

## **Physiological Elements In Job Satisfaction Of Special Education Teachers In Malaysia**

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**Abstract:** Previous studies have found that physiology is an important foundation in meeting a person's satisfaction. This explains that, if the basics of physiology such as eating, drinking, living, appreciation and relationships can be met well, then one's level of satisfaction is already beginning to be achieved. Similarly in the world of education, its citizens need a sense of satisfaction in working in order to motivate themselves to do better. Teachers are able to work contentedly once humanitarian values are taken into account as valued, treated fairly, no additional burdens and given space to determine the action to be taken. Physiological needs need to be given attention by the school leadership so that teachers can achieve their job satisfaction. This study conducted will further detail the physiological elements in helping teachers, especially in special education to achieve their job satisfaction. This qualitative study involved 11 respondents consisting of coordinators of special education integration programs in each district in the state of Johor, Malaysia. Interviews were conducted and thematic analysis was conducted to obtain data interpretation. The findings of this study are expected to provide a clear picture of the physiological elements in job satisfaction of special education teachers.

**Keywords:** physiology, job satisfaction, special education

### **INTRODUCTION**

The findings of previous studies indicate that there are six elements for the construct of teacher job satisfaction, namely the elements of physiology, safety, relationships, facilities, welfare and finance. The basic element found in determining job satisfaction of teachers in general and special education teachers in particular is the physiological element. The researchers argue that physiological needs such as salary or wages, income, rest and appreciation are the main pillars to teacher job satisfaction (Aminah et al., 2021; Azlisham et al., 2021; Saadiah et al., 2021; Firkhan et al., 2021; Ishak et al., 2021; Ashari et al., 2021). This finding is in line with the theory put forward by Abraham Maslow (1954) who discussed the need to meet each level of need before reaching the peak of satisfaction. Among the most basic stages are physiological needs

The findings of this study are also in line with Norazmi et al. (2019), Fauziyana et al. (2020), Norazmi (2020), Zaid et al. (2020) and Zaid et al. (2021) who agreed that the physiological element is a fundamental element in determining job satisfaction for teachers. They also set that physiology as one of the basic elements for meeting the job satisfaction needs of special education teachers. This element is also agreed as a key element in determining the job satisfaction of special education teachers and should be given attention by the school administration in ensuring job satisfaction of teachers. Therefore, it can be stated here that the physiological element becomes one of the pillars to the construct of teacher job satisfaction.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The elements of each construct were explored by conducting interviews. This qualitative approach was carried out by interviewing 11 coordinators for the PPKI program throughout the state of Johor. A total of 11 respondents involved are a coordinator for each district in the state of Johor. Each element is explored for each construct in this study. The results of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis methods. Each element obtained through the thematic analysis was included as a dimension in the construction of the questionnaire set.

### **FINDINGS**

Through the coding process, physiological elements result from the respondent's statement, i.e. additional payment, and certain incentives (open coding), which form the pay or wage code (axial coding), praise, do not underestimate effort and mention success (open coding) form a code of appreciation (axial coding), as well as free to perform tasks and free to focus on PPKI (open coding) which forms the freedom code (axial coding). The three statements on the axial coding, are summarized as physiological elements in the selective coding process as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Thematic Analysis Process For Physiological Elements

| <i>Open Coding</i>              | <i>Axial Coding</i> | <i>Selective Coding</i> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Additional payment              | Salary or Wages     | Physiological           |
| Certain incentives              |                     |                         |
| Compliments                     | Appreciation        |                         |
| Do not underestimate the effort |                     |                         |
| Mention success                 |                     |                         |
| Free to carry out tasks         | Freedom             |                         |
| Focus on PPKI                   |                     |                         |

Details of the thematic analysis of the physiological elements are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Physiological Elements Agreed by Respondents

| <b>Element</b> | <b>Respondent</b> | <b>Interview Excerpts</b>   |
|----------------|-------------------|---|
| Physiological  | RT1               | Actually, I didn't face that. What matters to him is little. Praise to, tokens to, food shopping to. Hehe. Not like that. I mean give him a little appreciation. Tired of people's work, change people, stay our work.  |
|                | RT2               | For a very good program, praise the little appreciation that I can't get, I don't want to be very jealous, but I want to be a little satisfied with the effort, even for a small certificate, it's ok.  |
|                | RT3               | He is open to the way we (teachers) to succeed in the task/work given   |
|                | RT4               | Back home, continue. The children who took the streets also got angry. Looking for a break room. When there is a lot of work, rest is difficult. It's worth it ... like I said earlier. If the special involvement is still ok.   |
|                | RT5               | Since I've been here, nothing has been possible between us. We do the work, people do the work. Same. Just part of their work, we do. That is not enough to be appreciated. Sorry to talk. My teachers and I came to school because we wanted to meet these special children. |
|                | RT6               | Then, when we make programs at PPKI, no one despises, even though there is no praise.   |
|                | RT9               | Even the headmaster can stand it. Want to do anything, find my teachers. Typical teachers. Ask for that help, this. There are also those who change classes for UPSR. If there is an allowance for that, it's ok. This is an unconditional replacement. That pity.            |
|                | RT10              | Also a factor of appreciation for every work for us.  |
|                | RT11              | In giving success to the school, PPKI teachers should at least be mentioned by name in certain events at the school so that we feel appreciated. The headmaster came to congratulate, thank you, it was enough for us to feel worth the work for us.                          |

**DISCUSSION**

The details of the analysis results also show that this element was agreed upon by 10 out of 11 respondents for this study. They stated that salary or wages, appreciation and even freedom to perform duties must be met in order to achieve job satisfaction. The majority of respondents agreed by explaining that it is important for PPKI teachers to be given appreciation for the efforts they have made for the school in general and to PPKI in particular. According to RT1 respondents, the required appreciation is not in the form of money or gifts, enough with a few words of praise.

Similarly for RT2 and RT6 respondents, the appreciation that can be given is like a certificate issued by the school itself. Moreover, they also argue that, if no appreciation is given in the form of praise, it is sufficient if their efforts are not underestimated. While for RT5, RT9 and RT10, the easiest appreciation to be given is by mentioning the names of the teachers who carry out their duties at the school assembly. For RT3 respondents, appreciation can also be given by giving freedom to PPKI teachers to manage PPKI well. Next, RT4 respondents stressed the need to have adequate rest. Rest is a requirement for a person's body to regenerate the

energy that has been used up. Getting enough rest can help PPKI teachers to carry out tasks productively and meet the requirements to achieve job satisfaction. While RT7 and RT11 respondents agreed that, emoluments and wage payments are also physiological requirements that need to be met.

## CONCLUSION

The physiological element is agreed upon by most researchers as an important element in determining the job satisfaction of special education teachers. They noted that this basic element is needed in examining the level of teacher job satisfaction and its relationship with head teacher leadership. The findings of this study are also in line with domestic and foreign studies, which agree that the physiological element is a fundamental element in determining teacher job satisfaction. In addition to previous studies, Maslow's Theory in detail explains the importance of meeting teachers' physiological needs such as salary and appreciation in determining their job satisfaction. The theory also makes physiology the basis of the theory in building a hierarchy of one's job satisfaction. It is important for head teachers who manage PPKI to pay attention to the physiological needs of teachers in determining teacher job satisfaction.

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