

Special Education Teachers Task Load In Malaysia: A Review

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Abstract: The workload of special education teachers occurs when teachers take on a variety of tasks, whether related to special education or not in a given time. Special education teachers at PPKI have to perform tasks that are not related to MBK in the time they are supposed to teach MBK. Many researchers state that the workload of special education teachers is the tasks borne affecting their primary role in teaching MBK. The researchers also explained that the workload of special education teachers made teachers feel dissatisfied in their teaching of MBK. This study was conducted to review previous articles that discuss the issue of workload of special education teachers. The findings of this study are expected to be able to provide a clear picture to future researchers related to the issue of teacher workload.

Keywords: special education, task load, special education management

INTRODUCTION

The issue that arises in PPKI is the high workload of special education teachers. Norazmi et al. (2019) stated that these teachers undertake various tasks in a given period of time. They are not only involved on a regular basis to teach in the integration special education program (PPKI), but also dumped with external assignments that do not involve MBK. This also indicates the need to have a deeper understanding of the difficulties faced by PPKI teachers in educating MBK to obtain 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)

In general, this teacher workload needs to be addressed as much as possible as it will have an impact on teacher job satisfaction and subsequently on the occurrence of MBK (Norazmi et al., 2019; Fauziyana et al., 2020; Norazmi, 2020; Zaid et al., 2020; ; Zaid et al., 2021). Norazmi (2020) explained that the high workload faced by PPKI teachers is the result of external assignments by the school. Zaid et al. (2020) in their study stated that tasks not related to special education or MBK cause tasks performed at one time to be multiple. Most worrying is that this high workload also creates pressure among teachers in PPKI (2021; Een et al., 2021; Yusaini et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ishak and Rusman (2018) in their study found that workload is a factor to the work performance of teachers in schools. The study they conducted in several primary schools in Sabah involving 68 teachers proved that there is a perception among teachers there that three main factors influence their work performance in school, namely, workload, work environment and personal. The study analyzed the relationship between teachers' work performance with the three variables mentioned earlier. Study data were collected by questionnaire and analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The findings of the study showed that all three factors were moderately evaluated by the respondents, as follows, (workload: $M = 3.1454$, $SD = .35822$, work environment: $M = 2.9592$, $SD = .32403$, personal: $M = 3.0441$, $SD = .24648$). If examined, this study proves that the workload of PPKI teachers can be reduced if the work environment and working conditions are improved.

A study by Erica and Raymond (2009) examined the reasons why special education teachers in the Heartland School District stopped being special education teachers and switched to mainstream education or continued to quit. In obtaining perceptions from special education teachers and former teachers, semi-structured interviews were conducted involving 40 teachers. The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using text analysis software, content analysis, and pattern matching. The results of the analysis then found four important factors that contributed to special education teachers retiring, namely administrators paying less attention to their needs, high workload, national education-related policies and various student handling time constraints. This shows that the high workload will make PPKI teachers stressed because they can not complete many tasks at one time, coupled with the attitude of administrators who provide less support and assistance.

Razali and Ali's (2016) study related to the factors that cause stress of special education teachers found that teachers' workload is one of the important factors. A total of 74 respondents consisting of Special

Education program teachers in secondary schools in the district of Johor Bahru were involved as respondents of the study. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS software and the findings from the results of the study as a whole show that the stress among special education school teachers is at a moderate level (3.01). Among all factors, the workload factor obtained the highest mean score (2.68), followed by the appreciation factor (2.54), the student frustration factor (2.52), while the factor that obtained the lowest mean score was resources and relationships among colleagues (1.94). This study also explains that the high workload of PPKI teachers, can affect the focus of teaching.

A study by Nelson et al. (2014) showed that special education teachers experience burnout due to workload, student conditions and also support from administrators. The synthesis was done by the researchers based on studies from 1979 to 2013. The findings of the study became the basis of support to the education management in addressing the problem of burnout among special education teachers. This study proves that a conducive work environment through the support provided by the administrators to PPKI teachers can avoid the occurrence of stress.

Anderson (2017) studied the effect of high workload on teacher retention in special education. This study involving special education teachers in the state of Minnesota explains that the retention of special education teachers is very important because the percentage of special education teachers who change streams or stop increases each year. The main factor to the situation is the very high workload related to clerical, national policies and even special education external assignments. Moreover, the study also found inconsistent administrative support, adding to this burden and retention of special education teachers increasingly difficult to maintain. According to him, the results of the study prove that the workload borne by special education teachers prevents them from providing quality lesson plans. Through this study, it is clear that appropriate working conditions and meeting the requirements provided by head teachers can reduce the workload of PPKI teachers (Norazmi et al., 2020).

DISCUSSION

There is evidence related to this issue through several other studies, among them the study of Razali and Ali (2016), have found that the workload factor is closely related to the level of stress of special education teachers. They noted that this workload factor is also the highest factor that has caused stress among special education teachers. The study of Rahim et al. (2006) found that 48.17% of respondents agreed that special education teachers are burdened with various tasks in school which will ultimately affect the quality of the teaching process and the job satisfaction of the teachers involved. Next is a study by Abdul Ghani et al. (2013) who stated that special education teachers not only need to carry out the teaching process in the classroom, but also be involved in administrative work, discipline management, substitute teachers and many other workloads. Nelson, Melissa and Kathleen (2014) stated that special education teachers are given inappropriate tasks to them such as administrative tasks as well as non-primary tasks such as replacing absent staff. At the same time, they also have to adhere to their main tasks and so on. Meanwhile, Mohamad and Yaacob (2013) stated that there are also situations where PPKI teachers are not given enough time to complete a task entrusted to them. The time interval between one task and one task, whether involving MBK or not, does not correspond to the intensity of work that needs to be settled (Erica & Raymond, 2009). This condition actually has a negative impact in terms of health and work focus (Anderson, 2017). If health levels decline and concentration is impaired, then job quality as well as job satisfaction will also be disrupted (Nelson et al., 2014).

Anderson (2017) found that special education teachers do not have enough rest in performing assigned tasks. Some of them had to bring home assignments to be completed because during school hours they focused on teaching MBK. There are a handful of schools that have PPKI that do not provide other side work schedules in the calendar because often surprise assignments will be given to teachers. This situation often involves PPKI teachers because in the opinion of school administrators, they do not face pressure when teaching MBK (Erica & Raymond, 2009).

The study of Dhanalakshmi and Jeryda (2014) found that the assignments given to PPKI teachers had nothing to do with their qualifications or positions. Some had to prepare reports of school meetings and external programs which were not directly related to special education. The findings of Bernard's (2014) study showed that some headmasters give unnecessary tasks to special education teachers such as preparing school program books, planning school-related community programs and so on with the excuse of evaluating the teachers.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, it can be concluded that, to address the issue of high workload of PPKI teachers, headmasters need to practice leadership that is appropriate to the environment in which they lead. Headmasters also need to have the attitude to understand the scope of duties of PPKI teachers in more depth as well as equip themselves with adequate knowledge related to special education, MBK and the scope of duties of teachers. If the workload of PPKI teachers can be handled well, then they can achieve satisfaction in performing their duties. The findings

of the study also found that there is a significant positive influence between the construct of teacher workload and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers. This indicates that there is a direct and positive influence between teachers 'workload on teachers' job satisfaction. This proves that the workload borne by PPKI teachers has an impact on their job satisfaction. The findings of this study are in line with the study by Muhammad Hisham et al. (2017), who stated that a high workload will affect teachers 'opportunities to work better. Muyan and Ramli (2017) also agree that the authority of leadership in schools by headmasters in assigning appropriate tasks, can make PPKI teachers perform tasks happily and satisfactorily.

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