



# Mentoring Mediation For Culture, Career Adjustment, And The Well-Being Of New Teachers At Primary School In The Interior Of Sabah

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## Abstract

The study examines career adjustment, culture, and the role of mediators to help new teachers attain well-being when placed in schools in the interior of Sabah. This quantitative approach used in this study is based on a survey design. The study population consisted of rural primary school teachers throughout the state of Sabah. Using a random sampling method, a total of 242 rural teachers were selected as a sample in this study. The study instrument included modified questionnaires from the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), Wiemann Communicative Competence Scale, Mentoring Function Scale (MFS), Mentoring and Personal Learning: Content, Antecedents, and Outcomes (MPL), and Job-Related Affective Well Being. Since the direct effect was not significant, the results of the bootstrapping test confirmed full mediation. This study's findings highlight the need for new teachers to receive guidance through a methodological programme to help them adjust to their jobs and the culture of rural schools. Therefore, relevant parties should capitalise on this discovery to establish a mentoring programme to assist teachers in overcoming the challenges of rural living and achieving well-being.

## 1.0 Introduction

According to career psychology, the world of education as a customer service-oriented profession, also known as helping professions, is classified as a socially oriented career to ensure the creation of society. Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires teachers who have a strong heart to face the various challenges of the world of education. The teaching profession is faced with various issues, such as the quality of teachers, the well-being and welfare of teachers, the shortage of teachers, and the issue of workload. The PPPM 2013–2025 report (2015) revealed that more than 60% of teachers today will teach for the next 20 years, a long service period full of challenges. According to the PPPM 2013–2025 report, four transformations have occurred, with teaching positions being the preferred occupation.

During their tenure, teachers need to adapt to their current environment, according to their circumstances. Adaptation factors have an indirect psychological effect and increase self-confidence, especially for new teachers. Self-adjustment is important in career adjustment, particularly for new individuals in the job, and often triggers conflict in careers (Sanawiah Abdul Salam and Ku Suhaila Ku Johari, 2018). The placement policy of female teachers in suburban and urban areas is influenced by factors such as security, culture, socialisation, teacher trauma, and others, contributing to an unbalanced distribution of placement between the genders in rural and urban areas (Esmaili, 2018) and having a major impact on the teachers' attitudes toward adapting to the work environment. Finally, rural schools always suffer from a lack of teachers, especially experienced ones, while students do not receive quality education compared to those in city schools (Mohd Yusoff and Sufean, 2013; Mulkeen and Crowe-Taft, 2010).

To help new teachers, adapt to the career and culture of the school and community environment, starting in 2015, the Ministry of Education made it mandatory for new teachers to follow a mentoring programme, the New Teachers Development Programme (PPGB) 2015. The implementation of this programme is school-based (a work-based programme). New teachers will be guided in a structured manner by mentors appointed among more senior teachers based on the syllabus for three years according to three phases of development, namely the orientation phase, the mentoring phase, and the professional development phase. The objective is to help new teachers adapt to the work environment, organisation, school culture, and local community, polish their talent or potential, and develop their professional competence. This guidance programme is implemented for three years and is expected to help new teachers adapt to the local cultural environment and understand the teacher's duties to achieve the perfection of personal happiness: to survive, to be loved and to belong (love and belong), to be happy (have fun), to have power, and to have freedom (William Glasser, 2014).

The well-being and happiness of teachers play an important role in the satisfaction and achievement of their students. Therefore, the issues that contribute to the well-being of teachers need to be dealt with immediately and resolved to avoid teachers experiencing stress and depression when they are placed far away in the interior. According to A. Poormahmood, F. Moayedi, and K. Haji Alizadeh (2017), failure to address teachers' well-being affects their level of happiness, which is a benchmark for stress and pleasure as well as an indicator of success at work. This also affects students' and schools' performances. As highlighted by Rothstein (2010) states that the quality of the education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. Therefore, the issue



of the welfare and well-being of teachers needs to be given special attention and must be handled carefully to protect the welfare and well-being of teachers who are placed in rural areas.

## 2.0 Research Problems

According to the data of teachers who applied to transfer, which was quoted from the website of the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) up to the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, the total number of teachers who applied to transfer was 15,420. Of that number, 8,931 are primary school teachers, and the remaining 6,489 are secondary school teachers. According to a 2012 report by the Education Policy Research and Planning Division (BPDDP), 70% of primary school teachers and 16% of secondary school teachers applied to move after serving less than 10 years at their current school due to poor school conditions and a lack of opportunities (*disadvantages*). As a result, teachers do not enjoy working with the environment, are unable to adapt themselves, and end up not being happy on duty in a school in a rural corner. In order to overcome the problem, several strategies are being implemented by the ministry, among which, according to Abang Ismail (2013), the Ministry of Education and Culture needs to provide a special recruitment route for indigenous students from Sabah and Sarawak to fill teaching positions in the rural and interior areas of Sabah and Sarawak. Even though this policy was implemented, this effort came to a halt when indigenous teachers were unwilling to return to serve in their original location. This was evidenced by Esmali bin Bari (2017), who discovered that the attitude of a few teachers was that they did not want to be placed in their original location and that it was more concerning that teachers were willing to fabricate excuses so that they would not be relocated back to the interior (rural areas).

The lack of infrastructural facilities in rural schools is a major challenge faced by teachers, especially new teachers. Working in an underprivileged and disadvantaged rural school requires new teachers to be emotionally, mentally, and physically prepared when placed in rural schools. Teachers are required to be more professional and positive in performing their given responsibilities (Mansir F., 2018), especially in disadvantageous situations. The situation has an impact on the teacher's emotional or physical well-being, which in turn has an impact on the teacher's adaptation to the new environment and understanding of the rural community's culture (Tan Yoong Yee and Zainudin, 2019).

The social environment is a determinant of the teacher's adaptation to the environment. The high level of egoism amongst new teachers often tends to trigger crises and social conflicts (Hafzan Omar and Zolkepli Haron, 2018), whereas failure to understand culture affects self-adjustment (Tan Yoong Yee and Zainudin, 2019). Failing to understand the culture makes it difficult for teachers to adapt, causing them to become unhappy with the environment, become bored, frequently show dissatisfaction, experience fatigue, demonstrate incompetent performance of tasks (Yusni Zaini, Rosna, and Tengku Faekah, 2015), experience stress (Norhazirah Mustaffa, 2020), and lose interest in service (Zuhaili Mohd Arshad and Ramlee, 2017). The lack of sensitivity to cultural differences, customs, ethnic descent, and local community beliefs is among the causes of teachers being involved in racial incidents with colleagues (Yasmin Ahma and Najeemah, 2016). Failure to deal with cultural challenges is the main reason teachers apply to move or quit, and this situation has a negative impact on the organisation and the students.

According to Tan Yoong Yee and Zainudin (2019), new teachers face emotional problems and difficulty adapting to new conditions. In addition, new teachers also experience difficulties applying the theory learned during teacher training. This situation requires teachers to be guided and need support to face unexpected situations in the teaching profession (Tengku Sarina Aini Tengku Kasim and Fatimah Sahida Abdurajak, 2018). According to Samantha L. Dias-Lacy and Ruth V. Guirguis (2017), first-year teachers require support and attention from more senior teachers in terms of teaching aspects, emotions, and lesson planning guidance to reduce stress and achieve satisfaction as educators. Without support programmes, new teachers will feel isolated and will be unable to adapt or survive in the service (Samantha L. Dias-Lacy and Ruth V. Guirguis, 2017), whereas with adequate support programmes, the risk of quitting after 5 years of service can be reduced (Subhan Bar-Tal et al., 2020).

To address the issue of teachers' well-being, a more collective framework needs to be put in place to help new rural teachers achieve a prosperous life in a deprived environment compared to teachers in urban or suburban areas who have complete basic facilities. Therefore, according to Clapham (2015), the well-being of teachers remains static due to the lack of research on the matter. Brouskeli et al. (2018) recommended that more research is needed to see the factors that contribute to and improve the well-being of teachers. This argument is supported by previous teachers' well-being researchers, such as Ceng and Guo (2012), who emphasise that aspects of teachers' well-being need to be explored and given due attention to ensure the provision of quality education to all levels of society. The well-being of teachers must be taken seriously so that workplace conduciveness can be improved (Yusni Zaini Yusof, Rosna Awang Hashim, and Tengku Faekah Tengku Ariffin, 2015).



Bricheno et al. (2009) highlight the need for an empirical study of the well-being of new teachers because it is still not the focus of most research. In Russia, Zasytkin, Zborowski, and Shuklina (2015) proposed a teacher welfare policy to improve the working and living conditions of teachers, especially new teachers in the interior. Therefore, there is a need and a research gap to examine the issue of rural teachers' well-being in the context of mentoring's function in assisting new teachers deployed in rural areas to adjust to their culture.

### 3.0 Objectives

1. To determine the extent to which mentoring programmes, career adjustment, and culture influence the well-being of new teachers in rural Sabah schools.
2. To test the direct effect of the mentoring programme as a mediator of the relationship between self-adjustment and culture on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

### 4.0 Hypotheses

- H1: Career adjustment has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah, despite a mentoring programme.
- H2: Culture has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah, despite a mentoring programme.
- H3: A mentoring programme has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.
- H4: The mentoring programme mediates the relationship between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

### 5.0 Study Theories

The Pryce-Jones Model (2010) places well-being as the means for increasing individual potential and true quality of life, making it a comprehensive model for well-being at work. Additionally, the well-being of the mind controls an individual's attitude when working in the organisation as well as the wisdom to act using limited resources. Individuals should be wise and more creative to solve existing problems as best as possible to overcome the challenges of the environment while working, have a strong sense of identity (be resilient), recover from negative experiences, and quickly adapt to their environment.

The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS) theory of career adaptation assumes that adaptation is a process of integrating different constructs in a career, which gives rise to vocational behaviour from different perspectives. Career adaptation describes the willingness of individuals to engage in a conscious and continuous exploration of themselves and their environment to successfully deal with various important adaptations in their career (Savickas, 2013). The core adaptation of the construct, career suitability, needs to transform into career maturity as a critical construct in the developmental perspective of career adaptation. The individual's ability to adapt is based on his or her ability to plan, explore, and make decisions that will shape the conceptual dimension of individual career development and maturity.

Berry's Acculturation Theory (TAB) explains four acculturation strategies, namely assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Acculturation occurs when two or more different cultures collide in a person's life, both socially and physically. Cultural differences emerge because of people interacting with people from other cultures. The TAB Theory of thought acculturation is based on a dual process of cultural and psychological change that occurs because of interaction between two or more cultural groups and individuals. Cultural stress (acculturative stress) refers to the process of individual adjustment in adapting to a new foreign group with a different way of life. This includes aspects of language, lifestyle, settlement patterns, food, religious practices, clothing, and customs.

Albert Bandura's (1986) behavioural theory emphasises social learning, direct learning, and observation to acquire behavioural patterns and strengthen expectations about task success. Social learning occurs when individuals learn new behaviours through a process that involves observations, interactions, and modelling, using external reinforcement explanations and internal cognitive explanations to understand how individuals learn from others. Albert Bandura's social learning theory (1986) assumes that humans will behave and understand others through the process of observing and emphasising the norms and values in society.

### 6.0 Past Studies

Early in their tenure, new teachers must make important decisions about the future of their career (Okas et al., 2014; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2015; SalÓte, 2015). Organisations play a role in helping the acculturation process of new teachers and improving new teachers' well-being when entering new organisations and communities (e.g., Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam, and Vedder, 2006; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder, 2001). This is proven by Oztürk, M., and Yıldırım, A. (2013), who found that novice teachers need guidance to adapt, but unfortunately, unfriendly, and unhelpful colleagues make it difficult for new teachers to face the challenges of teaching at the beginning of their service. On the contrary, according to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), it is



important to create an atmosphere of well-being among new teachers by actively involving them in work, helping them to be more energetic and produce positive feelings.

The mentoring programme is a support agenda for new teachers in their teaching career and helps develop their identity as teachers (Förbom, 2003). According to Kürüm-Yapıcıoğlu et al. (2016), a mentoring programme conceptualises guidance in the initial induction of individuals in the service and serves as a consistent and continuous professional training to train and support new teachers in the profession. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) and Hobson et al. (2009) agree that a mentoring programme needs to be a special induction programme to assist, guide, and support new teachers in adapting at the beginning of their service. This view is also supported by Kent, Green, and Feldman (2012), who assert that mentoring is essential to help new teachers experience resonant success that drives retention.

Schools play an important role in helping new teachers in their early years of service (McCann and Johannessen, 2004). According to Hobson and Maxwell (2017), the satisfaction of personal needs such as competence, relationship, and autonomy is not the only condition for guaranteeing the well-being of teachers early in their careers, but relationship factors and interactions with the environment greatly affect teacher well-being. Therefore, an important mentoring programme helps mentees adapt to the organisational climate by offering support (Dziczkowski, 2013), developing, honing, and improving the skills of new teachers (Hudson, 2010), and overcoming the challenges of adapting to the first year of teaching (Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey M. Kralik, 2004). This argument is supported by Shoshani and Eldor (2016), who highlight the importance of environmental climate learning that includes aspects of research, dialogue, collaboration, and vision with old teachers in guiding new teachers to achieve behaviour-positive learning and help form subjective well-being. Guidance is very important to help new teachers adapt to their new environment; without a sense of confidence and enthusiasm, teachers tend to leave the field (Mathur et al., 2013).

According to Hanson, S., and Moir, E. (2008), the mentoring programme is important because it deepens teachers' understanding of teaching and learning, situational adaptation, and the formation of norms and habits. Furthermore, new teachers can acquire professional practices (Feiman-Nemser, 2001), emotional support (Hellsten et al., 2009), improve their work quality (Odell and Ferraro, 1992; Callahan, 2016), and learn new things (Little et al., 2010). Structured professional learning processes support new teacher skills by providing systematic professional development intervention in the first year of service (LoCasale-Crouch, J., Davis, E., Wiens, P., and Pianta, R., 2012). Moreover, new teachers can be acclimated to school cultural norms, especially when they are posted in rural areas or disadvantaged cities (Jiang, 2011). A mentoring programme also further accelerates the process of self-adjustment to teachers' new environments (Sambrook, 2001).

According to Kobeleva and Strongman (2010), a mentoring programme is extremely effective as a structured socialisation for the personal learning process, making individuals eager to adapt, learn a new culture, and reduce the desire to quit work or move schools (Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey M. Kralik, 2004; Guarino, Santibañez, and Daley, 2006; Benjamin Kutsyuruba et al., 2019). It can also expand workforce resources (Jokinen and Välijärvi, 2006) and help facilitate teachers' adaptation to organisational culture and the teaching profession (Kocoglu, 2008; Rajashi Ghosh and Reio, 2013; Vumilia, Philbert L., Semali, and Ladislaus M., 2016; Gozukara, 2017). A mentoring programme has a positive effect on interpersonal development and career development (Kram, 1985; Anderson and Shannon, 1988).

Faye McCallum et al. (2017) believe that the teacher mentoring programme at the beginning of the career is a proactive initiative that supports the induction programme of new teachers to achieve well-being while transitioning from trainee teachers to real teachers. For example, Norway has mandated a formal mentoring and induction programme as an adaptive guidance programme for first-year new teachers, whereas in Australia, Johnson et al. (2010) identified the need for support and guidance programmes for the adaptation of new teachers to the domains of school culture, teacher identity, work, and teacher system policies and practices in supporting teacher resilience at the beginning of their careers. This support is in the form of guidance to help new teachers (Lambert, McCarthy, O'Donnell, and Wang, 2009) adapt to and understand organisational culture.

In California's Santa Cruz Novice Teacher Project (SCNTP), two-thirds of the new teachers who followed the mentoring programme and received mentor support stayed longer than the new teachers who did not follow the mentoring programme (Strong and St. John, 2001). According to Strong and St. John (2001), mentoring programmes can increase the level of satisfaction with the teaching profession and retain teachers to continue serving. A good collaboration between mentor and mentee teachers keeps new teachers in the same school (LoCasale-Crouch, J., Davis, E., Wiens, P., and Pianta, R., 2012). The retention of teachers in the same school proves that the mentoring programme is successful in helping new teachers adapt and understand the teacher's work culture, preventing teachers from being stressed by their workload as educators.

The findings of Strong and St. John (2001) proved to be true and have been supported by most researchers, including Nor Ain et al. (2015), Mahiswaran et al. (2013), and Rajashi Ghosh and Reio (2013), who found that mentoring programmes create good and prosperous relationships in the workplace, while Brock and Grady (1997) found that induction or mentoring programmes help new teachers adapt to the new teacher's





organisational culture. Hanson (2008) argues that the mentoring programme opens new teachers' minds about themselves and the teaching profession, helping to develop critical reflective practices in individuals (Harrison, Lawson, and Wortley, 2005). Darling-Hammond (2006), Wang, Odell, and Schwille (2008), and Benjamin Kutsyuruba et al. (2019) all agree that mentoring programmes are suitable for individual professional development.

In England, Andrew J. Hobson and Patricia Ashby (2012) found that, without guidance, the phenomenon of "reality shock" affects the well-being of teachers in the second year of their service during their transition process from the first year to the second year. Due to this situation, Tally (2008) suggests that the mentoring programme be continued until new teachers can adapt to the career of the teaching profession and achieve prosperity in the context of the school where they work. Marsha Playko (1991) add that continuous guidance is important in socialisation for social learning to continue and be fully successful; this view corresponds to the objective of the implementation of the mentoring programme in Tanzania, working to promote socialisation between new teachers and more senior staff in addition to providing instructional assistance to new teachers (Nzilano, 2013).

Kardos, S. M., and Johnson, S. M. (2008), in a qualitative study of the implementation of a mentoring or guidance programme throughout the American midwestern states for 147 new teachers and 89 mentors, found that the experience of following a mentoring programme had a positive effect on the development of new teachers from the aspects of positive interaction, collaboration, better teaching, self-improvement, having a clear direction, and being able to feel the life of the community. First-year new teachers on the job were able to overcome work challenges (Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey M. Kralik, 2004), adapt to and understand the culture of the organisation or the environment, and achieve a prosperous life in the service, subsequently retaining the number of new teachers in the service (Pogrud and Cowan, 2013). A mentoring programme is responsible for the development and well-being of new teachers (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011).

Irish Phaletta McCollum (2014) found and proved that the lack of guidance or mentoring programmes is a factor in many new teachers' leaving the teaching profession early, since inadequate support makes it difficult for teachers to grow in the profession. This is supported by Arends and Kilcher (2010), who state that new teachers are often left to teach in the classroom with little or no support or left to bear with their own failures (Fry and Anderson, 2011; Ingersoll, 2012) when implementing teaching. Such situations cause new teachers to feel alienated (Clark and Brynes, 2012), which can contribute to the occurrence of personal conflicts and cause teachers to find it difficult to adapt to their careers because not understanding the work culture makes them unhappy.

According to Chesley and Jordan (2012), new teachers in their first three years really need support from mentors, administrators, and schools to face the challenges of adaptation. This argument has been further strengthened by the views of Satu Uusiautti, Sanna Harjula, and Tiina Pennanen (2014), who agree that new teachers need support, social skills, and good collaboration to work well with their colleagues. Policymakers should emphasise the need for mentoring as the main strategy to deal with the problems of new rural teachers who experience feelings of isolation and frustration with their working environment (Kardos and Johnson, 2008) when assigned to rural areas. Therefore, Ingersoll and Strong (2011), Hobson et al. (2009), and Howe (2006) emphasise the need for a mentoring programme as a special induction process for new teachers to help, guide, and support each other to adapt during and after the induction phase.

In the development of careers, psychosocial fields, and organisations (Ghosh and Jr., 2013), mentoring programmes guide individuals in dealing with psychosocial problems (Ljungberg et al., 2011), improve personality and professional career development, develop positive psychosocial skills with excellent identity as educators, and improve individual or team tasks in the organisation (Arnold, 1997; Kleinman et al., 2001; Kram, 1983). According to Hobson et al. (2009), mentoring is important for schools because, through guidance, staff members get to know each other, which can increase collaboration and comfort, foster a culture of professional development, and provide more advanced support for new teachers to participate in schools. All these have an ultimate positive effect on new teachers (Hellsten et al., 2013; Mathur et al., 2013; O'Connor et al., 2011).

In order to ensure a successful mentoring programme, mentors need to be proactive in helping mentees adapt to the organisational climate by offering support (Dzickowski, 2013), developing, honing, and improving the skills of new teachers (Hudson, 2010), coaching new teachers toward understanding teacher roles, convincing new teachers to persevere (Mullen, 2010), and preparing new teachers to face challenges in the classroom (Boyd et al., 2009).

## 6.0 Study Methodology

This study employs a quantitative survey method (cross-sectional survey designs) and appropriate questionnaires to collect data on the phenomenon of mentoring as a mediator of cultural adaptation and well-being among new teachers in the interior. This study was conducted in the state of Sabah, involving new teachers who have served between 1 and 3 years in 368 primary schools in the interior of Sabah. The study's total sample size is 310 respondents, who were chosen at random. This study used a questionnaire to collect



research data, adapting instruments used in local context studies that have been translated into Malay by local researchers.

The Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), developed by Savickas and Porfeli (2012), was one of four instruments used in this study. According to Savickas and Porfeli (2012), the Cronbach's alpha reliability value should be approximately 0.92. Hui, Yen, and Chen (2017), in their study of the use of CAAS in Malaysia, found that the Cronbach's alpha values of reliability, according to the construct's subscales, were 0.79 (anxiety), 0.74 (self-control), 0.71 (individual curiosity), and 0.85 (self-confidence). The second instrument used in this study was the Communicative Competency Scale (CCS) instrument, established by Wiemann (1977). Wiemann's (1977) study reported a CSS coefficient alpha value of 0.96. In their studies, Cupach and Spitzberg (1983), Hazleton and Cupach (1986), and Query, Parry, and Flint (1992) each reported an alpha value of 0.90, 0.91, and 0.86, respectively.

The Mentoring Function Scale (MFS) was developed by Raymond A. (1988). According to Armstrong et al. (2002), the internal consistency reliability for the career function value obtained was 0.85, and the internal consistency estimate for the psychosocial function scale was 0.87. Chao (1997) found the reliability for psychosocial and career-related scales measured with alpha coefficients to be 0.85 and 0.79, respectively. The questionnaire for Mentoring and Personal Learning: Content, Antecedents, and Outcomes (MPL) was developed by Langkau and A. Scandura (2002). It had a reliability value of 0.82 for workplace in situ self-learning and 0.84 for personal skill development. Abdul Ghani bin Abu Hassan (2019), who adapted the Mentoring Function Scale (MFS) and the Mentoring and Personal Learning: Content, Antecedents, and Outcomes (MPL), found the Cronbach's alpha reliability values of 0.92 (self-learning) and 0.92 (personal skills development), with the mean Cronbach's alpha value being 0.943, indicating the instrument's high reliability value. This shows that the Mentoring Function Scale instrument has good reliability when used.

The Job-related Affective Well-Being Scale (JAWS) by Van Katwyk et al. (2000) measures individual well-being at work. The scale was developed by Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, and Kelloway (2000) and has an overall Coefficient Alpha rate of 0.95 (0.92 for positive items and 0.94 for negative items).

## 7.0 Findings of the Study

Hypothesis H1: Career adjustment has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah, despite a mentoring programme.

The first hypothesis states that, despite a mentoring programme, career adjustment has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. According to Table 7.1, career adjustment had a direct impact on the well-being of new teachers in Sabah's interior ( $\beta = 0.063$ ,  $p$  value  $< 0.05$ ). This means that when the self-adjustment value increases by 1 unit, the teachers' well-being value will increase by 0.063. Therefore, research hypothesis H1 is not significant.

**Table 7.1 Direct Effect of Career Adjustment on Well-Being**

Variable	Variable	Regression (Beta)	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Results
Well-being	← Career Adjustment	0.063	0.098	0.637	0.524	Not Significant

Note: *Significance level:*  $p^{**} < 0.05$ ,  $p^{***} < 0.001$

Hypothesis H2: Culture has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah, despite a mentoring programme.

The second hypothesis states that, despite a mentoring programme, culture has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. According to Table 7.2, culture had no direct effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah ( $\beta = 0.196$ ,  $p$  value  $> 0.05$ ). This means that when the value of culture increases by 1 unit, the value of teacher well-being increases by 0.196. Therefore, the research hypothesis H2 is not significant.

**Table 7.2 Direct Effect of Culture on Well-Being**

Variables	Variables	Regression (Beta)	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Results
Well-being	← Culture	0.196	0.108	1.822	0.068	Not Significant

Note: *Significance level:*  $p^{**} < 0.05$ ,  $p^{***} < 0.001$



Hypothesis H3: A mentoring programme has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

The third hypothesis states that a mentoring programme has no direct and significant effect on the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. According to Table 7.3, a mentoring programme had a direct impact on the well-being of new teachers in Sabah's interior ( $\beta = 0.700$ ,  $p$  value  $< 0.05$ ). This means that when the value of the mentoring programme increases by 1 unit; the value of teacher well-being increases by 0.700. Therefore, the research hypothesis H3 is significant.

**Table 7.3 Direct Impact of a Mentoring Programme on Well-Being**

Variable	Variable	Regression (Beta)	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Results
Well-being	← Mentoring programme	0.700	0.157	4.458	***	Significant

Note: *Significance level*:  $p^{**} < 0.05$ ,  $p^{***} < 0.001$

Hypothesis H4: A mentoring programme mediates the relationship between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

The fourth hypothesis states that the mentoring programme mediates the relationship between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. Table 7.4 below shows the conventional procedure to analyse the intermediate effect of the mentoring programme, which is the link between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. Table 7.4 demonstrates that the mentoring programme is a full mediator in the relationship between culture and well-being of new teachers in Sabah's interior because the regression coefficient  $\beta_1$  (culture and well-being) is significant and two other hypotheses that test the regression coefficient  $\beta_3$  (culture and mentoring programme) are significant, while the regression coefficient  $\beta_2$  (mentoring programme and well-being) is significant, as suggested by Zainudin (2015), Zainudin et al. (2018), and Kenny and Little (2011). Therefore, the mentoring programme fully mediates the relationship between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

**Table 7.4 Procedures for Testing the Mediating Effects (Hypothesis H4)**

Construct	Construct	Regression (Beta)	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Results
Well-being	<--- Culture	0.196	0.069	5.625	0.068	Not Significant
Well-being	<--- Mentoring Programme	0.700	0.157	4.458	***	Significant
Mentoring Programme	<--- Culture	0.386	0.069	5.625	***	Significant
Conclusion 1	1. Hypothesis testing for regression coefficients $\beta_3$ (Culture and Mentoring Programme) and $\beta_2$ (Mentoring Programme and Well-being) is significant. 2. Hypothesis testing for regression coefficient $\beta_1$ is not significant. Therefore, the mentoring programme is a full mediation.					

#### Mediator Testing: Validating Test Results Through Bootstrapping

To confirm the results of the mediator test explained in Table 7.4 above, the bootstrapping method was used to confirm the results of the mediator, which is a mentoring programme on the culture and well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah. This study used Preacher and Hayes' (2008) indirect effect bootstrapping method to determine the existence of mediators, as previously discussed. The bootstrapping test results in Table 7.5 show that the indirect effect 95% Boot Confidence Interval (LB = 0.097, UB = 0.302) does not include zero, i.e., both the upper limit (UP) and the lower limit (LB) are in the positive region. Parallel to the conventional method above, the type of mediation that exists is full mediation because the result for the direct effect is not significant at a value of  $p = 0.450$ . Therefore, hypothesis H4 is accepted because the mentoring programme fully mediates the relationship between culture and the well-being of new teachers in the interior of Sabah.

**Table 7.5: Validating the Mediator Using Bootstrapping (Hypothesis H4)**

Mediator	Cultural	→	Mentoring Programme	→	Well-Being	Significance of Well-	Results
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	Lower Limit (LB)	Upper Limit (UP)	Being (Two-Ended)	
Direct Effect on Well-being	-0.112	0.252	0.450	Not Significant
Indirect Effect on Well-being	0.097	0.302	0.003	Significant
Type of Mediation	Full Mediator Mediation (Full mediation) occurs because the direct effect is not significant.			

## 8.0 Discussion

Förbom (2003) discussed teacher identity development. Yapıcıoğlu et al. (2016), Hobson et al. (2009), and LoCasale-Crouch, J., Davis, E., Wiens, P., and Pianta, R. (2012) perceive teaching as a continuous professional practice. Supporting new teachers' development in the profession provides a positive impression on interpersonal development and work development (Kram, 1985). Hanson (2008) argues that mentoring programmes open new teachers' minds about themselves and their teaching profession. This helps to develop critical reflective practice in individuals (Harrison, Lawson, and Wortley, 2005). Darling-Hammond (2006), Wang, Odell, and Schulle (2008), and Benjamin Kutsyuruba et al. (2019) agree that mentoring programmes are in accordance with individual professional development.

According to Feiman-Nemser (2001), since a typical induction programme facilitates, guides, and supports new teachers in adjusting to the beginning of the service, accelerating the said process makes it easier for teachers to adjust to the organisational culture and the teaching profession (Kocoglu, 2008; Rajashi Ghosh and Reio, 2013; Vumilia, Philbert L.; Semali, and Ladislaus M., 2016; Gozukara, 2017). Adapting to and understanding the culture of the organisation or the environment allow new teachers to achieve a prosperous life in subsequent years of service, and this will most likely retain them in service (Feiman-Nemser, 2012; Pogrud and Cowan, 2013).

In a study by Irish Phaletta McCollum (2014), it was proven that the absence of guidance or mentoring programmes is a factor in many new teachers' leaving the teaching profession early because the lack of support makes it difficult for teachers to progress their careers. This is supported by Arends and Kilcher (2010), who state that new teachers are often allowed to teach in undergraduate classes with little or no support and are left to bear their own failures (Fry and Anderson, 2011; Ingersoll, 2012) when teaching. This situation causes new teachers to feel alienated (Clark and Byrnes, 2012), while personal conflicts cause them to experience difficulties in adjusting to their work or understanding the culture.

According to Chesley and Jordan (2012), new teachers in their first three years of teaching require a lot of assistance from mentors, administrators, and schools to get through the transitional period. Satu Uusiautti, Sanna Harjula, and Tiina Pennanen (2014) support this viewpoint, stating that new instructors require assistance, social skills, and effective collaboration to work successfully with their co-workers. For these reasons, Tally (2008) proposes that the mentoring programme be maintained so that new teachers can acclimate to the demands of the teaching profession and achieve success in the context of the school where they work.

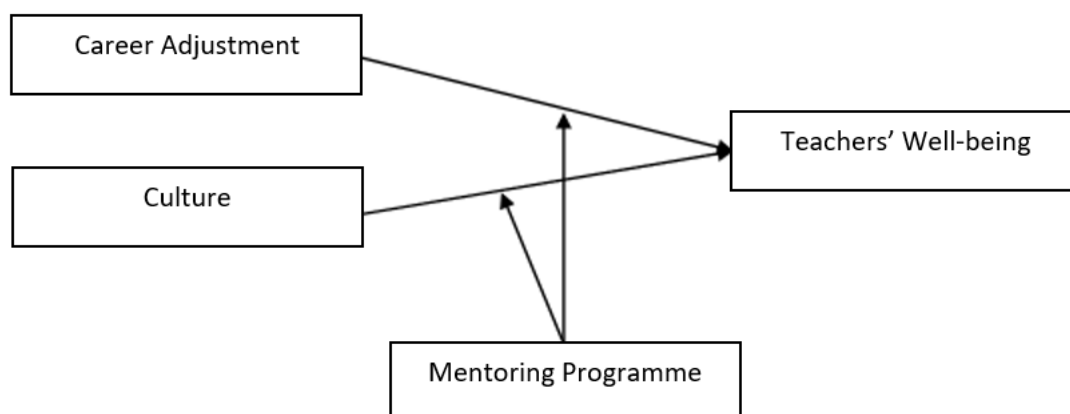
Mentoring programmes, according to Kobeleva and Strongman (2010), are important as a structured personal learning process of socialisation, making individuals eager to adapt, willing to learn new cultures, acculturating new teachers with school cultural norms, and working as teachers in disadvantaged areas outside the city (Jiang, 2011; Liaoli, 2011). Johnson et al. (2010) noted the need for support and guidance programmes to encourage new teachers' transition to the domains of school culture, teacher identity, the workplace, and the foundation of the teaching system and practices to support teachers' resilience at the start of their careers. This support takes the form of guidance to assist new teachers in adjusting to and understanding organisational culture (Lambert, McCarthy, O'Donnell, and Wang, 2009).

Teachers' well-being is critical in minimising the desire to quit or change schools (Hudson, 2010). Mentoring programmes, according to Strong and St. John (2001), can boost teachers' satisfaction and encourage them to stay in the institution. Faye McCallum et al. (2017) assert that the teacher mentoring programme at the start of a career is a proactive initiative that supports new teachers' induction to attain well-being while transitioning from trainees to real teachers. Mentoring programmes also foster positive and healthy workplace relationships (Gozukara, 2017; Nor Ain et al., 2015; Mahiswaran et al., 2013; Rajashi Ghosh and Reio, 2013). Furthermore, Brock and Grady (1997) discovered that induction or mentoring programmes would help new teachers adjust to organisational culture.





The findings of this study indicate the following model for rural teachers' well-being:



**Figure 8.1 Proposed structural model of teachers' well-being at work**

## 9.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

It is believed that this study would aid those responsible for the placement of new teachers and enable them to take suitable steps to promote the well-being of rural teachers, especially new teachers. The proposed model of well-being can assist the parties engaged in managing the placement and then build a support programme for new teachers and a programme to improve the well-being of rural teachers. A longitudinal study is proposed for future researchers who wish to examine the well-being of rural teachers over time. In addition, it is essential that teachers prepare themselves to be assigned to specific inland geographic regions, as geography-related issues provide distinct obstacles. Island teachers are distinct from those in forested, hilly inland regions.

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