

# The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction of Special Education Integration Teachers in Secondary Schools in Malacca

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## Abstract

The responsibility of being a special education teacher is not an easy task to educate students with special educational needs (MBPK) because it requires high patience and wisdom in managing these MBPK on a daily basis. The duties of PPKI teachers are not only academic tasks and responsibilities but also non-academic tasks, which are very burdensome for teachers in the transformation of the national education system. This study aims to identify the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, as well as to determine the influence of emotional intelligence on the job satisfaction of integrated special education teachers in the state of Malacca. This study is important in helping the administration to change management methods according to the specific suitability of staff or teachers to ensure excellent service, improve performance, and achieve the established goals. This quantitative study uses a survey method. A total of 180 respondents were selected from a population of 330 teachers from 20 secondary schools in the districts of Melaka Tengah, Jasin, and Alor Gajah in the state of Malacca using cluster random sampling. The questionnaires used are the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire by Daniel Goleman (1998) and the Job Descriptive Index by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969). The study data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. Descriptive analysis found that the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of teachers is high. While Pearson correlation analysis found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. This study contributes in terms of reference because studies related to the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PPKI secondary school teachers are still rarely studied. It is hoped that the findings of this study can provide useful information to those responsible for taking proactive steps to produce productive and innovative teaching staff.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Teachers, Secondary Schools.

**Introduction**

In the increasingly challenging era of modern education, the psychology and well-being of teachers have become a primary focus in educational research. One of the factors that has been gaining attention is the relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses the skills to recognize, understand, and manage one's own and others' emotions, is seen as a crucial component in influencing performance and job satisfaction in various fields, including Education (Ajilin et al., 2020). The teaching profession is often associated with high levels of stress, heavy workloads, and continuous emotional challenges. Teachers not only have to manage students' behavior but also face pressures from administration, parents, and society.

In this context, emotional intelligence plays a significant role in helping teachers cope with stress and maintain motivation and commitment to their profession. Teacher job satisfaction, on the other hand, is a critical factor that affects the quality of teaching, student achievement, and the overall school climate. It includes various aspects such as satisfaction with teaching tasks, relationships with colleagues and administrators, professional development opportunities, and perceptions of the value of their work in society. Teachers who are satisfied with their careers tend to be more committed, productive, and effective in their teaching duties (Asraf and Aizuddin, 2022).

There are many recent studies showing a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are reported to be more capable of managing stress and work pressure more effectively, building positive relationships with students, colleagues, and administrators, handling conflicts and problems at work in a constructive manner, maintaining motivation and spirit in facing challenges, and adapting to changes in the education system (Nur Afny Juati et al., 2020). All these factors directly or indirectly contribute to increased job satisfaction. Teachers who can control their emotions well and understand others' emotions tend to experience more positive experiences at work, which in turn increases their job satisfaction (Noorhafeza and Ferlis, 2020).

Understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction is important not only for the well-being of teachers but also for improving the overall quality of education. This knowledge can be used to plan more effective professional development programs, improve educational policies, and create a more supportive work environment for educators.

The objective of this study is to identify the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of teachers, as well as the influence of emotional intelligence on the job satisfaction of integrated special education teachers in secondary schools in Malacca. A quantitative approach and survey method are used for secondary school PPKI teachers in the state of Malacca. The study instruments used are questionnaires to facilitate the collection of data in statistical form and analysis. This article consists of four parts, including a literature review from previous studies on emotional intelligence, followed by the methodology involving sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods. The third part involves the results and discussion of the findings, and finally, the implications and suggestions for further research.

**Definition of Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's attitude towards their work and the difference between the amount of reward received and the amount that should be received by the worker (Norliyana & Yusof, 2018). Implicitly, job satisfaction can be understood as a human emotional situation that gives a positive impression and a feeling of satisfaction when appreciated after performing a task well (Noordeyana & Siti Zulaikha, 2019). Job satisfaction is the correspondence between an individual's expectations and the actual reality of the work as a whole (Wan and Tran, 2015).

A study by Hilda and Salleh (2022) on work stress and job satisfaction, evaluating factors of work stress and job satisfaction among primary school teachers as a whole, shows that teachers' work stress records teachers prioritize the knowledge given and consider this as a responsibility to educate the nation. The level of teacher satisfaction is also high in the dimensions of colleagues and the principal. Therefore, minimal work stress among teachers with a good and comfortable environment can increase job satisfaction among teachers.

**Definition of Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence skills are considered important to master so that an individual can manage their own emotions better (Goleman, 1995). The significant influence of mastering these skills can be seen in aspects of work performance and positive relationships with others (Welmilla, 2020).

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays an important role in the field of education, especially in teaching. According to Supardi et al. (2020) in a study on the level of emotional intelligence of technical and vocational teacher trainers in Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK), through the results of the questionnaire conducted on the level of emotional intelligence of teachers, it was found that with high emotional intelligence, teachers will be able to control emotions, show more empathetic attitudes, and can learn to adapt to problems faced and can provide good emotional education to students. Other studies have also shown that teachers with higher emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate higher organizational commitment to the institutions where they work (Isham and Nor, 2021). This is important because it shows that emotional intelligence is related to the dedication and overall involvement of teachers in their educational environment.

According to Thiagarajan (2020), teachers with emotional intelligence will show ethical behavior when facing problems, such as being more inclined to solve problems encountered. The teacher's skills in managing emotions reflect their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects while working or, in other words, while performing their duties (Wang and Wang 2022). Therefore, an educator greatly needs high emotional intelligence because through these skills, the educator will be able to build management skills and can be a good guide for MBPK (Rivana 2019).

**Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction**

A study by Marius and Mahmud (2022), can be used as a reference for the variables of emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction. The study found that the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of teachers is moderate. While there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, and there is no difference between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction based on the length of service. This proves that emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction influence each other, and the length of service does not affect emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction.

In addition, a study conducted by Elmi (2021) states that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence with job satisfaction and leadership with job satisfaction among head teachers of guidance and counseling in secondary schools. In addition, emotional intelligence also has a positive correlation with job satisfaction performance. This proves that the higher the level of emotional intelligence, the higher the level of job satisfaction of head teachers of Guidance and Counseling.

While a study on the relationship between job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, motivation, and organizational commitment among secondary school teachers in the Tambunan district by Juati et al. (2020) proves that the level of emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers in the Tambunan district is high, where all dimensions of emotional intelligence are at a high level. The highest level is the dimension of self-motivation, followed by self-management, social skills, self-awareness, and empathy. This shows that when an employee is motivated, they will strive to achieve the goals set by the organization.

### **Theories and Models of Job Satisfaction**

The main reference theory for the construct of job satisfaction in this study, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1954), is more relevant and dominant. The hierarchy stated in this theory meets the needs and also the reality that occurs in PPKI. According to this theory, each level of need must be met to achieve satisfaction in the work performed. The basic needs referred to are physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, self-esteem, and the level of self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). If all the levels of human needs stated are examined, they are very relevant to the situation in PPKI where teachers always feel marginalized and not always appreciated. The problems that occur subsequently make teachers in PPKI less or not feel satisfied in working. The head teacher as the school administrator can look at and examine the levels of needs stated in this theory to give space to PPKI teachers to feel satisfied in their work. Therefore, it is stated again that the main theory used as a reference in this study for the construct of job satisfaction is (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory 1954).

### **Theories and Models of Emotional Intelligence**

The community today begins to realize the importance of emotional intelligence in modern education through the theory initiated by psychologist Thorndike (1920), namely the theory of social intelligence. Thorndike describes emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to understand and manage emotions when interacting with others. Subsequently, the theory of emotional intelligence was further developed by Meyer and Salovey (1990), and this theory was continued by Gardner (1993) with his model of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence within the framework of multiple intelligences. Then the concept of emotional intelligence was successfully popularized by psychologist Goleman (1996) through his book "Emotional Intelligence." Goleman, through his theory, successfully convinced society of the importance of emotional intelligence skills, which are just as important as cognitive intelligence. He also believes that emotional intelligence skills can influence the level of success of an individual, whether in their career or in life. According to Goleman in Yahaya (2010), these skills help internal considerations of an individual to control and manage their own emotions and reflect the emotions of others, referring to aspects of feelings, emotions, or behavior. This also ensures that by possessing these skills, individuals will be better at making decisions and choosing appropriate actions according to the time and situation.

Aspects of emotional intelligence in this study, referring to Goleman's model of emotional intelligence, are divided into five main domains. These domains are the domain of self-awareness, the domain of self-management, the domain of motivation, the domain of empathy, and the last domain is the management of relationships.

Overall, based on this literature review, it can be concluded that teacher job satisfaction is determined by the level of emotional intelligence. This is because when teachers achieve job satisfaction, it indicates that they have a high level of intelligence, as these two variables are positively related.

### Methodology

The design of this study uses a survey design. The survey method was chosen because it is very suitable for use, referring to its advantages in collecting a large amount of data related to emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction in a short period. In addition, the choice of this design is also due to its standardized nature, which allows data to be easily prepared, administered, and analyzed for generalization to the respondent group (Ismail et. al., 2023). The population refers to the target group of the researcher. In this study, the population involved is special education integration program (PPKI) teachers in secondary schools in the state of Malacca, totaling 336 people. The sample involved is PPKI teachers selected using cluster random sampling. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for a population (N) of 340 people, the appropriate sample (n) is 180 people. The purpose of selecting this sample is to obtain feedback on the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers. A population distribution of 340 people was chosen, which is close to the actual population of 336 people.

Table 1

*Number of Schools and Respondents Involved*

No.	District	Number of schools	Number of respondents (people)
1	Melaka Tengah	7	62
2	Jasin	6	53
3	Alor Gajah	7	65
<b>Total</b>		20	180

The questionnaire instrument is used as the main approach to collect primary data from respondents. The use of the questionnaire instrument in this study is justified because of its effectiveness in measuring responses regarding views and assessments of emotional intelligence aspects (Ede 2018). In addition, this instrument has a standardized nature, which is very helpful in ensuring that each respondent receives the same set of questionnaires to answer (Hamed 2022). Therefore, in this study, there are two sets of questionnaires that have been adapted from the studies of Supardi et al. (2016) and Feng et al. (2023) and Norazmi (2021). Referring to this study, there are two forms of questionnaire that need to be filled out by respondents, namely the emotional intelligence questionnaire for teachers containing 25 questions and the job satisfaction questionnaire containing 25 questions. A five-point Likert scale is used in both sets of study instruments. This is because the five-point Likert scale helps the study to obtain better views from respondents, helps the accuracy of the data, is easier

to analyze statistically, and can avoid bias when respondents answer the questionnaire (Manisha 2021).

The analysis of the validity of the instrument and content states that all three experts agree (100%) that all items used in the emotional intelligence and job satisfaction instruments are suitable for use. This means that the minimum requirement for items to receive at least 80% agreement has been met (Hamzah & Idris 2021). A preliminary construct validity study has been conducted on respondents who have characteristics almost similar to the actual respondents. Based on the Google form distribution, it was found that a total of 15 out of 30 respondents had provided feedback. The preliminary study feedback has met the population criteria, which is at least five to 50 respondents or ten percent of the actual number of respondents (Aithal et al. 2020). The preliminary study results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value check for the emotional intelligence instrument was very high at 0.949. Meanwhile, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the job satisfaction instrument also successfully showed a high value of 0.973. Aithal et al. (2020) state that a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 has good internal error. The consistency shown by both instruments indicates that these instruments have stability and internal consistency in measuring a particular topic (Hamzah & Idris 2021).

Data analysis is a systematic process of searching and organizing the data obtained to make it easier to understand and communicate to others (Farida Fitriani & Dedy 2019). The data obtained in this study is analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 28 program. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis are used in this study. The descriptive approach is used to clarify or describe the facts that occur on the variables studied, namely to describe the level of emotional intelligence and the level of job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Pearson correlation analysis is used to determine the relationship between the independent variable (emotional intelligence) and the dependent variable (satisfaction) based on the teacher's perception.

## **Study findings**

### **Demographic Analysis of Respondents**

Table 1 shows the number and percentage for the demographic gender, academic qualifications, age, and length of service. The total number of respondents is 180, with males representing 29 percent of the respondents and females representing 71 percent. For the academic qualifications of the respondents, the highest percentage is for a Bachelor's degree at 86 percent, followed by a Master's degree at 13 percent, and a Diploma at 1 percent. The percentage distribution based on age groups shows that respondents aged 41-51 years have the highest percentage at 39 percent. Following this, ages 30-40 years represent 31 percent, ages below 29 years represent 16 percent, and finally, ages 52 years and above represent only 14 percent.

In addition, the length of service of the respondents shows the highest percentage for 11-21 years at 31 percent. Meanwhile, the length of service of less than 5 years shows a percentage of 23 percent. Following this is 6-10 years at 20 percent. The lowest percentage is for a length of service of more than 22 years at only 4 percent. Based on the demographic data, on average, PPKI teachers have a minimum qualification of a Diploma. In addition, the data shows that experienced teachers are more numerous compared to novice teachers. This explains that the longer teachers serve, the higher the level of emotional intelligence of teachers in managing the classroom. This indirectly will have an impact on the teaching performance in the classroom (Nurul Mufidah et al. 2021). In addition, the variation in

experience shown is also very necessary in an organization to become a mind opener for teachers to better recognize their strengths and weaknesses (Mavadat 2020). Variation in experience is very necessary because it can help the emotional intelligence of teachers to always be at a good level (Nor Hazizah Julaihi & Aniza Hamdan 2020).

Table 2  
*Distribution of Respondent Demographics*

Category	Detail	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	52	29
	Female	128	71
Academic qualifications	Diploma	1	2
	Bachelor's degree	155	86
	Master's degree	23	13
Age	Below 29 years	29	16
	30-40 years	56	31
	41-51 years	70	39
	Above 52 years	25	14
Length of service	Less than 5 years	41	23
	6-10 years	36	20
	11-15 years	56	31
	16-20 years	38	21
	More than 22 years	7	4

Table 3  
*Overall Mean Scores n=180*

Aspect	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	4.15	.330
Job Satisfaction	4.18	.389

Table 3 shows the descriptive analysis to determine the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of teachers. The analysis also found that the mean score for the level of emotional intelligence of teachers is 4.15 (41.5%) while the standard deviation is .330 for all items. Overall, the level of emotional intelligence of teachers is high. The mean score for the level of job satisfaction of teachers is 4.18 (41.8%) while the standard deviation is .389 for all items. Overall, the level of job satisfaction of teachers is high.

Based on the mean scores above, it was found that most respondents agree and have a high level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. This is because respondents chose scales 4 and 5, which indicate agreement and strong agreement with the items evaluated.

Descriptive analysis shows that teachers involved in the Special Education Integration Program in secondary schools in Malacca have the highest mean score according to the emotional intelligence construct, which is "I know the impact of my attitude on others," that is, b4 (M=4.386). Meanwhile, the lowest mean score is b13 (M=3.929), which is "I often make exciting decisions even though I have personal problems." As for the job satisfaction construct, the highest mean score is c21 (M=4.543), which is "I can get along well with my students," and the lowest is "Superiors treat all teachers fairly," c2 (M= 3.657).

The normality test shows that the skewness and kurtosis values for both variables are within the range of -1.95 to +1.95, indicating that the data distribution is considered normal. The reliability of the instrument in the actual study is a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.943.

### Correlation Analysis of the Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction of Special Education Teachers

Table 4:

*Correlation Analysis of The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction of Ppki Teachers*

Aspect	Job Satisfaction of PPKI Teachers
Emotional Intelligence of Special Education Teachers	.730***.

Based on Table 4, there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers ( $r = .730, p < 01$ ).

This correlation is analyzed using the mean score for all items of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. The correlation value obtained shows a value of 0.73. This value is positive, indicating that the higher the level of emotional intelligence, the higher the level of job satisfaction of Special Education Integration teachers.

### Discussion

The study findings show that the emotional intelligence of PPKI teachers is at a high level, with a mean score ( $M = 4.15, p > .01$ ). The researchers believe that the high level of emotional intelligence among PPKI teachers indicates that they are capable of managing emotions well while carrying out their duties of educating MBPK. In connection with this, PPKI teachers are also aware of the tasks and responsibilities that need to be carried out to ensure the smooth running of the program. According to Supardi et al. (2020) in a study on the level of emotional intelligence of technical and vocational teacher trainers in Vocational Secondary Schools (SMK), through the results of the questionnaire conducted on the level of emotional intelligence of teachers, it was found that with high emotional intelligence, teachers will be able to control emotions, show more empathetic attitudes, and can learn to adapt to problems faced and can provide good emotional education to students. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by the researchers. Therefore, it can be concluded that to be a quality teacher, a high level of emotional intelligence is required to face all the challenges and pressures in the transformation of the national education system. This is because when teachers have a high level of emotional intelligence, it can help them manage their teaching tasks more efficiently towards optimal work productivity.



The study findings show that the job satisfaction of PPKI teachers is at a high level, with a mean score ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $p > .01$ ). The researchers believe that the high level of job satisfaction among PPKI teachers indicates that they feel happy when carrying out their duties at school. These PPKI teachers do not feel stressed even when facing MBPK with various disabilities; in fact, it gives them satisfaction. According to Hilda and Salleh (2022) in a study on Work Stress and Job Satisfaction among Primary School Teachers, through the results of the questionnaire conducted on the level of teacher job satisfaction, it was found that the level of teacher satisfaction is also high in the dimensions of colleagues and the principal. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by the researchers. Therefore, it is proven that a harmonious work environment can provide job satisfaction to teachers every day.

The study findings show a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers, with a correlation value ( $r = .730$ ,  $p > .01$ ). This value is positive, indicating that the higher the level of emotional intelligence, the higher the level of job satisfaction of Special Education Integration teachers. The researchers believe that the higher the level of emotional intelligence of teachers, the more they can increase job satisfaction. In a study on the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among Rural Primary School Teachers by Cellistina and Mohd Izwan (2022), through the results of the questionnaire conducted, it was found that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and teacher job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by the researchers. It is proven that the higher the level of emotional intelligence of teachers, the higher the job satisfaction obtained because the intelligence possessed can have a positive impact on the work carried out with joy.

### **Conclusion**

This study provides some information about the influence of emotional intelligence on the job satisfaction of PPKI secondary school teachers in Malacca. Based on the study findings, the emotional intelligence of PPKI teachers has a significant relationship with teacher job satisfaction, meaning that the higher the emotional intelligence, the higher the job satisfaction of PPKI teachers. Further suggestions and studies are proposed for actions by the relevant parties to increase the level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers. Studies related to emotional intelligence and its relationship to the job satisfaction of PPKI teachers are important to ensure the well-being, quality, and self-esteem of special education teachers. With this study, it can produce quality PPKI teachers who can impact the job satisfaction of special education teachers. In addition, appropriate courses on emotional management and stress should be provided to increase the level of emotional intelligence to control emotions in facing bureaucratic red tape and the burden of tasks in achieving maximum job satisfaction when carrying out responsibilities as PPKI teachers.

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