

## **Demographic Factors Associated With Early Retirement Intention among School Leaders in Secondary Schools**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to identify the level of early retirement intention and demographic factors associated with early retirement intention among school leaders of secondary schools in Kelantan. 347 teachers consisting of senior assistants, senior teachers, heads of units and heads of six (6) core subjects from secondary schools in the state of Kelantan, Malaysia had participated in this research. Data was collected and analysed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 21. They were interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics. The finding of the research revealed the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders in Kelantan was at the high level ( $M=4.18, SD=.41$ ). The discovery also divulged no significant difference in early retirement intention based on gender, age and experience as a teacher among these leaders. Several suggestions had been submitted in order to reduce the early retirement among the school leaders so as to increase motivation to be committed to the task of promoting the continuity of the nation's education transformation until their compulsory retirement age.

**Keywords:** early retirement intention, school leaders, demographic factors, compulsory retirement.

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### **Introduction**

Education continued to be a national agenda for Malaysian nation-building. To achieve this aspiration, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) continued to be committed to improving the best educational provision in Malaysia at the international level (Ministry of Education, KPM Report, 2015). Based on the 5<sup>th</sup> initiative of the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025, the ministry had expressed an emphasis on the placement of high quality leaders in schools. Owing to this action, the highly competent school leaders were expected to be capable of delivering their best services in order to advance schools as well as to continue the aspiration of education in the country.

Early retirement among school leaders is concerning as an important issue in educational system which affecting to educational development plan (Mafukata&Mudau, 2016). As a national agenda for Malaysian nation-building, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) also faced the shortage of skilled and competence leaders because of early retirement trend which become an option among school leaders. Most of the western countries stated the age for compulsory retirement was at 65. While according to According to the Public Service Department (JPA), compulsory retirement age for a civil servant in Malaysia is 60 years (Public Service Department, 2012).

According to Chabaya, Tshephe and Molotsi (2014) efforts to keep employees with the skills, experience and expertise that are very significant human resources to continue organizational success and excellence are very challenging today. Although many of the school leaders originally chose the teaching profession on the basis of interest and wanted to contribute to the community (Van Scheers&Wiid, 2011) but in recent years many have expressed dissatisfaction with working and acting out of the profession earlier than ever (Appiah-Agyekum, Suapin&Pepurah, 2013). The question now was how far could these school leaders give their service to enhance students performance and the school excellence?

As a consequence, this study was to identify the level of early retirement intention and demographic factors associated with early retirement intention among school leaders in secondary schools.

### **Research Objective**

Generally, the objective of this research was to identify the level of early retirement intention amongst secondary school leaders in Kelantan. In addition, this research intended to look into the difference

in the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders based on the demographic factors namely gender, age and service experience as a teacher.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders in the secondary schools in Kelantan?
2. Is there a significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on gender among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan?
3. Is there a significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on age among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on service experience among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan?

### **Research Hypotheses**

**Based on the research questions, three hypotheses had been formed:**

- H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on gender among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan.
- H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on age among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan.
- H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention based on service experience among the secondary school leaders in Kelantan.

### **Literature Review**

Early retirement was a condition of employment and leaving any position or career during the service period before age 65 (Beehr, 1986; Feldman 1994; Bonsdoff; 2009). In addition Bonsdoff (2009) states that retirement refers to the separation from the field of employment whether optionally or forcefully, early or timely, complete service cycle or semi-complete. Bonsdoff (2009) also stated that early retirement was a situation of workers out of employment or service before age 65. While the age for early retirement for several countries varies between 55, 57 and 58 (OECD, 2003). However, early retirement in Malaysia can be defined as a condition of leaving the employment before age 60 (Malaysian Public Service Department, 2012).

While Desmette and Gaillard (2008) stated the older employees were comprised of a group of workers aged 50 years and over, competent, capable, committed to work, a good teamwork and could be a guide to younger workers. In addition, the Conservation of Resource theory (COR) also explains the need to safeguard and conserve key organizational resources, long-serving and experienced, credible and competent employees (Hobfoll, 2011). Hence they are valuable assets for the organization and these findings are in line with government policies that want these experienced people to remain in the organization for longer periods (Desmette& Gaillard, 2008; Hobfoll, 2011).

As in past empirical studies in Taiwan about working in the elderly have found that female workers, low education qualifications, low levels of skills, poor health, and having family members who are sick and need attention are among the factors of an employee intended to retire early (Lu, 2010; Su, 2007). As a sequence, most employees want to retire early when they have high household income that can be used during retirement (Davies et al., 2017; De Wind et al., 2015). Beside that, spouse who has retired also influenced the intention to retire early for their belonging life and happiness spending time together with their families.

### **Research Methodology**

This was a quantitative research involving 347 school leaders comprising of senior assistants, senior teachers, heads of units and heads of six (6) core subjects from secondary schools in the state of Kelantan. The early retirement intention instrument was adapted from Desmette& Gaillard (2008). In this research, the data were analysed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Research Findings**

**What is the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders of secondary schools in the state of Kelantan?**

Table 1.1  
 Mean Score and Standard Deviation for the level of early retirement intention among school leaders (N=347)

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Early Retirement Intention	4.189	.407	high

Based on Table 1.1, the level of early retirement intention among school leaders in secondary schools in Kelantan was high (M=4.19, SD=.407).

**Is there a difference in the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders based on gender?**

**Hypotesis H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on gender.**

Table 1.4  
 T-test result for the level of early retirement intention among the school leaders based on gender

	Gender	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	F
Early Retirement Intention	Male	147	4.20	.415	0.43	0.59
	Female	200	4.18	.402		

Based on table 1.4, the t-test statistic was  $t(345) = .43, p > .05$ . This statistic showed that there was no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among male school leaders (M=4.20, SD=.42) in comparison to female school leaders (M=4.18, SD=.40). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted because there was no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention between male and female school leaders.

**Is there a significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on age?**

**Hypotesis H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on age.**

Table 1.5  
 One Way ANOVA test result for the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on age

Variation source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.400	2	.200	1.209	.300
Within groups	56.958	344	.166		
Total	57.358	346			

\*significant at the 0.05 level

Table 1.5 was the ANOVA test of one-to-one level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on age. Based on table 1.5, one-way ANOVA statistical test was  $F(2, 344) = 1.209, p > .05$ . This finding showed that there was no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on age. Thus, the null hypothesis was failed to be rejected.

Table 1.6  
 One Way ANOVA test result for the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on service experience.

Variation Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	.141	1	.141	.849	.357
Within groups	57.218	345	.166		
Total	57.358	346			

\*significant at the 0.05 level

Table 1.6 was the result of a one-way ANOVA test of the early retirement intention among school leaders based on service experience. Based on table 1.6, one-way ANOVA test statistic was  $F(1,345) = .849$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding showed that there was no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on service experience. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted.

### Discussion

This study proved that school leaders in secondary schools in Kelantan state had a high level of early retirement intention. The findings also showed most of school leaders in secondary schools in Kelantan have high intention for early retirement. The finding showed that 337 respondents (97.1%) decided for early retirement while only 10 respondents didn't sure whether to retire early or continue their service until age at 60. For that reason, many committed and high competent school leaders will be reduced because most of them have a high intention for early retirement.

The findings showed that there was no significant difference in the level of early retirement intention among school leaders based on gender, age and service experience. This finding showed that both male and female of school leaders have the high and same intention to retire early. This finding was supported with Joo and Grable (2001) which concluded there was no significant difference based on gender on retirement intention. In addition, those who were aged at 55 above with more than 20 years working experience already have a good and established career, high household income and high job satisfaction and life were also intended to retire early (Davies et al., 2017; De Wind et al., 2015).

However, the finding was not in line with some empirical studies in Taiwan about working in the elderly have found that female workers, low education qualifications, low levels of skills, poor health, and having family members who are sick and need attention are among the factors of an employee wanting to retire early (Davies et al., 2017; Lu, 2010; Su, 2007;). Furthermore, the factors that cause early retirement are related to demographic variables such as gender, race and marital status, health status, number of years of service, attitude toward work and individual attitudes towards retirement (Feldman, 1994; Loretto & Vickerstaff 2013).

This finding also was not supported with Lusardi & Mitchell (2008) which concluded there was gender difference in early retirement planning studies. Men is found to be more ready and well prepared for retirement planning compared to women in general (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2008). Based on the result obtained was contradicted with most of previous researches which concluded that demographic factors based on gender (Feldman, 1994; Talaga & Beehr, 1995) and age (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2014; Beehr, 1986; Davies et al., 2017).

As a sequence, this finding concluded that most of school leaders in secondary school in Kelantan have the same and high intention for early retirement without concerning demographic factors such as age, gender and experience in teaching.

### Conclusion

In this regard, this study can be used as a guide to reduce the level of early retirement intention among school leaders. As MOE's goal of producing committed and viable school leaders, a shortage of competence and committed school leaders because of early retirement should be taken into account and reviewed. In an effort to reduce the level of early retirement among school leaders, the MOE should focus more on areas that have an effective impact on teacher professionalism, teacher well-being and encourage high-performance and committed school leaders to continue contributing towards the success and excellence of the school until their mandatory retirement at age 60.

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