they were very stressed by tasks outside their field. This was stated by GBM2 who was stressed by tasks outside PdPc.

- *Feel like retiring, but my service life is still long. Sometimes I feel 'stressed' with a lot of external PdPc work (GBM2).*

In addition, the pressure of clerical duties also caused all of these GBMs to wish to retire early. Added to this is the pressure from administrators and superiors who want to request various data that are not included in the teacher's actual duties. Some of the administrators also often harass teachers via *WhatsApp* by asking them to do various tasks regardless of the time. This situation includes the teacher's vacation time. There are GBM who state that there are schools that hold programs that are not suitable and are not directed towards the development of students. Such programs not only waste the students' time because they do not benefit the students, but also add to the workload of the teachers because of managing such programs. Among the programs are large-scale birthday celebrations, talk programs from product sales companies and so on.

The factors mentioned above have been supported by GBM3 which is increasingly stressed by the increasing load of non-essential tasks. In addition, he teaches at SJKC school, where the administrator is quite 'hard' in the instructions given. These factors are expressed by GBM3 as follows:

- *There are several factors. Among them, the task of teaching students cannot be given 100% because teachers do more clerical work, administrators and superiors put pressure by asking for diverse data and in a short time, various programs do not lead to the development of students and whatsapp interruptions do not count the teacher's break time (stress) and give a lot of instructions (GBM3).*

The next factor why GBM plans to retire early, according to GBM4, He who teaches SJKT still enjoys teaching at school, in addition, his love for the students and his position as a Resource Centre teacher makes him continue as long as possible until mandatory retirement. However, his uncertain health condition in addition to his lack of ICT skills, caused him to think of early retirement. These factors are stated by him as follows:

- *My health has been unstable lately. In addition, the use of ict in PdPc. I am not good at using ict (GBM4).*

All GBM have also given their opinion on the factors that make teachers in Malaysia want to retire early. Among the factors mentioned is the declining health of teachers, which has caused many teachers in Malaysia to want to retire early. Furthermore, the diseases faced by the teachers in question require continuous treatment. This is also acknowledged by GBM1, GBM2 and GBM3.

- *Health factors that require ongoing treatment cause teachers to apply for early retirement (GBM1).*
- *Deteriorating health especially with increasing age (GBM2).*
- *Health factors - many teachers become unhealthy and suffer from various diseases (GBM3)*

The high syllabus is also the main reason teachers want to retire early. All GBM stated that the high syllabus caused many teachers to not be able to teach well and feel quite stressed because they are unable to help students to understand a topic in a certain subject. According to GBM2, a high and rather silly subject syllabus is also a contributor to the reason teachers want to retire early. Teachers are increasingly losing the joy of teaching, especially when the students are not able to master the lesson well and feel bored in PdPc. This is stated by GBM2.

- *High student syllabus causes no enjoyment of teaching (GBM2).*

In conclusion, it can be seen that teachers have various reasons why they want to retire early. Teachers now feel very burdened with so many assignments that it causes them to feel stressed and lose interest in teaching. In addition, health problems are also the main reason why teachers in Malaysia want to retire early.

Identifying The Effects of Many Teachers Wanting to Retire Early

The effects that arise when teachers apply for early retirement are summarized as diagram 2:

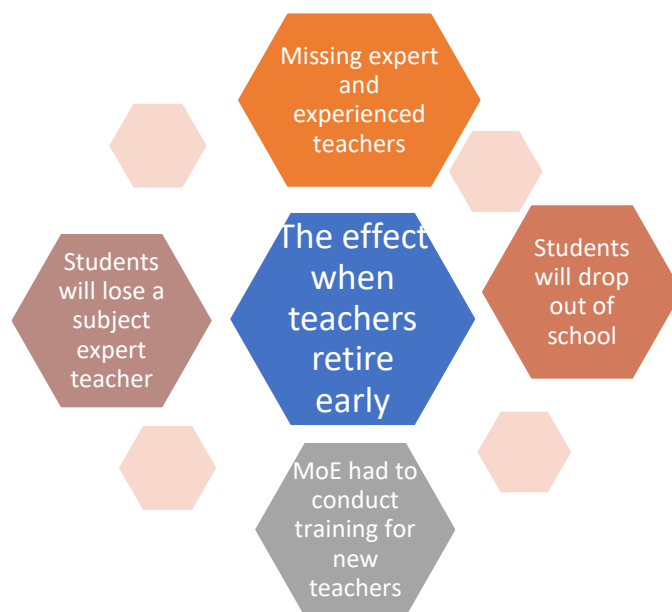


Figure 2: The effect that arises when many teachers want to retire early

GBM1, GBM2 and GBM3 state that the effect of teachers retiring early on national education is that there will be a loss or shortage of experienced and expert teachers in implementing Teaching and Learning (TaL). The loss of these teachers not only harms the school, but the entire education system where their services are needed to help improve student performance and further elevate the status of the country's education. This matter was stated by the respondent as follows;

- *Yes, because there will be a shortage of expert teachers who are able to implement PdPc well (GBM1)*
- *Correct. Schools will lose many skilled and experienced teachers. This is a loss to the school (GBM2)*
- *In my opinion it will have an impact on the education system. This is due to the loss of experienced teachers in various subjects. (GBM3).*

However, according to GBM4, the education system will not suffer losses if many teachers who retire early are immediately replaced by new teachers who are more competent and skilled in information technology.

- *Maybe not impressed because if a teacher retires early, the vacancy for that teacher is immediately filled with new teachers who are proficient in using ict (GBM4)*

Based on the findings from the respondents of these teachers, GBM1, GBM2 GBM3 and GBM4 give the same view that students will fall behind in their studies if their teachers retire early and there is no replacement teacher the said. It is normal in the current education system that teachers who retire or move schools will find it difficult to find replacements immediately. Pupils will study with 'relief' teachers who do not have expertise or skills in the replaced subjects. This will not only affect student learning, but can also cause school

performance to fail due to student failure to master a subject. In fact, students will be bored to come to school because according to their point of view, there is no point in them coming to school, but not learning properly.

- *Pupils will fall behind if substitute teachers are slow to take over the duties of teachers who retire early (GBM1)*
- *Pupils will drop out of lessons if retiring teachers cannot find a replacement immediately (GBM2)*
- *Students' learning will be disrupted, until their retired teachers get replacements (GBM4)*

Apart from the school administration, pupils are also affected by the loss of a teacher who is an expert in a subject. According to GBM3, students will lose experienced and knowledgeable teachers. New teachers who will replace retired teachers, do not have the same knowledge as experienced teachers.

- *Pupils will lose a teacher who is knowledgeable and has a lot of experience.. The acceptance of knowledge may not be the same as a new teacher who is still shallow about a subject (GBM3)*

In this study, the researcher obtains information about the effects on school administrators by asking questions, do school administrators agree with the decision of teachers who want to retire early and why? The findings are the school will lose skilled teachers. This matter was stated by the respondent as follows;

- *No, because I can still teach and the school still needs my services (GBM1)*
- *Most of them disagree. They want experienced teachers to continue teaching because their knowledge is not the same as new teachers (GBM3)*
- *But administrators will not agree because the school will lose skilled and experienced teachers (GBM4)*

In addition, the administrator is also very worried as a result of the effect of teachers retiring early, the workload for teachers who are still on duty is increasing. This will cause these teachers to be tired and lose motivation and enthusiasm to work.

- *Most of them disagree because the school administration will face the problem of teacher shortage and increase the workload for other teachers (GBM2)*

However, school administrators may agree and consider a teacher's request for early retirement if the teacher has a very strong reason and has an illness that requires careful treatment. This is according to GBM4;

- *May agree if the teacher is facing health problems or mental problems due to work pressure nowadays (GBM4)*

Another effect that can be seen when many teachers retire early is that there will be a shortage of teachers and the MoE will have to recruit and train new teachers. This is stated by GBM3. GBM4 also said that if many teachers retire early, existing teachers will have to take over their duties and this will also cause existing teachers to be burdened with many tasks and the number of teaching hours will increase.

- *KPM will lack teachers and will need to recruit and train new teachers and for schools that lack teachers, students will drop out and the workload must be shared with other teachers (GBM3)*

- *The effect is that the school lacks the number of teachers, there are no substitute teachers for subjects the said. The existing teacher had to take over the duties left by the teacher. The number of hours a teacher spends at the school increases (GBM4)*

How to Overcome The Effects That Occur

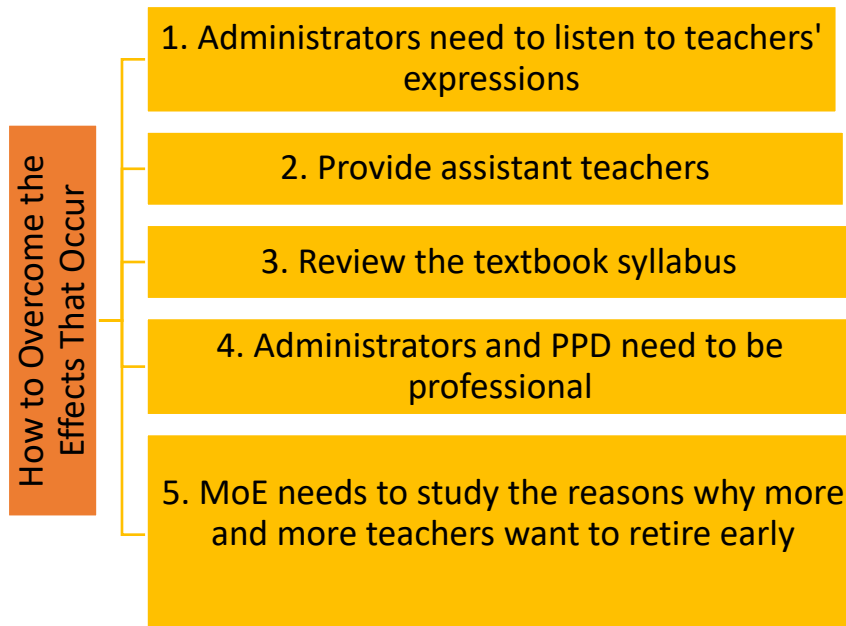


Figure 3: how to overcome the effects of teachers retiring early

According to GBM2, GBM3 and GBM4, school administrators and KPM need to listen to the expressions of all teachers who are burdened with various workloads. According to GBM2;

- *The school administration and KPM need to listen to teachers who are burdened with various tasks and need to take immediate action (GBM2)*

While GBM4 stated that school administrators and PPD need to listen to teachers' expressions well and take appropriate action immediately. GBM4 says;

- *In my opinion, the administrators and PPD need to listen to teachers' complaints about the never-ending workload and be professional in administration, don't be biased (GBM4)*

GBM3 also stated that the Ministry of Education needs to listen to teachers' hearts and set an instruction or circular so that teachers are not disturbed by the administrator by sending whatapps regardless of time, especially at night or during holidays. According to GBM3;

- *KPM needs to listen to teachers' hearts, not create programs just to achieve KPIs for officers, set a directive and circular so that teachers are not disturbed by administrators with the Wassap application, especially at night or during holidays, and strictness is also necessary so that parents do not take action at will teacher (GBM3)*

Beside that, all GBMs are of the opinion that MoE needs to provide assistant teachers for each teacher so that all tasks and PdP can be carried out well and smoothly. The teacher's workload can also be reduced and student learning can be carried out in the best possible way. Following this GBMs;

- *MoE needs to prepare assistant teachers to ease the burden on teachers. (GBM1)*
- *Should prepare assistant teachers to help teachers in schools (GBM2)*
- *MoE also needs to prepare assistant teachers to reduce our workload. (GBM3)*
- *Assistant teachers should be considered to help reduce the burden teacher's duties. (GBM4)*

GBM2 also thinks that MoE needs to review all textbook syllabus now because the content is too high and very burdensome for teachers and students. The difficulty of students understanding the skills found in textbooks is a burden on teachers to teach them. This is also the reason why many teachers want to retire early.

- *MoE also needs to study all the syllabus of high subjects because it is also one of the burdens that teachers have to bear. (GBM2)*

While, GBM3 has given the view that school administrators and PPD need to be professional and open to receive complaints and complaints from teachers about excessive workload. They need to find a solution so that teachers are not stressed and stressed with extreme workloads.

- *In addition, administrators and PPD need to be professional and accept complaints from teachers with an open heart (GBM3).*

GBM2 who thinks that in order to overcome the problem of teachers who want to retire early, MoE needs to examine the main reasons why teachers want to retire early without waiting for the mandatory pension. According to GBM2;

- *MoE needs to examine the reasons why many teachers want to retire early. (GBM2)*

In summary, there are many effects that arise when teachers want to retire early. The most significant effect is that the burden of teachers who are already serving at the school will be heavier with many assignments due to the difficulty of finding replacements for teachers who have retired. In addition, student learning will also be affected due to the absence of substitute teachers. All GBM are of the opinion that MoE needs to immediately take action and find a solution to reduce the number of teachers who want to retire early.

Discussion

Education in Malaysia plays an important role in shaping the future of the next generation. Teachers are a very valuable asset in the education system of this country. However, one problem that is increasingly focused on is the issue of teachers retiring early. This phenomenon is worrying because it has an impact on the quality of teaching and learning in Malaysia. How can the issue of teachers retiring early in Malaysia happen and what can the authorities do to deal with this problem?

Among the factors that contribute to the issue of teachers retiring early are physical and mental factors related to the teaching profession. Carrying out the duties and responsibilities as a teacher requires an active physical presence and a healthy mind. However, many teachers in Malaysia are reported to experience high psychological and physical stress. Excessive workload, academic pressure and social pressure are some of the main factors that cause teachers to feel burdened and finally decide to retire early.

According to the study of Farook (2022), this is not a phenomenon that only happens in our country, but also happens at the global level. According to a study conducted by the RAND

American Teacher Panel (ATP), during the pandemic, teachers become less certain that they will continue to serve as teachers until retirement. The proof is that in March 2020, 74% of teachers reported that they would continue to be teachers until retirement, but in March 2021, the value decreased to only 69% who thought the same. Teachers reporting the possibility of leaving the teaching career has also increased from 24% in March 2020 to 30% in the following year.

A more thorough study is being done by The Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) wants to find the reason why teachers quit early. Following this disclosure, many parties expressed their opinions and studies regarding the analysis of the cause of this issue. There are a handful of teachers who express complaints about problems due to bureaucracy that is too fussy, the attitude of students who are increasingly rude, and lethargy. Meanwhile, according to the President of the West Malaysian Malay Teachers' Union (KGMMB), Jasni Md Kechik said, the standard operating procedure (SOP) set on duty has burdened teachers who are already old (Farook, 2022).

Serve for More than 10 Years Results from interviews with four teachers, found that the teachers have served for more than ten years. Three out of four of these teachers have served for more than 20 years. This relatively long service period is one of the reasons why the teachers plan to retire early. In addition, the pressure and internal challenges at work can also cause these teachers to want to retire early. Along with the passage of time, the teacher's job is often associated with heavy and responsible teaching work. They should plan and implement effective teaching strategies that are in line with the current education system, and engage in ongoing professional development. This may create emotional and physical stress that can lead to burnout and fatigue. This fatigue can damage the spirit and motivation of teachers, which ultimately causes them to choose to retire early to find peace and balance in life even though some of them still love the world of education.

The results of this interview with four GBM people have found the answer that teachers are no longer interested in becoming a teacher. This has caused him to fill out an early retirement form this year. Among the reasons why he wants to retire early even though he loves the world of education very much is the workload that is too much and cannot be done by a teacher who is old like him. The workload of teachers has been understood to be the main reason teachers want to retire early. The study of Tajul et al. (2023) also states that the burden of teachers is becoming more and more significant at this time. According to his research, in addition to that, teachers are also required to perform time-consuming clerical tasks in addition to existing teaching and assessment recording duties. This includes the preparation of monitoring results, reporting and intervention for student attendance issues, preparation of paperwork for each program as well as assessment reporting. There are also teachers who are asked to conduct additional classes organized by outside parties (Tajul et al. 2023).

The teachers interviewed stated that extreme work pressure is the reason they plan to retire early. Extreme teacher work pressure is a serious issue in the field of education. Teachers are the backbone of the education system and they are exposed to various challenges and pressures day after day. Increasing educational standards, demands to achieve high academic success, disciplinary issues and also extracurricular tasks, are all factors that cause teachers to experience pressure beyond the limit.

According to GBM interviewed, they are not only burdened with a lot of real duties, but also have to do clerical duties that are too burdensome. Clerical duties refer to a variety of additional duties that must be managed by teachers, apart from teaching duties in the

classroom. Among the clerical tasks that teachers need to carry out are such as preparing assessment reports, managing student files, reviewing assessment papers, and many more. These tasks should not be an additional burden to the teacher, but in reality they often take a lot of time. This results in teachers not being able to give full focus in the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The clerical duties that burden teachers also include the task of registering new students every year. Every year, teachers need to collect and update new student information. They also need to establish important student information and ensure all student-related documents are properly registered. This process takes a long time and is full of complications. As a teacher, carrying out the task of teaching effectively is already a challenge, but this additional task only adds to their burden (Mah, 2022).

Pressure from the school administration is also the cause of teachers planning to retire early. The administrators who do not seem to understand the problems and workload faced by teachers cause teachers to feel stressed and lose motivation. In addition, pressure from the school administration can also come in the form of excessive performance evaluation. Teachers are often evaluated based on student performance in exams or tests, and their performance will be the school's responsibility. This creates a sense of fear and anxiety among teachers, because they know that their performance will affect the image of the school. This constant pressure and pressure from the administration can cause a loss of motivation and interest in teaching, which ultimately causes teachers to seek a way out by retiring early.

In a study by Ahmad (2018), it was found that 65% of teachers who wanted to retire early stated that administrative pressure was the main factor influencing their decision. Unavoidable and irreducible stress results in continuous feelings of stress, and indirectly has a negative impact on their work performance. For some teachers, the effect causes them to lose job satisfaction and joy in the profession as an educator.

In the last few years, there is a phenomenon that is increasing among teachers which is harassment through messages from administrators regarding work matters. This phenomenon does not count time, and it is also known as "timeless work message". These interruptions can occur at any time, including at night, weekends and holidays. This issue is getting more serious because it is the main reason many teachers want to retire early. That was the experience of one of the GBM interviewed. The GBM who teaches at Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan Cina (SJKC) felt very stressed by the interruption of WhatsApp messages from the administrator.

The phenomenon of harassment through messages from administrators is a sensitive issue because it destroys the balance between a teacher's professional and personal life. It also affects excellence in teaching and learning in the classroom. Teachers who are distracted by messages about work matters in their free time tend to lose focus and motivation in teaching. This can result in a negative impact on student performance.

In addition, interruptions through messages such as WhatsApp regardless of time also have a negative effect on the commitment and motivation of teachers. Feeling unappreciated and burdened with unreasonable demands from administrators can reduce morale and negatively affect work efficiency and teaching quality. Teachers who continue to receive messages about work matters will feel frustrated and may lose their interest in the field of education. Unmotivated teachers will reduce the quality of their teaching, which ultimately harms students' academic performance.

Deteriorating health is one of the causes of early retirement of teachers in our country's education system. Teachers are an important asset in the development of education in

Malaysia. However, concerns about health problems have become a deepening issue. Factors such as high work pressure, unstable weather, and unhealthy lifestyles are some of the main causes of poor health among teachers.

In general, every year there are teachers who apply for early retirement. Most of those who apply are influenced by health factors. As a normal person, when reaching the age of 40 or 50, many people start to face health problems. Most teachers who retire early are among women over 50 years old and the decision is made based on health factors. Common diseases are high blood pressure, heart disease, gout, diabetes, kidney or nervous disorders. For those who are quite serious and chronic, they have to go back and forth to the hospital and often take sick leave.

They are no longer able to be productive teachers because they cannot carry out their duties normally. Added to this, the demands of work other than teaching in the classroom but also having to complete assignment reports make teachers with illnesses determined to choose early retirement. This action allows them to receive treatment, adequate rest and does not affect the school's productivity without their presence.

In this rapidly growing digital age, skills in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are increasingly important in various fields, including in the field of education. Teachers who are skilled in ICT can take advantage of this technology to improve the efficiency of teaching and learning. However, there are teachers who are less skilled in ICT and this has encouraged them to want to retire early. GBM4 who has problems in using ICT causes him to feel depressed and is one of the reasons why he wants to retire early.

According to a study by Noraini et al. (2019), one of the factors that cause teachers to be less proficient in ICT and want to retire early is a lack of self-confidence. When they are not skilled in using technology, they may feel threatened or stressed when faced with new ICT applications and equipment. This lack of confidence can prevent them from trying innovative teaching materials that involve the use of ICT. As a result, they may only be limited to conventional teaching methods that are not as effective as teaching methods that involve the use of technology.

Apart from lack of self-confidence, ignorance about modern technology is another reason why teachers who are not skilled in ICT want to retire early. There are teachers who are too engrossed in traditional teaching methods that they have no motivation to learn ICT. They may not know about various ICT applications and tools that can improve their teaching and learning efficiency. This lack of knowledge makes them lag behind in the world of education that increasingly uses technology in the teaching and learning process. Teachers who realize that they are not good at ICT may feel threatened by this rapid progress and end up wanting to retire early.

In addition, changes in the field of education also encourage teachers who are less skilled in ICT to want to retire early. In this day and age, many students are becoming more adept at using technology compared to previous generations. They usually have access to ICT devices such as smartphones and tablets. If teachers who are less proficient in ICT cannot adapt to this development, they may feel marginalized or irrelevant in teaching. This feeling can result in increased feelings of stress and fatigue which can affect their desire to retire early.

Apart from the issue of too much workload, health problems, and stress and pressure from the administrators, too high a subject syllabus is also one of the factors for teachers to retire early. The high subject syllabus creates high pressure not only for students but also for teachers. Teachers are required to carry out their duties to provide quality education to

students. However, with the increasingly dense syllabus, they are faced with various tasks and responsibilities that require exhausting efforts. They have to provide complete teaching materials, plan learning to improve students' skills in a topic and conduct tests, while students themselves cannot master the skills found in textbooks. All this makes teachers have to work longer and sometimes even late into the night. This increased workload affects their health and well-being, which ultimately leads to the desire to retire early.

Effects When Teachers Retire Early and How to Cope

Teachers who are experts and experienced in teaching a subject play an important role in the development of education in our country. They are teachers who have accumulated experience and knowledge in their specific subjects over many years of teaching. Therefore, the loss of these experienced specialist teachers when they retire early is a big issue that needs to be addressed seriously and is a loss to the world of education.

When these experienced teachers retire early, the obvious negative effects can be felt by pupils. Pupils may have difficulty finding a suitable replacement for the teacher. These specialist teachers usually have in-depth knowledge in their specific subjects and have unique teaching methods. The loss of these expert teachers can cause instability in the teaching and learning process. Pupils may experience difficulties in understanding complex topics or face difficulties in completing assigned tasks. This will cause students to fall behind in the subject.

When teachers who specialize in important subjects such as the core subjects of Malay, Mathematics, Science and English choose to retire early, it will affect students. The biggest impact is the loss of a high source of knowledge and experience. Experienced teachers have usually spent many years in the field of education and have acquired in-depth knowledge of the subject they teach. They also have a variety of teaching strategies that are proven to be effective. When they retire early, students who are still in school will lose the benefit of this experience. They are no longer able to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the teachers, which may lead to deficiencies in their learning.

One of the effects that occurs when teachers retire early is the loss of knowledge and experience of skilled teachers. These teachers have been through many years of teaching and they have deep knowledge in their respective fields. When they retire early, this knowledge will disappear from school. Schools will lose a valuable resource in the form of these teachers. Without them, schools may face difficulties in providing quality teaching to students. These skilled teachers also usually become mentors and role models for younger teachers. They help improve the professionalism of new teachers and guide them in teaching. When these teachers retire early, new teachers will lose mentors who can help them improve their teaching skills. This can have a negative impact on the quality of teaching in the school.

Teachers are an important asset in the country's education system. Teachers are responsible for teaching, guiding, and shaping the young generation into knowledgeable and quality individuals. However, more and more teachers are choosing to retire early as there is a shortage of teachers in Malaysia. This phenomenon has caused various problems in the field of education, including the increased burden on other teachers. The lack of teachers has increased the burden of other teachers who are serving. Teachers who are still active in the education system are forced to take over the duties and responsibilities of teachers who retire early. They had to teach more classes, run extracurricular programs, and perform school administrative tasks that should have been assisted by retired teachers. This situation clearly affects the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Overburdened teachers will experience stress and difficulty in giving sufficient attention to each student. This can cause a decrease

in the academic performance of students and reduce their motivation in learning the subjects being taught, which will also cause the school management to become a mess if not dealt with immediately.

The next effect when teachers retire early is the difficulty in finding replacement teachers. This can also affect the quality of teaching and learning. The replacement teacher that may be hired may be far from the level of expertise of the retired primary teacher. This is because substitute teachers may not have sufficient experience or training and lack of knowledge in the subject. Therefore, student performance also decreases and the learning process can be affected. In addition, the difficulty of finding replacement teachers when teachers retire early can also cause uncertainty in the continuity of education. If there are no quality substitute teachers, students may experience deficiencies in the aspects of learning that they should be able to get. This can have a long-term negative impact on their academic achievement. This difficulty can also have a negative impact on the continuity of teaching staff in certain fields. In the long term, this may cause a gap in the level of expertise of teachers in a certain field in this country.

The effect of teachers retiring early also causes school performance to decline. The phenomenon of the absence of experienced teachers due to early retirement is a worrying issue. The absence of experienced teachers can contribute to the deterioration of school performance. School performance plummets when experienced teachers retire early. Experienced teachers play an important role in the development of national education. The absence of experienced teachers contributes to the deterioration of school performance. Therefore, wise actions need to be taken by the management to involve experienced teachers, at the same time keeping the school's performance outstanding.

Ways to Overcome the Impact

One of the ways to overcome the effects that occur when teachers want to retire early is that KPM needs to act immediately to find replacement teachers. The purpose of this is to maintain the quality of education in this country. Lack of teachers can cause vacancies and imbalances in the education system. A study conducted by the Malaysian Ministry of Education in 2020 found that there is a decrease in the number of teachers who are still active in their profession. This is a clear sign that immediate steps should be taken to address this issue.

In addition, teacher vacancies can also have a negative impact on student achievement. Experienced teachers usually play an important role in providing guidance, imparting knowledge, and also inspiration to students. When there is a vacancy in a teacher's position, students may face difficulties in understanding concepts, skill development and desired achievements. The presence of effective and quality substitute teachers is important to maintain and improve the quality of learning in this country for the future.

Teachers are the backbone of the Malaysian education system. They are responsible for providing quality education to the young generation. However, the tasks given to teachers are increasing along with the changes in the curriculum and education policy. This includes completing class assignments, preparing teaching materials, creating various programs and more. Teachers often feel stressed because of this obligation.

It is not only the many tasks that burden the teachers, but also the imbalance of the workload. In some schools, teachers are assigned additional tasks such as managing co-curricular and co-curricular programs. Teachers are not only in the classroom teaching, but also involved in activities outside the classroom. Moreover, teachers also need to carry out

administrative duties related to school management. This unbalanced workload distracts teachers from giving full attention to student learning.

The Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) listens to all teachers' expressions about the workload they carry. MoE needs to find a way to balance the workload of teachers. They can consider reducing additional tasks and focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. In addition, they can re-evaluate the division of administrative tasks in the school to ensure that each teacher can give full attention to the academic development of students.

As a result of the study, GBM suggests that the Ministry of Education and Culture should provide assistant teachers because the increasing workload of teachers can have a negative effect on the performance of teachers in teaching. Teachers are responsible for planning and implementing teaching activities, testing and evaluating students, as well as being involved in school administration tasks. These tasks require a lot of time and energy. Teachers who are given too many tasks and responsibilities will face stress and mental fatigue which can affect their health and the quality of their teaching.

Through the preparation of assistant teachers, the workload of teachers can be reduced. For example, teacher assistants such as practical instructors or special education facilitators can assist teachers in meeting the needs of students who need extra help. Teachers who have assistant teachers can give more effective emphasis to teaching and learning, and can use their time and energy more efficiently. This will provide positive benefits to the performance of teachers in their teaching activities.

In addition to reducing the teacher's workload, the presence of assistant teachers can also benefit students. Teacher assistants enable more personal and individual teaching for students who need additional support. For example, assistant teachers who specialize in the field of special educational needs can help students with special educational needs. Additional support provided by teaching assistants can help pupils to make individual progress, by meeting their unique needs and potential.

Beside that, with the presence of assistant teachers, teachers can pay more attention to aspects of school management and administration. Teachers can get involved in professional activities, such as training programs, action studies and specialization activities. Teachers can also get involved in efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE) should review the textbook syllabus in an effort to reduce the workload of teachers and students. In our country's education system, textbooks play an important role in the teaching and learning process. However, with the increase in student textbook syllabuses and the workload of teachers and students, it is important to re-evaluate the textbooks used.

Textbooks are often the main source of teaching material, and increasingly heavy syllabuses have caused the workload of teachers and students to increase. A syllabus that is too dense and detailed forces teachers to understand and learn teaching material quickly. This limits the teacher's ability to teach with creativity and give individual attention to each student. Therefore, it is important to review the textbook syllabus to ensure that it emphasizes the quality of teaching and learning.

School administrators and District Education Officers (PPDs) play an important role in ensuring that the education system works well in Malaysia. One of the tasks performed by school administrators and PPD is to receive complaints from teachers about the heavy workload. In this situation, a professional and open attitude is very important so that the issues that arise can be resolved properly and responsibly.

A professional attitude is an important characteristic that school administrators and PPDs should have when receiving complaints from teachers about heavy workloads. This professional attitude involves the act of listening carefully, communicating effectively, and acting fairly in observing the issues presented by the teacher. School administrators and PPD need to pay serious attention to these complaints in order to solve the problem. In this regard, they need to place the importance of teachers and the quality of education as a priority in order to be able to give satisfactory answers to teachers.

In addition, an open attitude is also important for school administrators and PPD when receiving complaints from teachers about heavy workloads. This open attitude means that school administrators and PPD should provide sufficient space to listen to complaints and suggestions presented by teachers. They need to give opportunities to teachers to voice their opinions and give honest and sincere feedback. With this open attitude, school administrators and PPD will be able to understand more about the challenges faced by teachers and find appropriate solutions for every problem that arises.

School administrators and PPD also need to carry out their role with full responsibility when receiving complaints about heavy workload from teachers. This responsibility includes actions to take appropriate steps to solve problems and provide the necessary assistance to teachers who are facing heavy workloads. They need to provide sufficient support and resources to teachers so that they can carry out their duties effectively and improve the quality of teaching and learning. PPD also needs to play a greater role in monitoring and assisting schools under its administration as well as dealing with matters related to school administration.

Conclusion

In conclusion, teachers retiring early has become an issue that is getting more and more attention in our country's education system. This phenomenon is becoming more noticeable among teachers where many of them choose to retire as early as possible compared to the previous generation. There are several main causes that drive this phenomenon and it has a significant impact on the country's education. The main reasons that cause teachers to retire early include high work pressure and an unfavourable career environment such as problems with administrators. The impact of this issue includes a lack of quality and experienced teachers. By involving the school administration and the ministry of education and implementing appropriate measures, we can overcome this issue and ensure stability and quality advantages in our country's education system.

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