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Evaluation of New Teacher Adjustment Factors in International Schools in Thailand to Improve Teacher Retention

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Evaluation of New Teacher Adjustment Factors in International Schools in Thailand to
Improve Teacher Retention

by
Rekha Sachdej

An Applied Dissertation Submitted to the
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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Approval Page

This applied dissertation was submitted by Rekha Sachdej under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

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Statement of Original Work

I declare the following:

I have read the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility as described in the *Student Handbook* of Nova Southeastern University. This applied dissertation represents my original work, except where I have acknowledged the ideas, words, or material of other authors.

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Name

November 23, 2018

Date

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Abstract

Evaluation of New Teacher Adjustment Factors in International Schools in Thailand to Improve Teacher Retention. Rekha Sachdej, 2018: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education. Keywords: teacher retention, teacher adjustment, PE-Fit, international schools, new teacher adjustment, teacher turnover, new teacher support

This applied dissertation was aimed to provide updated information in regards to new teacher's adjustment factors in a small international school setting in Thailand. With the rapid increase in international schools in Thailand, the demand for quality education and instructions has also increased due to competition between schools. Retaining good teachers is one important aspect in providing quality education, in particular new teachers. Studies have shown new teachers are at high risk of leaving the school or even leaving the teaching career within their first five years of teaching (Haynes, 2014; Phillips, 2015). However, little research exists in regards to new teacher retention in international schools. This study attempted to explore new teacher retention in an international school in Thailand, and what work and cultural adjustment factors led to the probability of staying.

The participants of the study were new teachers who were new to the mid-tier international school setting in Bangkok. Two instruments were used in order to measure their work and cultural adjustment – the Perceived Person Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS) and the Cultural Quotient Scale (CQS). A follow up group interview was conducted after data was collected from the two instruments, in order to obtain in-depth information in regards to new teachers' experiences that could lead to successful work and cultural adjustment.

The study determined specific categories in both cultural and work adjustment domains for new teachers in the international school setting in Thailand. The categories in the work adjustment domain included Curriculum and Instruction, Guidance and Support of Educational Practice, and Perceived Organizational Support. The categories in the cultural adjustment domain included Initial Set Up, Daily life, and Characteristics of the Host City. Within these categories, common experiences were identified. These experiences were then labeled as positive or negative experiences in the context of adjustment. The combination of negative and positive experiences in each of these categories can be determinants of successful work and cultural adjustment leading job satisfaction and retention for new teachers in an international school setting.

Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Background and Justification.....	4
Deficiencies in the Evidence.....	11
Audience.....	13
Definition of Terms.....	13
Purpose of the Study.....	14
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Theoretical Framework.....	18
Historical Context of Work Adjustment.....	20
Historical Context of Cultural Adjustment in the Workplace.....	22
Importance of the Problem.....	24
Gaps in the Literature.....	28
Summary.....	30
Research Questions.....	31
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	32
Introduction.....	32
Participants.....	32
Instruments.....	31
Procedures.....	36
Limitations.....	38
Chapter 4: Results.....	40
Overview.....	40
Results.....	46
Chapter 5: Discussion.....	55
Summary.....	55
Discussion.....	55
Limitations.....	63
Recommendations for Future Research.....	64
Conclusion.....	65
References.....	67
Appendices	
A New Teacher Adjustment Survey.....	88
B New Teacher Adjustment Interview Questions.....	104
Tables	
1 SPSS Analysis of PPEFS and CQS Reliability.....	43

2	CQS, PPEFS, and Intent to Return Correlation Matrix via SPSS Analysis ...	44
3	Categories of Work Adjustment Determined From Interviews.....	45
4	Categories of Cultural Adjustment Determined From Interviews.....	46

Figures

1	Percentage of Participants by Department	41
2	Percentage of Participants by Gender	41
3	Percentage of Participants by Age	42
4	Percentage of Participants' Teaching Experience by Years	42
5	Percentage of Participants' Intent to Return.....	43

Chapter 1: Introduction

International schools have been growing in numbers over the past 10 years (Hayden & Thompson, 2011; ISC, 2015). It has been estimated that there are roughly 4.2 million children attending international schools worldwide, up from 2.5 million five years ago (EducationInvestor, 2015). The number is expected to reach 8.26 million by 2025 (EducationInvestor, 2015), as such schools that are identified as international schools “can no longer be considered as peripheral dimensions of educational provision worldwide; they are of central interest” (Bunnell, 2016, p.408).

Recent growth has been focused in Asia, with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and China leading in the number of international schools. There are 428 schools in the UAE, and 417 international schools currently operational in China (ICEF, 2014). The steady growth in popularity for international school education in Asia are due to the rising demands of local families wanting their children to receive quality English medium education in order to ensure entrance into top universities overseas. This is a difference from 20 years ago, where most international school students were from expatriate families (Clark, 2014; ICEF, 2014, ISC, 2015). It has been estimated that by 2020, the number of teachers teaching in international schools worldwide will have doubled from 2009 (Hayden & Thompson, 2011). In Thailand alone there are currently over 180 schools, as compared to just five international schools in 1994 (About ISAT, 2014; Machin, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The topic. Teaching has been referred to as a “revolving door” profession (Miller, 2010; Philips, 2015) where teachers start their teaching assignments, only to leave very

soon after – often within the first five years of their career (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010; Riggs, 2013;). This phenomenon, also known as teacher turnover, is a major concern for administrators of schools as it impacts schools negatively (Miller, 2010; Olson-Stewart, 2015; Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2016). Teacher turnover refers to the movement of teachers away from their current school to either another school, or leaving the profession completely (Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Miller, 2010). Keeping turnover rates low and increasing retention rates are important to schools to ensure students’ success and quality of the school (Hong, 2010; Miller, 2010; Roberts, Mancuso, & Yoshida 2010; Wan, & Fu, 2012; Miller, Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Olson-Stewart, 2015).

The research problem. In the U.S., roughly 40 – 50 percent of teachers will leave the classroom within their first five years of being in the profession (Haynes, 2014; Phillips, 2015). There are several negative effects of high new teacher turnover rates. New teachers often lacked the essential knowledge and skills needed to implement a school’s curriculum effectively. This suggested that with high turnover rates, “schools are continuously starting over rather than making progress in the programmatic agendas” (Ronfeldt et al., 2013, p.8). High turnover rates also had a negative financial effect on schools (Hughes, 2012; Phillips, 2015; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). In 2014, it was estimated that the cost to the U.S. government due to the high teacher turnover rate was 2.2 billion dollars, and roughly 22,000 dollars to replace each teacher who left the school (Miller, 2010; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). The high turnover rates have further been known to decrease student achievement as well as staff morale (Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Olson-Stewart, 2015). Countries other than the U.S.

reported similar issues in teacher retention. “Although teaching would appear to be an occupation considered central to a country’s development and wellbeing - Australia, the U.S., Germany, and Norway among other countries including the U.K, and several European countries report difficulties recruiting and retaining teachers” (Watt et al., 2012, p.791).

Turnover does not necessarily need to be viewed as having just negative effects. Some experts believe that some turnover is good, and may even be necessary for an organization in order to bring in fresh ideas and faces, and to replace low performing teachers with more effective individuals (Hughes, 2012; Adnot, Katz, & Wyckoff, 2017). However, the concern is that turnover in the teaching profession is about four percent higher than in other professions. In the U.S. about 15.7 percent of teachers leave their posts yearly, and 40 percent of those that pursued a teaching degree in their undergraduate programs do not even enter a classroom upon graduation (Philips, 2015).

Research suggested that new teacher turnover rates in international schools worldwide were as high as in the percentages in the U.S. for an array of reasons (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts, 2010; Desroches, 2013). “Teacher turnover rates tend to be high in international schools for a variety of reasons, including cultural differences, desire to travel, salary, benefits, and perceived effectiveness of school leadership” (Gray & Summers, 2016, p.4). It was unclear whether new teachers moved to different schools upon leaving their current school, or left the profession permanently or temporarily, as data on the movement and career paths of international school teachers were not abundant (Manusco, Roberts, & White, 2010; Hayden & Thompson, 2011).

Research showed that challenges faced by new teachers in any school context were similar. Such challenges included struggling with classroom management, lack of curricular freedom, or facing an unsupportive leadership environment (Wiebke & Bardin, 2009; Gray & Summers, 2016; Goodwin, 2012; Olson-Stewart, 2015). Teaching at an international school setting only added to the already existing challenges faced by new teachers (Sims, 2011, Halicioglu, 2015). New teachers at international schools not only needed to adjust to a new school environment and administration, but also adjust “to the cultural mix of students to be taught, the curriculum offered, the country in which the school is located, and the local language and culture” (Hayden & Thompson, 2008, p.59). The few studies on international schoolteacher turnover, suggested that many new teachers were not prepared for, or lacked the skills to handle such challenges (Hong, 2010; Olson-Stewart, 2015). Therefore, there was a higher percentage of new teachers leaving the international school posting within the first few years (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Manusco et al.,2010;). The problem examined in this study was the turnover of such new teachers at international schools specific to Thailand, and what adjustment factors influenced their decision to stay or leave.

Background and Justification

In the past, international schools worldwide catered predominantly to expatriates, or diplomat families residing in the host country. In recent years however, the international school student population has expanded to include host country nationals, or individuals holding nationality of the country in which the school is located (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Clark, 2014; ICEF, 2014; Kerdchuen, 2015). Many host country nationals wanted their children to receive international school education, and be able to

not only communicate effectively in English, but also attend quality colleges and universities overseas (Machin, 2017).

In the case of Thailand, prior to 1992, Thai nationals were not permitted to attend international schools. With increased globalization and the government's recognition of the importance of the role of international schools in aiding the country's internationalism movement, the Thai government dropped these restrictions against Thai students (Techavijit, 2007). Furthermore in 2013, Education Minister Phongthep Thepkanjana asserted that the business sector step in and be actively engaged in educational services such as of international schools (Saengpassa, 2013; Machin, 2017).

Over the past two decades or so, the world of international schools has been transformed from a niche market serving mainly expatriate families to a highly lucrative business attracting aspirational local families. At some schools, local children can make up to 80% enrollment, though others cap the proportions of nationalities in order to encourage greater diversity (Kerdchuen, 2015, p.10).

As a result, there was a surge of international schools that opened its doors in Thailand since 1992, and the study site is an example of such a school. The site was set up in 1999 in Bangkok, as a for-profit institution. It has since expanded to include three campuses located in the Bangkok metropolitan area. The school offers an American-style curriculum, from nursery–grade 12, and has established itself as a college preparatory school. Students graduate with either a high school diploma, International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, or receive honors through the Advanced Placement Capstone program (AP Capstone).

Of the 750 students attending the school in 2017, fifty nationalities were represented, with the majority of the population being Thai (38.45%), the second largest population being Indian (19.61%), and the Japanese and Korean population being the third largest at roughly 10%. Most of the students were of Asian descent, and many were first in their families to have attended an international school. Whether or not the students apply to colleges outside of Thailand, every student is offered the testing options, college application and counseling services necessary to attending accredited English medium universities abroad.

The counseling profession is still relatively new profession in Thailand (Sangganjanavanich, 2015), making international schools an ideal choice for to the local families that wish to send their child to study overseas. Thai schools typically do not provide such services, and neither do they provide the necessary programs and assessments (IB, AP, Scholastic Aptitude Tests, American College Testing) as most of the graduating students in such schools aim to attend local universities - which requires high school diploma, report cards, and scores from the national university entrance examination administered by the Ministry of University Affairs (MOE, 2015). Students graduating from this study site have attended universities all over the globe including the US, Australia, the U.K., Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, as well as within Thailand.

With the increase in the number of international schools in Thailand, the need for teachers also increased. Hiring teachers for an international school is a complicated and time consuming process as administrators must not only consider the qualifications and job performance of the applicant, but must take into account their cultural intelligence

and adjustability to a new country and its culture (Manusco et al., 2010; Zhao, 2010; Kellett, 2015). As such, the recruitment process at international schools often involves a team, to assist in addressing the various characteristics that would make an individual a good fit for the school (Hayden & Thompson, 2013).

With the ever-increasing population and popularity of international schools in Thailand, most of which are located in Bangkok, the competition to recruit quality teachers is tough. School leaders and recruitment teams have taken various approaches in order to attract and retain quality teachers. Some international schools have used the services of recruitment agencies such as Search Associates, Schrole Connect, and International School Service, or online publications such as The International Educator (TIE) and Teach Away Teacher. Recruitment agencies also hold job fairs one or twice a year, with Bangkok being a common location for such fairs (ISS, 2018; Search, 2018). Other schools tried alternative strategies including offering cash bonuses for staff whom sign on to extend their contract, or offering contracts before job fairs are typically held.

“Over the past few years, school leaders have increasingly been trying to account for the increased competition for top candidates by trying to offer these candidates jobs earlier and earlier in the recruiting cycle. It is thought that by giving teachers a solid offer before the first job fairs take place that they have a higher likelihood of accepting as they would not yet have other offers to consider, and it would allow the teacher to forget the cost, stress, and time of attending a fair” (Kellett, 2015, p.9-10).

Recognizing the competitive nature of hiring and abundance of higher paying international schools in Bangkok, the study site created a strategy in order to be able to

recruit quality teachers. The school decided to tap into a pool of candidates that consisted of new graduates from Western universities (such as in the U.S. or U.K.) - those of whom had just completed their teaching degree. Such teachers are eager to land their first teaching job, and would be inexpensive to due to their minimal amount of classroom teaching experience. In order to attract such new graduates, a package was put together that included the standard benefits (salary, health insurance, relocation stipend, airline ticket) along with a full tuition waiver for the M.Ed. program from Framingham State University (Framingham, MA). In the three years of its implementation, there have been very few applicants that have refused this particular package.

Along with having minimal classroom teaching experience, many of these new hires from this particular pool had minimal experience traveling or living overseas. To support the needs of these teachers in adjusting to both the international school setting and living in a new country, an induction program was put in place. The induction program started upon the arrival of the overseas hires. These teachers were provided with an airport pick up service and hotel accommodation for the first week after their arrival. During that time, they were assisted in finding accommodations of their choice, setting up their mobile phones and bank accounts, getting their immigration and visa documents in order, cultural tours, and any general assistance required when moving to Thailand and living in Bangkok. Local new hires (those hired within Thailand) would join later in the week when all new teachers are introduced to school specific matters such as tours of the three campuses, access to their assigned classrooms, opening school email accounts, and training on various resources. The following week, returning teachers came back to

school, and new teachers began to work on the curriculum and lesson plans with their peers.

The induction program was at its infancy, and its effects on the new teachers' job and cultural adjustment required a closer look. Despite given such support, the percentage of teachers not renewing their contract was higher amongst new than experienced teachers. Since 2014, roughly 20% of new teachers renewed their contract to stay on an additional year or more, while 70% left the school after their contract was over, and 10% did not even complete the standard two-year contract. Retaining this particular group of teachers was important in order to decrease turnover and maintain the academic quality of the school, as well as avoid financial stress.

With the ever-changing environment and culture of international schools, it has become more evident that teachers who take on posts overseas and in an international school setting needed to be equipped with a certain set of skills (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). Many international schools offered professional development and training to provide such skills to new teachers (McNulty & Carter, 2017). An example of such a skill included working with students to whom English is not their first language.

One skill likely to be needed by international schoolteachers relates to the growing number of international school students who are not native speakers of English. Clearly there will continue to be specialist teachers whose main responsibility is the provision of support for such students as they develop fluency in the English language. Arguably, however, it will become increasingly important for all teachers, and not only language specialists, to have some ability

to support the needs of such students in the non-specialist language learning context. (Hayden & Thompson, 2011, p.93)

The study site provided such training through mentoring, coaching, co-teaching, and peer observations protocols. At the study site, each subject department had a lead teacher that acted as a mentor and coach, and provided necessary assistance in terms of resources, student behavior management, planning, and instruction. Professional development and training from experts outside of the school organization were also offered when they were available in Thailand or through courses online. Research showed that such strategies were very useful in assisting new teachers in adjusting to their job positively, which correlated with retention (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015; Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017). “Established mentoring programs in schools and districts are effective at giving new teachers the confidence they need to be successful in the classroom. Research has clearly indicated that instilling confidence directly correlates with a teacher’s decision to stay within the teaching profession” (Callahan, p.12, 2016).

Another important skill new teachers needed in order to be successful at an international school setting, was cultural awareness and sensitivity (Hayden & Thompson, 2011; Zhao, 2010). Classes in international schools are made up of students that come from varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Being able understand how these differences can coexist in a classroom is an important skill, in order for a teacher to be effective in the class (Alsubaie, 2015; Xerri, 2016; Lai, Li, & Gong, 2016).

The school attempted to provide as much support to new teachers through establishing hiring procedures, induction programs, professional development, and training in order to facilitate new teachers in the successful adjustment to the school as

well as Thailand. This study attempted to take a closer look at the adjustment factors of its new teachers, in order to understand what led to job satisfaction, and ultimately retention (Abzari, Kabiripour, Saeidi, 2015; Grogan, & Perrone, 2015; Youngs, Pogodzinski,).

Deficiencies in the Evidence

Several region specific studies have taken place in order to obtain insight into what could be done to retain teachers in that region. A study by Manusco et al. (2010) analyzed retention factors within three categories – teacher characteristics, school characteristics, and organizational conditions - in the Near East South Asia (NESA) region. The findings indicated that organizational conditions such as salary, decision-making, and supportive leadership were important factors in a teacher's decision to stay or leave. Such factors may be easily adjusted through changes in policy, leadership practices, and professional development for school leaders. Such data related to teachers in the Southeast Asia area were not available at the time of the study.

According to an article by Witt (2015), recommendations to improve teacher retention included a comprehensive induction program, continued support from peers and leaders, common planning time, coaching, and mentoring. International schools have tried to improve their recruitment practices in order to be able to select the ideal candidate for their schools (Cox, 2012). However, there is a need to focus on retaining new teachers after recruitment.

The highly independent nature of international schools made it difficult to collect accurate data (Hayden & Thompson, 2013). They may belong to several organizations, and often have little or no connection to other international schools globally (Odland &

Ruzicka, 2009). It has been commonly recognized that international schools function independently from one another. “With the exception of isolated clusters such as the United World Colleges, international schools share no recognized philosophical foundation. There are no deeply held, publicly declared beliefs and values to bind them, to bond them into a coherent global system” (Hayden & Thompson, 2013, p.85). This has made data collection difficult, and it is tough to say if the little data available on international schools is even accurate. International schools and “its scattered distribution in outlying schools with many geographical and social settings, has always made data collection difficult’ (Pearce, 2013, p.67).

“While references to problematic teacher turnover rates in international schools abound, studies examining the factors associated with that phenomenon are rare” (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009, p.7). The European Council of International Schools and Council of International Schools have both conducted surveys throughout the years (Henley, 2006), but they “do not offer specific enough information to analyze insightfully the phenomenon of teacher turnover in international schools” (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009, p.6).

These surveys were also limited to international schools in Europe that make up a fraction of the international school population worldwide. “While retention research in U.S. schools abounds, there has been little on teacher turnover in international schools...” (Manusco, p.307, 2010). A review of the literature uncovered only three studies that specifically looked at teacher retention and turnover in international schools outside of Europe. The study by Odland and Ruzika (2009) involved two hundred and eighty nine participants from schools in the Council of International Schools (CIS) database. CIS accredited schools are located all over the world, and there are 21 CIS accredited schools

currently in Thailand. Of the twenty-one CIS accredited schools in Thailand, roughly half were accredited before Odland and Ruzika's 2009 study (CIS, 2018). Hardman's (2001) study focused on 30 teachers from international schools in Indonesia, Tanzania, Egypt and Argentina. The more recent 2017 study by Tkachyk (2017) focused on teacher turnover in East Asia Region Council of Schools (EARCOS), which included twenty international schools from Thailand (EARCOS, 2016). The limited number of research on teacher turnover in international schools, particularly new teacher turnover, led to the need of this study to look into adjustment factors leading to retention. An in depth look was especially needed in the context of international schools in Thailand, as the number of international schools in the country increased rapidly over a short period of time.

Audience

Information from this study is beneficial for administrators in similar midsized international schools in Thailand, in order to better understand the process of new teacher adjustment. Administrators can attempt to lower their teacher turnover rates by revisiting their recruitment, induction, and training procedures using data from this study. New teachers who are embarking on their first experiences as international schoolteachers in Thailand may also use the information from this study to gain some understanding into what kind of adjustment factors would lead to a successful teaching post at a midsized international school in Thailand.

Definition of Terms

International School. Though an actual definition has been regarded as difficult to determine, international schools typically portray the following characteristics: transferability of students between international schools, mix of various nationalities and

language in both student and staff bodies, a curriculum that differs from the host country, international accreditation, English or a bilingual medium, and a transient teacher and student population (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Nagrath, 2011).

New teacher. For the purpose of this study, a new teacher refers to one new to international school teaching, whether it be a new graduate with limited number of years teaching, or an experienced teacher who has several years of teaching but not at an international school.

Teacher Turnover. This is the movement of teachers away from their current school to either another school, or leaving the profession completely (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Adjustment Factors. Adjustment can be defined using four dimensions of Person – Environment Fit: PO (person-organization fit), PS (person-supervisor fit), PJ (person-job fit) and PG (person-group fit) (Chuang, Shen, & Judge, 2015; Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011; Silva, Hutcheson, & Wahl, 2010).

Job Satisfaction. The “pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating one’s job values” (Yeh, 2013, p220).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to understand successful adjustment factors for new teachers at a mid-sized international school in Thailand in order to establish an environment and protocol that will help retain new teachers. An in-depth look at adjustment factors provided useful insight for school administrators in establishing appropriate and effective protocol in order to assist new teacher in their adjustment to the school and host country. Administrators can fine tune already existing support systems

such as induction programs, training, mentorship, etc., for their new teachers. Studies have shown that a supportive environment at a school has led to higher teacher retention rates (Miller, 2010; Sharplin, O’Niell, & Chaplin, 2011; Zhao, 2010). Higher retention rates are correlated to positive outcomes to a school (Hanushek, Rivkin, & Schiman, 2016; Adnot et al., 2017).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In order to ensure the success of a school, one key component is hiring and retaining quality teachers (Hong, 2010; Miller, 2010; Roberts et al., 2010; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Olson-Stewart, 2015). High teacher turnover rates have led to negative impacts in schools, affecting student academic achievement, school morale, and finances (Miller, 2010; Olson-Stewart, 2015; Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Administrators are in need of exploring factors that affect teacher turnover, particularly amongst new teachers.

New teachers in particular struggle with their first few years as a professional teacher, being one of the highest populations in teacher turnover (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). Research has stated figures and statistics of new teacher turnover in the U.S., and very little information is available in terms of teacher turnover rates in an international school context (Hong, 2010; Roberts et al., 2010). However, in the European region it is roughly estimated that 14.4% of teachers leave their international school yearly (Henley, 2006; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). In both regions of the world, the percentages are cause for alarm.

Studies regarding new teacher turnover have identified common organizational trends in schools. Research has pointed to several factors that may lead to new teacher dissatisfaction leading them to leave a school (Manusco et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Okhremtchouk et al., 2015). Such factors range from “administrative challenges, issues with work-life balance, feelings of isolation, and being overwhelmed with the workload, and the complexities of teaching” (Olson-Stewart, 2015. p.18).

Teachers in an international school setting faced further challenges particularly when they are new to that environment (Sims, 2011). Not only do new teachers need to adjust to a new school in terms of job responsibilities and organizational structure, they needed to adjust to the international school's culture, curriculum, cultural mix of students in their classes and within the staff, and the host country's culture, food, traditions, and language (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Zhao, 2010). Such challenges are large factors in a teacher's decision to stay or leave an international school.

Studies have shown that successful adjustment of any new employee to an organization leads to job satisfaction (Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Yang et al., 2012; Zheng, & Lamond, 2010). Studies have shown the more satisfied an employee is at the job, the less likely she or he is to seek a new job (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010; Medina, 2012; Tooksoon, 2011). As such, job satisfaction has been regarded as an important factor in employee retention.

This study explored adjustment factors for new teachers in an international school in Thailand to shed some light on the phenomenon of new teacher adjustment at international schools. Information from this study provided additional perspective on several key factors in the international school context - such as teacher retention and turnover. The literature presented discusses the concept of work adjustment and cultural adjustment leading to job satisfaction. The study applied these adjustment concepts to new teachers in the international school context in Thailand, in order to understand specific adjustment factors that affect retention.

Theoretical Framework

The study of work adjustment and person-environment fit has been beneficial to many businesses and organizations other than those in education. Appropriate fit or compatible adjustment leads to job satisfaction (Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Yang et al., 2012; Zheng, & Lamond, 2010). Studies have shown that job satisfaction is a strong indicator of an employee's intent to stay or leave an organization (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010; Medina, 2012; Tooksoon, 2011). As such, the concept has been prevalent in organizational and management studies, regarding employee retention and maintaining quality control of organizational services (Gutierrez, Candela, & Carver, 2012; MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010; Silva et al., 2010; Tak, 2011; Wang, Tao, Ellenbecker, & Liu, 2012).

There has been much debate as to how to measure adjustment (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). One such attempt to measure adjustment has been through the person – environment fit theory (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). The person-environment fit is defined as the “degree of compatibility or match between individuals and some aspect of their work environment” (Kristof-Brown, & Guay, 2011, p.3). In order to fully understand P-E fit, “person” can be defined as “one’s individual knowledge, skills, abilities, and other traits such as personality, values, and interests” (Oh et al., 2014, p.103), while environment refers to aspects external of the persons such as job responsibility and organization.

This theory provides four dimensions of adjustment that can be measured and analyzed. This includes person – organization fit, person – job fit, person – supervisor fit,

and person – group fit. Person – job fit is defined as the employee’s compatibility with the responsibilities with a specific job. This fit can further be characterized by factors, such as personality, knowledge, skills and abilities. Person – organization fit refers to the correspondence of the employees’ values and goals with that of the work organization (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). People are attracted to and selected by organizations that share the same values. When there is no match of these components, people tend to leave the workplace. Person – group fit is the compatibility between the employee and members of the work organization, and person supervisor – fit refers to the compatibility between the employee and the supervisor.

Few studies take all four of these “fit” views into account when studying an employee’s ability to adjust to their work environment. Many studies focus on one fit, or combination of fits. “With a few exceptions, most studies have treated different types of fit separately, or have focused only on their relative importance, without scrutinizing the relationship between them” (Lee, Rieche, & Song, 2010, p. 169). Often times these fits are person – organization, person – job, and person – supervisor fit (Babakus, Yavas, & Ashill, 2010; Boon, Den Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2011; Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2011; Van Vianen, Shen, & Chuang, 2011). Adjustment is a complex phenomenon and therefore in need of a multidimensional perspective. “Recent advances in fit theory have recognized that the most rewarding experiences are those in which multiple types of fit exist simultaneously” (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011. p.3).

In addition to the PE Fit, this study will also take into account the cultural adjustment factors, or cultural intelligence (CQ), in order to determine an individuals’ ability to adjust to the multicultural environment of international schools. With greater

mobility of teachers and students in recent years, the education landscape has become globalized. Teachers not only are to adjust to new schools, but to a new country. It is important to understand the various issues, challenges, and gains a new teacher experiences in such a setting. “In order for an expatriate to successfully fulfill their foreign assignment, they often need to adjust their attitudes and behaviors to new cultural contexts” (Huff, Song, & Gresch, p.151, 2013). These adjustments are integral in determining whether they will succeed in their positions leading to job satisfaction and retention.

The cultural adjustment aspect of the study will be looked at through the CQ theoretical framework. Cultural intelligence is defined as “an individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings” (Ang & Van Dyne, p.3, 2015). Like the PE fit, CQ is made up of several dimensions – metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ, motivational CQ, and behavioral CQ. Each of these dimensions like facets of adjustment and job satisfaction, may or may not correlate with each other. Through the combined multi-dimensional theoretical framework of the PE –Fit and CQ, the study will take a look at adjustment factors of teachers in a mid-sized international school in Thailand.

Historical Context of Work Adjustment

There have been several models and research undertaken on work adjustment factors developed in the past decades, largely in an attempt to define adjustment and factors that are needed in order for successful employment to occur. Throughout history of adjustment research, the models range in their approach and context of adjustment. Models by Grove and Torbiorn (1985) and Gudykunts (2005), focus on the behavioral,

cognitive, and affective dimensions of adjustment. Berry (1997) focused on adjustment as a state and process. Searle and Ward (1990) brought to light the psychological and sociocultural adjustment. As can be seen, adjustment is a complex concept to map out, and Dawis and Lofquist's (1984) theory of work adjustment, a person-environment fit theory, attempted to encompass many multi-dimensions of adjustment.

The Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) was initially developed to identify the factors associated with employees' job satisfaction as well as the employers' satisfaction with their employees and employee tenure (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Rather than focusing on the individual and environmental factors, the work adjustment theory focuses on ways the person and environmental factors intersect. "The central concept is that work adjustment is an ongoing process of building and maintaining a mutually responsive and harmonious relations with the work environment" (Hippler, Haslberger, & Brewster, 2017, p.87).

TWA works as an interactive process between the individual and the environment. The individual is fulfilling the needs of the employers by providing their skills and completing job responsibilities, and the employer or work environment is fulfilling the needs of the employee whether it be financial, social, or psychological needs. TWA provides a framework in which outcomes can be predicted, which has led to its profound impact beyond career guidance and management services. TWA concepts have been adopted by the US government agencies for public health and welfare workers, as well as influenced the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention job stress model (Eggerth, 2008).

The theory of work adjustment can be also referred to as P-E Fit. PE has been dominant in the research paradigm in career theory as well as human resources and management, and TWA is a model of PE fit. The TWA focuses on the concepts of correspondence, which is similar to the concept of fit between the environment and the individual. TWA emphasizes the theory through which individuals try to obtain and maintain correspondence with their environments, much like PE fit (Sekiguchi, 2004). PE Fit specifically identifies four of these areas of correspondence, and the development of the Perceived Person –Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS) by Chuang et al., (2015), has allowed for a further data collection strategy for PE fit and job satisfaction.

Historical Context of Cultural Adjustment in the Workplace

A growing number of studies have started to examine expatriates' adjustments to new cultures (Huff, Song, & Gresch, 2014; Mo & Yong, 2015; Hippler et al., 2017). Successful cultural adjustment is of great importance to both the employer and the employees. From an employee's perspective, both cognitive and emotional level of satisfaction must be obtained with the norms, values, and attitudes of the host culture. This enables them to adapt to differences that exist in their new environment –whether it be physical, psychological, or communication differences. Adjustment from the employer's perspective can influence job satisfaction “whereby those that are satisfied with their job are motivated to perform well and tend to remain in the organization” (Nolan, & Morely, 2014, p. 1632). It is important to understand the various issues, challenges and gains a new teacher experiences in an international school setting. These adjustments are integral in determining whether they will succeed in their positions leading to job satisfaction and retention.

Recent studies on international education have focused on issues of cultural adjustment and CQ as being an important characteristic to have for new teachers working internationally (Alban, 2013; Halicioglu, 2015; Hirsch, 2016; Zhou & Austin, 2017). Even if teachers have done their research regarding various aspects of the host country and school, they cannot be fully prepared for the actual experience in their new environment unless they are immersed in that situation. New teachers may experience culture shock, which was originally defined as when behavior we consider normal is not perceived as appropriate in the new culture (Oberg, 1960), or when the behavior of others causes confusion or even distress (Fenne & Hapgood, 1997).

Culture shock has also been identified to have several stages – honeymoon period, aggression and hostility towards the host country, superior attitude towards the host country, autonomy, and finally adjustment and acceptance (Adler 1975; Oberg, 1960). The actual existence and length of each stage has been heavily debated, and Abarbanel (2009) suggests that all of the stages will vary in terms of their existence, length and severity depending on the employee's (in this case, the new teacher's) outlook, previous experience, and types of initial reactions with the new culture (Halicioglu, 2015). Studies specifically looking into cultural adjustment of teachers in international schools are few. However, Roskell's (2013) study of culture shock in new teachers suggests that the honeymoon period can last up to four months. This indicated that new teacher induction should address cultural training in order to avoid effects of culture shock.

CQ is characterized by four components as identified by Earley and Ang (2003) – cognitive, meta-cognitive, motivational, and behavioral. The metacognitive CQ refers to the mental processes that individuals use to understand and process cultural knowledge.

Such processes include monitoring and revising perceptions of cultural norms. Cognitive CQ on the other hand, refers to knowledge of cultural norms, practices, and conventions acquired through education and personal experience. Motivational CQ reflects an individual's capability of learning about functioning in culturally diverse situations. Behavioral CQ refers to the ability to display appropriate verbal and non-verbal actions in varied cultural situations.

Importance of the Problem

International schools in Asia have seen rapid growth in the past 40 years. The top five countries leading the international school market are all located in Asia – namely UAE, Pakistan, China, India, and Japan, each with over 200 international schools. Thailand is not very far behind with about 128 schools (About ISAT, 2014), many of which are located in Bangkok, locale of the current study. The rate of growth in this area continues to grow. There are approximately three to five new international schools opening each year in Thailand, increasing competition amongst international schools in Thailand for quality teachers, staff, and students (About ISAT, 2014; Kerdchuen, 2015).

The issue of supplying high quality teachers is a concern for every international school worldwide. “The candidate pool for teachers in these international schools has not kept in pace with this increasing demand, thus creating an increasingly competitive market for recruiting” (Cox, 2010, p.10). However, the problem is even more exacerbated when there are numerous international schools located in the same area, such as in Bangkok. Location has become less and less the only deciding factor for quality candidates, and therefore “candidates can be more discerning and base their selection on other factors such as salary and benefits package, reputation of schools, career potential,

and support for family” (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013, p.33). Therefore, it is necessary for schools facing such issues to take a look at factors to attract and retain teachers at their schools, in a market that is showing rapid growth.

The study of PE Fit and cultural fit has been beneficial to many businesses and organizations, and increasingly applicable in the field of international schools. Such organizations must gain better understanding of what attracts potential employees and why they stay or leave. Studying the PE Fit and cultural adjustment of new employees can have practical implications for employers and employees to address the concern of retention.

PE Fit may be used to improve hiring practices in order to make sure the ideal individual is hired for the position (Cranston, 2012; Tak, 2011; Watt et al., 2012). A study by Zhu, Wanberg, Harrison, and Diehn (2016) looked into the trajectories for work adjustment in a cultural context as well as the outcome on job satisfaction. This study showed that work adjustment increases gradually over time from the start of new hires’ cross-cultural adjustment –leveling off at about six months. The starting point of the trajectory was also dependent on whether the employees had previous culture-specific experience. The trajectories of such individuals started at a higher level. This study showed that those with previous international experience were more likely to adjust sooner, and therefore employers could consider taking that into account when hiring.

PE Fit and work adjustment information may also assist in determining appropriate training procedures to ensure an appropriate adjustment to the environment (Schilling, Laumer, & Weitzel, 2012; Tak, 2011; Yang et al., 2012; Zheng & Lamond, 2010). PE fit provides evidence that an individual takes on the values and beliefs of the

organization over time. Training, or socialization, even before starting a job has been known to be an important factor in an individual's identification with the organization's values and beliefs (Kristof – Brown & Guay, 2011). The purpose of training is to educate employees about various aspects of the organization including “performance proficiency, people, politics, organization-specific language, organizational history and goals and values” (p. 28). The exposure to such information can lead to the formation of fit perceptions because the additional knowledge affects employee preferences, expectations, beliefs and behavior. An early study in the field of new employee training by Cable and Parsons (2001), concluded new employee values were more likely to shift to that of the organization through their experience with structured and social oriented forms of training (2001).

Other types of training can be implicated through an employee's cultural fit. An interview conducted by Kurdatov and Cheng (2016) found that expatriates frequently struggled with cultural differences and cultural gaps. “Hence, in order to manage expatriates in such a way that they could adjust easily, cope with challenges and perform effectively, companies need to first of all motivate, support, and provide cross cultural training to sensitize expatriates to values, norms, and beliefs of host culture in initial stages of assignment” (p. 119). Not all new teachers are expatriates, and the implications of cultural fit may also be applied to local hires in their adjustment to the new culture of the school (Tran & Nguyen, 2015).

A study by Sims (2011) took a closer look at CQ and its influence on job satisfaction and intent to renew contracts for new teachers working at international schools in Latin America. The results of his study indicated that CQ does have strong

impact over positive job satisfaction therefore leading to renewal of contract. As such Sims (2011) suggested teachers considering going overseas should assess their own CQ. Similarly, he suggested to recruiters that, “the ability to identify CQ levels among teaching candidates could help them make better decisions regarding the professionals who may better adjust to their new job, organization and cultural surroundings... The implication for teacher support programs are obvious and may prove to be the key to greater fit, embeddedness, job satisfaction and retention” (p.137 – 138). Much like this research, Sims used the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) in addition to a short form of the Job Embeddedness Scale (Holtom, et al., 2006), gathering information in a quantitative approach. However, in this research interviews were conducted to collect additional information to further Sims study in the context of a international school in Thailand.

PE fit has also been used to evaluate both compensation and appraisals (Bussin, 2015; Nazir, Shah, & Zaman, 2014; Yang et al., 2012). A study by Cable and Judge (1994) showed that the compensation package was a determinant on job search decisions for employees. The compensation and benefits are correlated with an employee’s work ethics and job performance, which further allows for an individual to feel adjusted or a “fit” with the organization’s values which then leads to job satisfaction and retention. Appraisals also strengthen the PE fit, as recognizing and supporting one’s achievement and effort would build trust as well strengthen the idea that everyone is contributing to the collective for the greater good (Boone & Hartog, 2011).

Gaps in the Literature

There are many studies on new teacher adjustment, focusing on aspects of retention. In particular, studies have taken a closer look at school induction programs (Hammerness, & Matsko, 2013; Kane & Francis, 2013), as well as administrative support for new teachers in order to lower teacher turnover (Coates, 2015; Shaw & Newton, 2014; Simon and Johnson, 2015). A study by Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) investigated whether different kinds of induction programs predict teacher turnover in the U.S. The study found that teachers that underwent an induction process in their first year lead to less migration. The study also pointed out teachers who have worked with students who spoke English as a second language needed higher levels of induction support. Perhaps this can be applied to the international school context, suggesting carefully crafted induction programs would benefit new teachers in adjusting to an international environment.

Many of the studies on teacher adjustment and retention do not take place in an international school context. Of those few studies that have taken a look at teacher adjustment and retention in the international school environment, many are outdated. Odland and Ruzicka (2009) conducted a study with 281 schools to explore expatriate teacher turnover at international schools. The findings revealed three factors were influential to retention – administrative leadership, compensation, and circumstances. Another study by Manusco et al. (2010) also took a look at retention in international schools in the NESAs (Near East South Asia) region and supported similar findings that support administration, compensation, and age influenced retention. Yet another study by Chandler (2012) took a closer look at the influence of location on international

schoolteacher retention. Sims (2010) study looked at cultural adjustment factors that lead to retention in expatriate teachers in Latin America. One of the more recent studies by Ritter (2016) looked into retention of international school teachers, and identified that the right “fit” were one of the major factors leading to a teacher’s decision to stay at their international school posting. The current study attempted to take all this information from previous studies in to account to provide further analysis in regards to teacher adjustment and retention in an international school in Thailand.

On the other hand, there is a great amount of literature on expatriate adjustment in the corporate context. Many of these studies have focused on cross-cultural adjustment particular to certain countries (e.g. Japan, Ireland, China, Malaysia), and its relationship and influence to the employee’s work adjustment. Few studies focus on both the cultural adjustment as well as adjustment to the workplace through PE Fit, with the exception of one study by Nolan and Morely (2014). This study took a closer look at the relationship between PE Fit and cross-cultural adjustment in expatriates, stating that the various dimensions of PE Fit have varied influence over cross-cultural adjustment. Identifying the relationship between PE Fit and cross - cultural adjustment offers additional information on the complexities of adjustment in an international setting. Nolan and Morely (2014) have suggested that the findings “have implications for organizations when recruiting and supporting self-initiated expatriates” (p. 1631). The current study attempted to provide more specific information on the PE Fit and cultural adjustment in an international school in Thailand, in hopes increasing the rate of retention among new teacher population.

Summary

The intent of this two-phase, sequential mixed methods study was to study the relationship between work and cultural adjustment on retention of new teachers at an international school in Thailand. In the first phase the quantitative research questions addressed the relationship between PE Fit and CQ on retention of new teachers at the study site. Information from this first phase was used to guide the next qualitative phase of the data collection process. In this second phase, qualitative interviews was used to gather further insight on teacher retention by exploring aspects of work and cultural adjustment with the new teachers at the study site. The reason for following up with the qualitative research in the second phase was to better understand the data from the quantitative data. The qualitative data provided more in depth information, allowing for further insight into the specific areas of PE Fit and CQS in the context of an international school in Thailand.

With the growing numbers of international schools worldwide, and the estimated doubling in numbers by 2020 from 2009 (Brummet & Keeling, 2013; Cox, 2012; Hayden & Thompson, 2011; Nagrath, 2011), these authors concluded that the number of teachers entering the international teaching circuit increased and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, with online and on-site recruitment services becoming more abundant, this has further increased the pool of international teachers worldwide. Competition has increased amongst schools to attract and retain quality teachers who are beneficial to the school. With the rapid growth in population of international schools in Thailand, and rapid growth in new teacher population, further studies of their adjustment

in international schools in Thailand would be beneficial to ensure job satisfaction in order to avoid high rates of new teacher turnover

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the work and cultural adjustment factors that lead to job satisfaction and retention for new teachers at an international school in Thailand?

2. What is the relationship between the work and cultural adjustment factors that lead to job dissatisfaction and turnover for new teachers at an international school in Thailand?

3. How might the school administration support the success of new teacher adjustment in an international school in Thailand?

4). To what extent does the data from the Perceived Person Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS) and Cultural Quotient Scale (CQS) support the feedback from the teacher interviews?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify successful adjustment factors for new teachers at a mid-sized international school in Thailand. An in-depth look at adjustment factors provided useful insight for school administrators in providing appropriate support through various methods (e.g. induction programs, packages etc.) for new teachers in their school in order to ensure job satisfaction. Studies have shown that supportive environments at schools and organizations worldwide have led to higher employee and teacher retention rates (Miller, 2010; Sharplin, O’Niell, & Chaplin, 2011; Zhao, 2010).

Participants

The study’s target population were teachers who were new to the international school setting in Bangkok, Thailand. For the purpose of the study, new teachers were defined as those who have had three or fewer years of teaching experience in the international school context. Besides this commonality, the participants were not restricted in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, or teaching qualifications. Therefore participants were determined through homogenous sampling in order to focus on one variable (lack or very little experience in an international school) and its effects on the topic being researched – adjustment and retention (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

This type of purposive sampling was used in this study, as the target population was readily available and individuals were already identified as a *new teacher* at the study site upon the start of the new academic year. The task of identifying individuals that fit the target population was therefore eliminated, making this type of sampling convenient for this study site. The time frame was also limited as the typical school year

at international schools is about 185 days. Eliminating one extra process allowed for the study to take place sooner within the academic year.

Instruments

The work and cultural adjustment were the two areas that were measured in relation to their effects on retention. The instrument to be used in this study was based on two existing instruments that examine cultural adjustment (CQ) and PE (person environment fit). The first of these two instruments was the cultural intelligence scale, also known as the cultural quotient scale (CQS), by Chuang et al., (2015). Permission to use the CQS was granted by the researchers with the disclaimer on the instrument allowing the scale to be used only for research purposes. This scale measured an individual's ability to adjust to new cultural environments. Cultural intelligence originally defined by Earley and Ang (2003) is "an essential element in the recruitment and retention process for international schools as it has been shown to predict the cultural adaptability of people who find themselves in cross-cultural situations" (Sims, 2011, p. 2).

The CQS is comprised of 20 questions where answers are rated on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing strongly disagree and 7 representing strongly agree. The 20 questions are divided into four sections, representing the four dimensions of CQ: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational and behavioral. The reliability and validity of the CQS were assessed in several studies. The results from these studies demonstrate the CQS is stable across samples, time, and countries. Results from one of the studies also showed the same pattern of relationship is evident across self-report and peer-report

versions of the CQS. The findings also show the scale has practical applications (Bucker et al., 2016; Bucker, Furrer, & Lin, 2015; Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008).

The CQS was developed and validated in the USA, Singapore, and Iran and has been validated in several other cultural settings. Mahembe and Engelbrecht (2014) sought to test the reliability and construct validity of the CQS on a South African sample. In this research it was determined that all subscales of the CQS (with the exception of the metacognition dimension) had reliability cognition above 0.80.

The results [from the first-order confirmatory factor analysis, CFA] demonstrate that the CQS indicated sufficient construct validity. The second-order CFA confirmed that the four cultural intelligence dimensions contributed to an overall cultural intelligence construct. Thus the four dimensions form one overall latent variable, called cultural intelligence. (Mahembe & Engelbrecht, 2014, p.7)

Furthermore Sahin, Gurbuz, Koksall, and Ercan (2013), conducted a study on the validity and reliability of the CQS in a Turkish cultural setting. Various combinations of the four dimensions of the CQS were analyzed and assessed to determine the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) of each combination. The results indicated that using the four-dimension model of the CQS was a good fit for the Turkish sample (GFI = .89). The three-dimension model yielded a GFI of .75, and the two-dimension model resulted in a poor fit with GFI of .65. The study is significant as the data shows the “generalizability of the cultural intelligence [CI] construct across cultures” (p.142).

The second instrument used in this study was the Perceived Person Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS). The PPEFS is based on PE fit, as defined by Kristof et al., (2011). The

match between an individual and work environment has been known to lead to job satisfaction, which leads to employee retention (Chuang et al., 2015; Sims, 2011).

The purpose of the PPEFS was to incorporate the four main dimensions of the PE fit in one scale. These dimensions are person-job fit (PJ Fit), person-organization fit (PO Fit), person-group fit (PG Fit), and person-supervisor fit (PS Fit). The reliability values of each of the four fit measures were about the level of 0.70 for newly developed scales (Nunnally, 1976). This was an indication of the instrument's effectiveness in the four fit dimension, as "...the usefulness of the measures is obtained since the measures show incremental validity above and beyond an existing corresponding fit measure in the majority of cases" (Chuang et al., 2015, p.27).

Permission to use the PPEFS was obtained from Chuang via email. The PPEFS will be used in conjunction with the CQS, in order to collect data on PE fit and cultural intelligence simultaneously to fit within the expected time frame of the procedures in this study. The two scales were sent via email to the new teacher participants of the study, and titled New Teacher Adjustment Survey (Appendix A).

The two instruments were preceded by a section collecting nominal data regarding demographics (such as age, gender, number of children), teaching experience of the individual, and whether the individual will continue to stay at the school upon completion of his or her contract. The second and third sections were the CQS and PPEFS respectively. The CQS was used to collect ordinal data using a quasi-interval scale in the form of the Likert scale, with 1 representing *strongly disagree* to 7 representing *strongly agree*. Similarly, the PPEFS was used to collect data using a 7-point Likert scale, 1 representing *no match* and 7 being a *complete match*. It was sent via

an online format using Survey Monkey. An email was sent out upon approval from IRB during the first semester of the new academic year, to the target population explaining the purpose of the survey, describing the sections presented in the survey, and the amount of time required to fill in the survey. A reminder email was then sent out after a few weeks to remind those who had not completed the survey, that it needed to be submitted before the end of the term. New teachers participated on a voluntary basis with the understanding that the findings from the study would be used to help new teachers in future recruitment cycles.

After the data from the PPEFS and CQS were collected and analyzed, a semi-structured, face-to-face, group interview process took place in order to obtain further insight as to adjustment factors in the context of the study. Semi-structured interviews “allow for the exploration of lived experience as narrated in the interview in relation to the theoretical variables of interest. The semi-structured interview offers great potential to attend to the complexity of a story in need of contextualization” (Galletta, 2013, p.9). This took place during the middle of the second semester, before the end of the term.

Procedures

Design. The study utilized explanatory sequential design approach, implementing a quantitative survey research method and a qualitative interview method (Appendix A, Appendix B) that was recorded via audio and visual recording. Having both audio and visual recording ensured that there were minimal errors during transcribing. The quantitative data was collected using the PPEFS and CQS. This first phase of the study took place before the end of the first semester, as this marked the fifth month of the new teachers arrival to the school, which is in the area of the four to six month cultural

adjustment period mentioned by Zhu et al. (2016) and Roskell (2013). After recording and analyzing data from the PPEFS and CQS, interviews were conducted.

This design allowed for further insight on factors that lead to work and cultural adjustment. Data from the two instruments will provide a general overview and common trends in the adjustment experiences of new teachers. The follow up interviews provided more in-depth information in regards to their adjustment. Adjustment is a complex multi-dimensional phenomenon and therefore simply using survey instruments may not capture the complexity of each participant's experience. "The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is needed to refine, extend, or explain the general picture" (Creswell, 2012, p.542). The personalized data obtained through interviews provided important and relevant information on new teacher adjustment, and provided additional details on the various domains explored through the PPEFS and CQS.

Data analysis. Factors were developed through the data from the PPEFS and CQS through factor analysis. These factors were then be used as a typology to identify themes or domains, which were useful in guiding the direction and focus of the interview process. Factor analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistic software to determine correlations with cultural adjustment, work adjustment, and turnover. Using a correlation matrix, themes and commonalities were determined to see what aspects of work and cultural adjustment led to a teacher's decision to stay or leave after his or her contract was over.

The commonalities and themes were then discussed further in interviews. The responses from interviews were transcribed, and studied to see if any further themes and similarities arise – either to extend on the already determined factors through the PPEFS and CQS factor analysis, or whether new themes arise. These reoccurring themes in interviews were provided with a code, allowing for representation through graphs and correlation matrix. The triangulation of the data provided multi-dimensional perspectives of the relationship between adjustment and retention of new teachers.

Limitations

Cultural intelligence is a complex phenomenon and is often dependent on various aspects of a person's life experience and personality. In order to truly measure an individual's level of cultural intelligence, further analysis and data collection would be necessary. Therefore, the Likert scale used in the CQS may not be the most ideal method of data collection for cultural intelligence for broader purposes. Nevertheless, the CQS attempted to measure cultural intelligence in four dimensions (metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ), which does provide sufficient information for the current needs (Van Dyne et al., 2012).

Similarly, work adjustment and person environment fit is also a complex phenomenon that is dependent on many other additional factors unique to each individual. Such factors include individual preferences, as well as environmental cues “that may cause some fit dimensions to be more salient than others” (Chuang et al., 2015, p.92). Individual preferences may change due to social and environmental cues, which make measuring the person-environment fit difficult to measure with complete accuracy.

An additional limitation is the sample size may be too small to provide reliable and valid data, especially for the collection of data from the PPEFS and CQS that are quantitative in nature (Button et al., 2013; Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012) suggests approximately 30 participants should be available for a correlational study that relates variables (adjustment and retention). However, the small sample size does not question the validity and reliability of the qualitative phase of data collection (Creswell, 2012; Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013) as many qualitative research studies typically include a few individuals or a few cases.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

Data on teacher retention in international schools was limited at the time of this study. Studies on retention in an international employment setting other than schools suggested that several factors could lead to turnover. Such factors included organizational leadership, work culture and environment, host country location, and host country cultural fit of the employee (Ritter, 2016; Chandler, 2012; Manusco, 2010; Sims, 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). This research study attempted to find a correlation between work environment adjustment and cultural adjustment to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction - which in turn affects turnover and retention percentages.

The target population was new teachers within the three campuses under one umbrella of a mid-sized international school in Thailand. In total, 18 teachers were identified as new teachers as defined in the study, and all 18 completed the survey. Of the total participants, 50% were from the primary school department as shown in Figure 1.

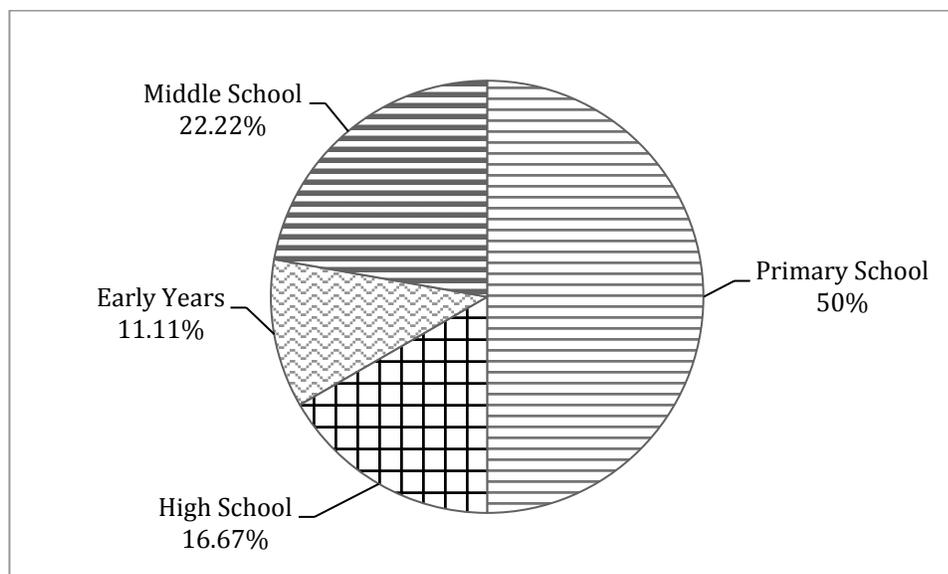


Figure 1. Percentage of participants by department. From Survey Monkey results of New Teacher Adjustment Survey.

Male teachers represented a little under a third of the participant population as compared to the population of female teachers. Of the total participant population 72.22 % were female, while 27% were male teachers as shown in Figure 2.

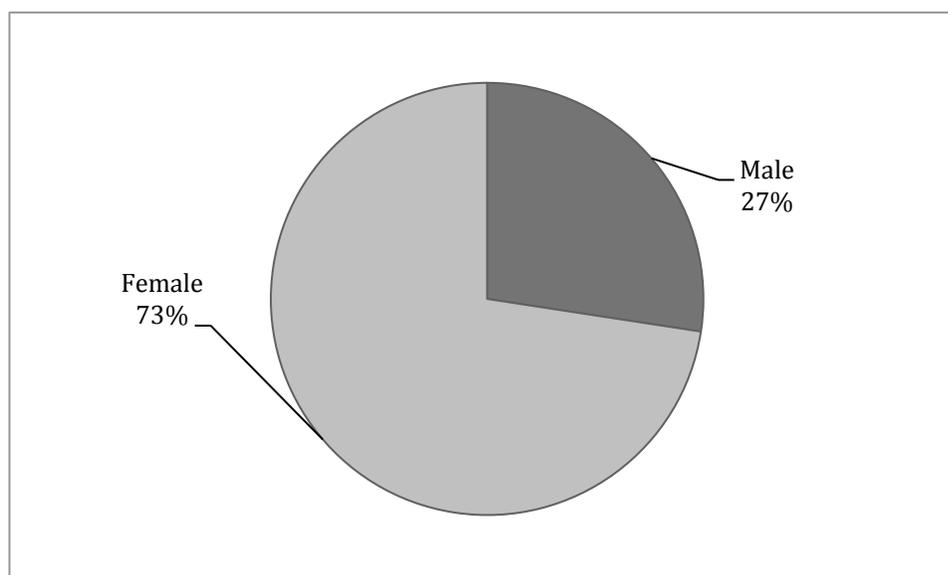


Figure 2. Percentage of participants by gender. From Survey Monkey results of New Teacher Adjustment Survey.

A majority of the participants were 29 years old and under, and in their first year teaching overseas, as seen in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

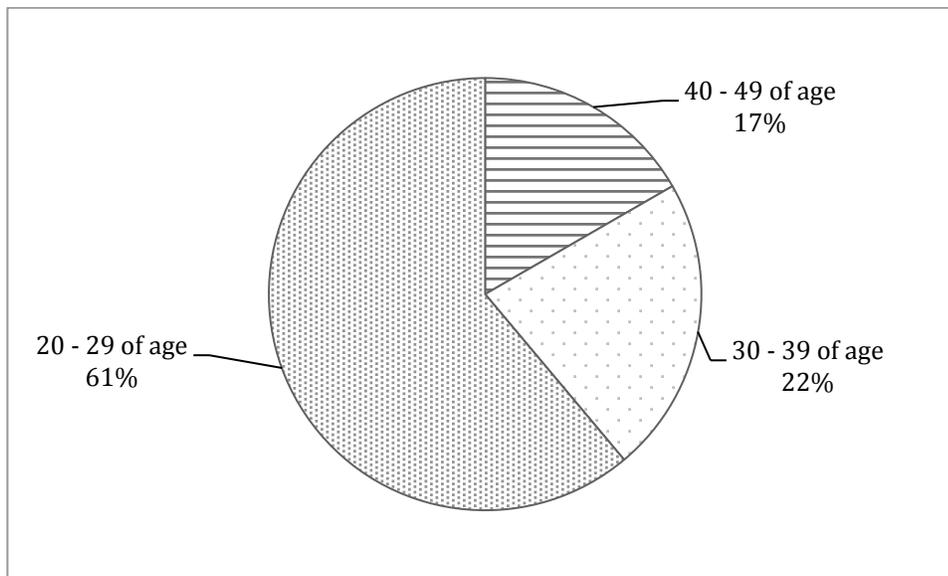


Figure 3. Percentage of participants by age. From Survey Monkey results of New Teacher Adjustment Survey.

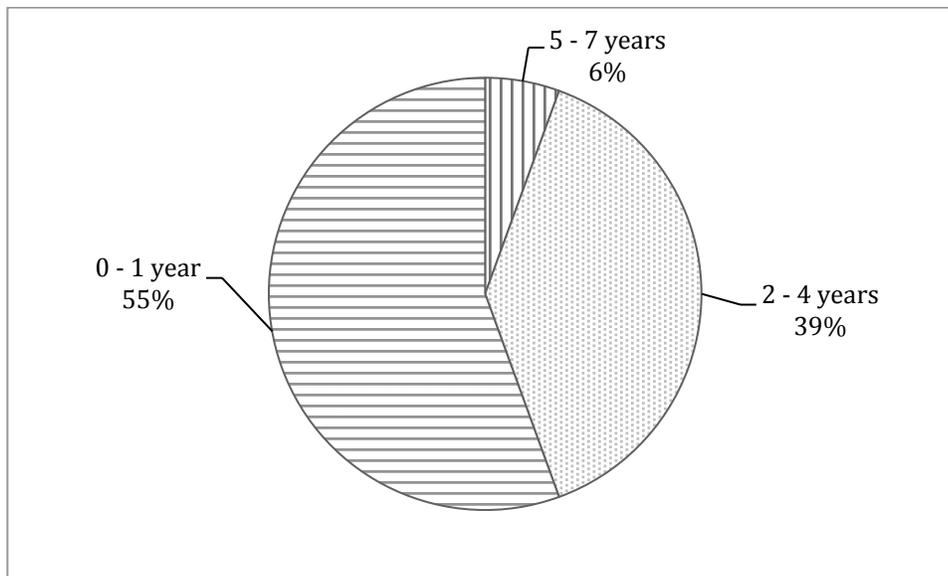


Figure 4. Percentage of participants' teaching experience by years. From Survey Monkey results of New Teacher Adjustment Survey.

Regarding the participants' intent to stay or leave the position, 44.4 % answered yes, while 50% replied not sure when asked if they planned to return after their contact was over, and 5.6% responded with a no.

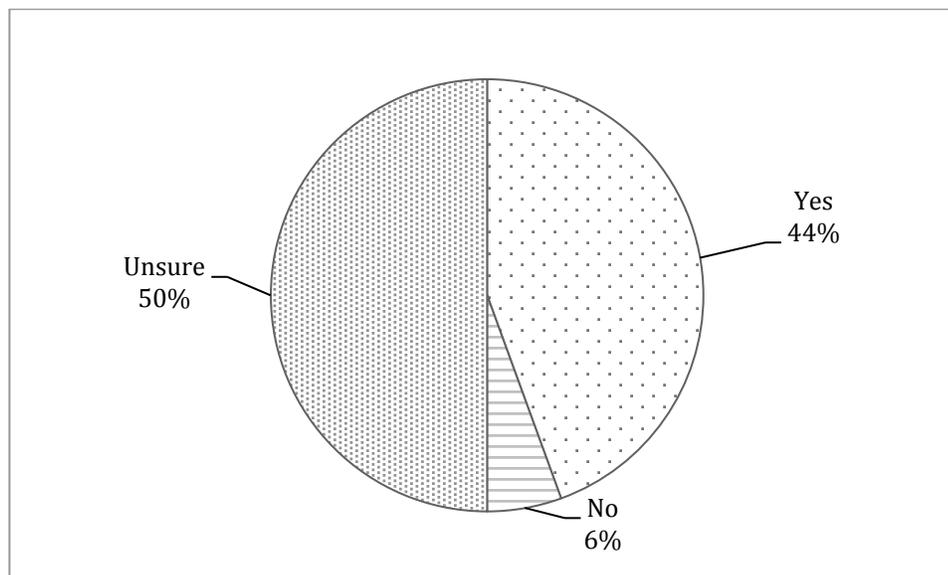


Figure 5. Percentage of participants' intent to return. From Survey Monkey results of New Teacher Adjustment Survey.

Data from the surveys were collected via Survey Monkey, and imported into IBM SPSS. The internal reliability of CQS and PPEFS was determined through IBM SPSS, resulting in Cronbach's Alpha score of .937 indicating that the survey and data are indeed reliable, as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1

SPSS Analysis of PPEFS and CQS Reliability

Cases	N	%
Valid	17	94.4
Excluded*	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

*Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

However, when correlated with a teacher's intent to continue the contract, there was little indication that the two affected one another. The average CQS score for each participant was correlated with the intent to return after his or her contract was over, and .107 score marked little correlation between the two. The same was found for the PPEFS average, which resulted in a .125 correlation. The quantitative results indicated that cultural and workplace adjustment did not effect on a teacher's decision to leave or stay at their current position as two separate domains. However, group interviews provided a wealth of detailed information in the two domains.

Table 2

CQS, PPEFS, and Intent to Return Correlation Matrix via SPSS Analysis

		Will you return after your contract is over?	CQS Average	PPEFS Average
Will you return after your contract is over?	Pearson Correlation	1	0.107	0.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.673	0.633
	N	18	18	17
CQS Average	Pearson Correlation	0.107	1	0.256
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.673		0.321
	N	18	18	17
PPEFS Average	Pearson Correlation	0.125	0.256	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.633	0.321	
	N	17	17	17

The second data collection procedure via group interviews, allowed for further information with regard to work and cultural adjustment and the decision to stay or leave. Coding of the transcribed conversation resulted in six categories. Three categories fell into the work adjustment domain (Curriculum and Instruction, Perceived Organizational

Support, Guidance and Support of Educational Practice), and another three were under the cultural adjustment domain. (Initial Set Up, Daily Life, Characteristics of the Host City). Within each category, descriptors were identified as positive or negative experiences in regarding job satisfaction and adjustment. This is indicated with a negative (-) and a positive (+) symbol in Table 3 and Table 4 that follows.

Table 3

Categories of Work Adjustment Determined from Interviews

Categories	Positive Experience	Negative Experience
Curriculum and Instruction	+Freedom	-Resources are not user friendly
	+Minimal Paperwork	-English Language Learners
		-Asking for help
Perceived Organizational Support	+Teacher appreciation by parents/ students	
	+Teacher appreciation by colleagues	
	+Teacher appreciation by the school governing body	
Guidance and Support of Educational Practice		-Mentorship
		-Teacher instructional packet
		-Resource training
		-Prior knowledge of school culture
		-Prior knowledge of school structure

Note. The positive symbol indicates the descriptor leads to positive work adjustment. The negative symbol indicates the descriptor leads to negative work and cultural adjustment.

Table 4

Categories of Cultural Adjustment Determined From Interviews

Categories	Positive Experience	Negative Experience
Initial Set Up	+Transportation	-Timeline of orientation
	+Cultural tours	-Apartment search
		-Rent payment system
		-Balance of work and personal life
Daily Life	+Language	-Language
		-Transactions
		-Groceries/Eating
Characteristics of Host City	+Public transportation	-English language
	+English language	-Stores
	+Stores	
	+Cultural attractions	

Note. The positive symbol indicates the descriptor leads to positive cultural adjustment. The negative symbol indicates the descriptor leads to negative work and cultural adjustment.

Results

Taking into account all the experiences indicated with the plus (+) sign, several factors led to positive job satisfaction. In terms of the adjustment to the curriculum and instruction, many participants indicated that the flexibility and freedom of the curriculum was a good experience as it allowed for one to grow as an educator without being constrained to certain expectations or required teaching strategies or lessons. As Participant A said, “You learn to be more sufficient that way because you were able to solve your own problems which is a good thing, so in regards to that it was a silver lining.”

Similarly, the relaxed expectation on submitting paperwork, or meeting deadlines, to a higher body such as the state or district, alleviated the work pressure from an already high stress situation of being in a new country and new school system. “I mean we filled the gaps and we changed a lot of stuff because we were throwing things out there and whatever sticks it sticks, and if it didn’t work we were able to try again and I think it was difficult but it also made me really confident,” said Participant B. Participant C added, “The school gave me a chance to adjust the curriculum, so that was great opportunity. And there was not anyone on your back asking you all these questions. I found it great because you have freedom and not like in the bigger schools where you will have more pressure. It’s a great place to start.”

The participants were also pleased about the positive feedback and support they received from stakeholders. They felt that despite having very little experience in the classroom, or in an international school setting, they did not feel that parents or students judged their ability to provide quality education. They felt parents, students, and administration trusted that they were able to do their job. As one participant put it,

Here and in international schools all over, compared to schools back at home, they value new teachers. Whereas back at home they want someone who has been teaching in the district for years and have kids of their own, but I think in international schools people are like ‘oh you just started teaching, that’s great!’ and I don’t feel that’s the same at home. (Participant A, Group Interview)

The participants felt the same when interacting with fellow more experienced colleagues and the administration. Despite feeling under-qualified and overwhelmed, the

new teachers did not feel that they were looked down upon or treated as inferior educators. They were met with respect and collegiality.

I found it really useful here in that the culture is really supportive of being able to go into somebody's classroom. Because we have all been through it everybody seems to be understanding with the new teacher coming in. I never felt like I was talked down to. I felt that people took me seriously, and gave me advice to help me. (Participant D, Group Interview)

This was further supported by comments from Participant E:

When I came in here and was introduced to everyone and started working here it was a huge blessing as I came from a negative work environment [non-teaching environment], where everyone was very driven and competitive. Here I feel that its very positive, even people outside of my department are very positive and friendly people and it makes such a huge difference.

Positive experiences in cultural adjustment were mostly addressed in the category of the Characteristics of the Host Country. Bangkok presented itself as a good place to live and work, as all of the four descriptors are indicated with a positive symbol. In particular, new teachers found the transportation system such as the Bangkok Transit System (BTS) very convenient, making living in the metropolitan area less daunting, in addition to the variety and low cost of public transportations. Participant E pointed out, "Coming from a where I was, I was really excited about the BTS. I had to have a car and this was such a huge difference and convenience." As such, getting to places and running errands could be done efficiently.

The availability of familiar products from participants' home country, as well as the availability of local products that allowed for regular daily routines to continue, was a positive experience. Not being able to speak the language proved not to be an issue, as most people in Bangkok are able to communicate in English, with various degrees of fluency. Finally the cultural attractions such as temples, museums, foods and traditions were appreciated by the participants, and therefore made adjustment to the host country somewhat easier.

Many of the negative descriptors for work adjustment were under the categories of Curriculum and Instruction, and Guidance and Support of Educational Practice, as indicated by the negative (-) mark. New teachers found that existing curriculum provided to them, along with the other resources that were supposed to be used to support the curriculum, were not user friendly. Participant A commented, "We were not given an overview of what the day should look like, or the week, or the month. We didn't get an intro for the curriculum and I was handed the materials and it was like 'here use this' and it was not user friendly at all." Participant B added, "But then it was also like 'you don't really have to use it, you can supplement' but then we were like 'supplement with what?' In regards to specific curriculum of the campus, Participant C pointed out the following:

For me it was getting accustomed to the IB theme. It was more of an adjustment on how to use it. To use all the terminology and words that they use was like a pain it seems to me, so it took me awhile and I am still getting used to it. I got more comfortable with it during the second year. For me being a new teacher I kept wondering what I am doing right and what I am doing wrong.

Some of the participants found adjusting to the student culture difficult.

For me to adjust to the students was tough. I had come in for a primary school position, but they put me in middle school and high school. It wasn't what I was expecting so it was a big change for me, trying to be able to help them the way they want it and its not only emotionally but also academically. It was all new to me. (Participant F, Group Interview)

A participant coming from a specific skills-instruction based background observed:

For me it was similar in that my adjustment related to student ability. I was in the field of _____ and the way that my work place was set up was to cater to the kind of students that were competitive, and had their minds set up in that they need to improve and do everything they can to get better [than the other students]. So as a teacher you can expect anything out of them and they would do it. So that was kind of my mindset I had before, and here it's obviously a school and students are here to learn many subjects, I had to just be more mindful of what expectations I can put on them. I had to think what effect my teaching had, and I was really not used to that. It took awhile to even realize that some students do not do anything, and I had to be okay with that.

Participant G added, "For me it was breaking down the topic or theme by grade level, so that everyone gets the appropriate information of the same theme for each grade level. I had to figure out what does that look like for grade 1 and grade 7, and how much I can push them and how much can I guide them?"

Participant H described her experience with students with low English language proficiency. "Also with the English language learners, I really struggled trying to make the connections for students in the curriculum and adjusting to it myself. I felt the

curriculum wasn't really catered towards students that were English language learners. It didn't help them meet where they were supposed to meet, so I felt really unsure.”

Culturally, the participants commented on the following. Participant I said “I was surprised and had to learn about the culture just within the classroom. I had a mix of Japanese, Thai and Indian students, and when I gave my first test, the Indian boys would swarm to my desk and haggle with me for the grade so that was a bit challenging. The Japanese students were very quiet so I had to cater to that too.”

Participant J compared American education to that of international schools. “In America they are still memorizing and here they are not learning like American kids, where as in a classroom with American curriculum and American students, participation is out loud and physical, but coming from traditional Asian background, the way the structure is and what I had seen in Thai school is that the teacher is the god and you just shut up and listen so there is still respect there, and it would have been nice to have that in orientation.

To add further frustration to the situation, new teachers found that there was not much continued guidance from colleagues in the area of instruction implementation. They were informed as to what was expected of them, and they were introduced to the resources and online classrooms to which they had access and were to maintain. However, the skills and instructions on how to implement these resources were lacking or non-existent. Participant B said “Another thing I found stressful was that in the beginning of the year I was supposed to make a Google website, blog, Google classroom, and update Rubicon Atlas maps [a digital curriculum mapping platform], and work with PowerSchool [a student data management system] on top of creating and correcting

assignments. I had never done any of this stuff, and I felt that I was presented as I knew how to do that stuff.’

In terms of cultural adjustment leading to job dissatisfaction, most of the negative comments were in the Initial Set Up category. Getting life set up prior to working was a huge stress factor. Teachers were given a week in the induction program, and within that week they were given city tours, cultural tours, a school tour, instructional and resource training. They were also given the responsibility of looking for their own apartment. All of these were useful and necessary, but the time frame being too short was something that the new teachers agreed upon unanimously.

Participant B mentioned, “For me the timeline was a big problem. Moving here two and a half weeks before school started, it was not enough time and then having to find a place and having to come to a workshop right after. Not having enough time to set up my classroom the way I wanted, or become familiar with the curriculum, stuff like that was kind of frustrating.”

To further emphasize the overwhelming number of things, to be done during that set-up week, Participant E said, “The area I was really stressed out was to find an apartment. We were given a hotel stay for 7 days and were expected to find an apartment within those 7 days, and I didn’t feel that we got enough help and I was really stressed out about that. It would have been nice to have gotten information on where it was easy to live as foreigners and where to live around.” To add to the frustration Participant A said, “Any kinds of “transaction” things were hard. I tried setting up a bank transfer multiple times to the account in the U.S. and there was always some kind of extra information I needed which I didn’t have.” Participant B added, “I was not sure where to

get fresh vegetables, or where is safe to get such vegetables that are free of pesticides. Cooking is hard, and going out all the time, or picking up food feels weird and hard to feel that it's healthy.”

Many addressed the need of a mentorship program that would provide an avenue of continued support throughout the year. Others noted that they would like to have been told what was expected of them via a checklist or a packet, having something that they could refer back to, to ensure that they were on the right path.

As someone who is not an experienced teacher, the school is for advanced teachers. Especially the way classrooms are set up, its own structure and own everything. A seasoned teacher would love that! They can come in and use 15 – 20 years of experience. However for someone who has never taught, and no idea what Google classroom or Rubicon Atlas was it became chaotic. I need structure or something designed for that teacher, even if it's like a book or a packet with specific instructions and information in it that would be useful. (Participant E, Group Interview)

Participant C supported this.

Yeah that was with me too. They [department administrators] gave me a list of things to do, a website, PowerSchool, Gradebook and I am not from a teaching background so that was a real struggle. I didn't have a guide or no one [anyone] to help me and it had to be done in so and so time. These are things you need to do, and I think it was the same with teaching as well. There wasn't really much guidance on that it would have been nice to have somebody.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, through quantitative process of the study, the data showed that there was little correlation between the PPEFS and CQS and intent to stay at the current workplace. The data from both quantitative instruments did not provide a wealth of information in the context of this study. They provided information in regards to the cultural awareness and job fit for each participant, but not in correlation to what leads to retention. However, the group interviews alone provided more detailed information that was particular to the school, allowing for the identification of categories that may be used to guide administrators in recruitment, induction, and new teacher support.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Summary

The two quantitative instruments used prior to the interviews, the CQS and PPEFS, did not provide much relevant information in terms of the work and cultural adjustment to the study site. However, the interviews provided a more in-depth and specific information that were relevant to the research questions of new teacher adjustment at a mid-sized school in Thailand. The specific adjustment factors determined through the interviews can be taken into account when supporting new teachers to work at mid-sized school in Thailand to ensure adjustment and to reduce turnover.

There were several categories within the two domains of work and cultural adjustment that could lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Through group interview transcriptions, common themes (categories) were identified and placed into the appropriate adjustment domain (work and cultural adjustment). In the work adjustment domain, three categories emerged – Curriculum and Instruction, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), and Guidance and Support of Educational Practice. The three categories for cultural adjustment were Initial Set Up, Daily Life, and Characteristic of the Host City. Descriptors were identified for each category, and were labeled as positive or negative experiences as determined through the interviews and participants' feedback. The quantity of negative and positive categories for each domain provided useful insight as to adjustment factors.

Discussion

Positive work adjustment. The study reveals that new teachers felt positively in terms of how they were perceived by the stakeholders of the organization. Despite their

own insecurities and doubts of competency, they felt that parents and students appreciated them as educators, colleagues did not judge their inexperience, and the school community was welcoming and warm. This perceived organizational support (POS) is defined as “sensitivity and opinion of employee regarding the degree to which their involvement is appreciated and recognized by their institution and care about their well-being” (Kurtessis, et al., 2017).

Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between POS and retention. Employees with higher POS would more likely continue in their current job position (Kurtessis, et al., 2017; Park, et al., 2016; Kalidas & Bahron, 2015; Kim & Barak, 2015; Madden, Mathias, & Madden, 2015). Likewise, organizations that enhance POS would consequently lower an employees’ intention to leave the organization. POS has such a positive impact on employee work ethic and attitudes mainly because “POS creates a sense of obligation within the employees to repay the organization... and to help reach its goals” (Kalidass & Bahron, 2015, p.83).

In addition to POS, employees who have positive relationships at work with stakeholders result in a lower rate of turnover intentions (Lai, et al., 2018; Madden, Mathias, & Madden, 2015). Feelings of belonging and connections can be fulfilled by a presence of a work community. Experiencing this allows for employees to feel meaning in their work, resulting not only in higher retention rates, but quality input and output from employees (Dennehy & Dasgupta, 2017; Mathias, & Madden, 2015). The participants from this study on new teachers indicated that they felt valued and respected, despite being new to the school community and having minimal experience in the country or in the international school setting.

Negative work adjustment. Although the participants felt welcomed and valued by members of the school community, they did struggle in the actual implementation of the school curriculum and using effective instructional strategies. Most of the descriptors under the Guidance and Support of Educational Practices and Curriculum and Instruction categories were indicated as negative experiences. New teachers came in with minimal experience, and yet were expected to be able to apply effective instruction and classroom management techniques to a group of students with diverse cultural and academic backgrounds. “Whereas beginners in other fields start with minor responsibilities and gradually get more demanding challenges and duties along their path of professionalization, beginning teachers immediately have full pedagogical and legal responsibility” (De Neve, Devos, & Tuytens, 2015, p.30). As such, the new teachers in this study wanted more specific information regarding structure of the school, culture of the school, cultural make up of the school in the student, teacher, and staff communities as well as clear lines of communication, and exact job responsibilities, in order to grasp the full scale of their situation.

The need for even more specific information and guidelines from the new teachers in this study may also be largely due to the cultural, social, and other influences specific to the participants’ generation. “Each generation has unique experiences that shape their behaviors and attitudes” (Kibler, Barclay, & Ohmer, 2014, p.80). As indicated through the survey, a little over 61% of the participants were 29 years of age and under. Within this population a further 60% were under the age of 24. The rest of the sample population were 24 years old and above. This indicated that the new teacher population in this study was comprised of both generation Y and Z individuals.

Generation Y individuals were born between the years of 1980 and 2000, and are typically known to view work as a key part of life. However, they only want things to develop in their terms as this generation is characterized by a sense of entitlement (Aruna & Athina, 2015). They want to be able to make their own decisions, and test these decisions in order to receive positive feedback and encouragement to their success. Research has shown that they learn by doing, and are willing to learn in order to achieve success in their jobs success (Van den Bergh, & De Wulf, 2017; Kibler, Barclay, & Ohmer, 2014). “They want a road map to success, and they expect their companies to provide it” (Meister & Willyerd, 2010, p.68).

Generation Z individuals prefer independent work and are adverse to teamwork. This can be due to their active virtual and online presence, where communication is done via devices rather than in person (Singh, & Dangme, 2016). Communication is made up of using abbreviated languages, that in turn affect their listening and speaking, interpersonal, and socializations skills in a negative way (Iorgulescu, 2016). A study by Robert Half (2015) indicates, members of this generation need to be constantly taught and require constant feedback on their action. This research also highlighted their need for security as they grew up in a recessionary period. This may be a correlation with the participants in this study and their need for detailed instructions and feedback.

School support for successful work adjustment. Many of the participants indicated a need of a mentoring program, or a document with a set of explicit instructions and goals as to what they were supposed to accomplish. Mentorship is a more complex phenomenon than it appears to be. In the last two decades, research has revealed the importance of a workplace mentorship program for those beginning of any new job

(Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014). Whether it occurs formally or informally, it is commonly used to assist new employees to adjust to the work community and the position. However, there are many different understandings of what mentoring should look like. It is dependent on many different factors – the personalities of the staff and the employee – or new teacher, hierarchy of the school leadership, payment structure, scheduling structure, local cultural practices – to name a few (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014; Kemmis, Heikkinen, et al., 2014).

Regardless of the complexities of establishing an effective mentorship program, studies have shown that having any mentorship protocol in place is beneficial. The results of having one in place correlate positively to job satisfaction, leading to successful adjustment and retention (Kim, Im, & Hwang, 2015; Jyoti & Sharma, 2015; Callahan, 2016). New teachers who participated in mentoring programs were more committed to their jobs, had higher job satisfaction and as a result were more likely to stay either within the organization or in the teaching profession (Callahan, 2016).

Mentoring programs afford new teachers the ability to perform at higher levels in aspects of teaching such as keeping students on task, developing effective lesson plans, utilizing appropriate questioning techniques, adjusting classroom activities to meet student interests, cultivating a positive classroom environment, and establishing successful classroom management...The more success a teacher encounters, the higher the job satisfaction, The higher the job satisfaction, the higher the rate of retention. (Callahan, 2016, p.9).

Positive cultural adjustment. In terms of adjusting to Bangkok itself, the participants had a more of a positive experience in the cultural adjustment domain than in

the work adjustment domain. As can be seen in the Characteristics of the Host Country category, the traditions and cultural attractions were greatly appreciated. In addition, the large number and variety of stores, availability of foreign products, and efficiency of public transportation (namely the BTS) were all positive experiences for the participants.

Surprisingly, host country language acquisition was not a priority amongst the participants in this study, and neither did it have any effect on their perceived organizational support and adjustment to the host country. Typically when moving to a new country, individuals face the dilemma of whether or not to invest time, money, and energy into learning the host country language (Zhang & Harzing, 2016; Zhang & Peltokorpi, 2016). Studies focusing on expatriate cross cultural adjustment through the aspect of language acquisition state that learning or making the effort to learn the language leads to positive relationships between expatriates and host country colleagues, host country nationals in the community, as well as host country students. The positive relationships then lead to job satisfaction and successful work and cultural adjustment, which should result in retention (Zhang, Harzing, & Fan, 2018; Zhang & Harzig, 2016; Zhang & Peltokorpi, 2016). However, the participants in this study did not feel that learning the language was a priority, neither did they feel that it had a tremendous effect (positive or negative) on their adjustment to the work place or country.

To support this, one research study suggests language acquisition for employees in international settings are different in the field of academia. In academic institutions abroad, the use of English is expected on a daily basis and throughout the workday. There is not much opportunity or reason to use the host country language, as English is the

medium of instruction not only for the students, but also for the academic institutional community. Consider analysis offered by Selmer and Luring (2014):

The finding that this variable [language acquisition] also had positive associations with general adjustment and interaction adjustment, but not with job adjustment for the academic expatriates in the combined sample, may also be easy to explain. Much of the communication at work may be directed in English and the ability to understand and speak the host language may be of less importance for adjusting to the foreign work environment. (Selmer & Luring, 2015, p.412)

Another study also suggested that language acquisition may not be a large factor in cultural adjustment, but rather an individual's ability to interact with various cultures as a more important skill in order to adjust successfully. The study's participants were geared towards call center employees who dealt with a diverse cultural population in their line of work, which is similar to that of teachers in an international school setting.

Currently, existing training programs are limited to language proficiency and accent reduction, which can be insufficient in delivering call center work. Training programs should be geared toward the development of cultural knowledge and the equipping of call center agents with the ability to persist and carry on with a transaction despite the cultural nuances of the customers. (Presbitero, 2017, p.1559)

Taking this into account, new teacher induction programs do not necessarily need to include language classes, but should perhaps include effective Thai culture classes for those teachers that are new to Thailand, or even an informational packet.

Negative cultural adjustment. The participants of the study found the adjustment to daily living in the host country challenging. This included figuring out a system for daily meals (e.g. groceries, deliveries, take out), transactions (e.g. banking, phone plans, internet plans), and housing. As language was not indicated to be an issue for this group of participants, this difficulty have been due to cultural differences in how things were done in the participants' home countries versus host countries (Kurdатов & Cheng, 2016; Zhu et al., 2016). If there is too much of a difference between the cultures, it can lead to ineffective cultural adjustment.

Where expatriates experience the cultural distance as too large, or communication barriers as insurmountable, they close themselves off from the host society, keeping interactions with host nationals to a minimum. They separate themselves from individuals whom they may perceive to be too different from them (i.e., those with different languages, cultures, and religions) and seek out those who are similar to them, and in a similar situation (viz. other expatriates). This often leads to the formation of expatriate enclaves, where they remain segregated and feel comfortable to maintain their own identity and culture.

(Adams & Van de Vijver, 2015, p.328)

Though they may feel comfortable in their enclave, this minimizes interactions with the host country culture, and may hinder and employee or a new teachers' ability to relate to the various cultures represented through the students they teach. In the context of new teachers to international schools, it is unclear if this will have a negative effect on adjustment and retention. But studies continue to support the phenomenon that having

cultural training of some degree is correlated with retention (Okpara, 2016; Kassab, Rouhana, & Lythreatis, 2015; Ko & Yang, 2011).

School support for successful cultural adjustment. The school can continue to support new teachers' cultural adjustment by assisting in the Daily Life category. Most of the school's assistance occurs within the first week or two of the new teachers' move to the host country. Further continued support throughout the first few months of the work contract may be needed and be beneficial. The induction or mentorship system should therefore include cultural education and support aspects in addition to classroom instruction and subject curriculum support.

The kind of cultural education and support needed is difficult to determine as it is dependent on the new teachers' CQ levels, individuals' learning styles, maturity, experience in life, personality, and peers (Okpara, 2016). Even if an organization is able to narrow down various characteristics that are specific to their new teacher population, the effectiveness of their cultural adjustment training will also need to be determined and evaluated (Poonpol, 2018; Ang & Van Dyne, 2015; Huff, Song, & Wechtler, 2014; Koveshnikov, Wechtler, & Dejouz, 2014). School administrators will need to coordinate and work with their local staff population in order to create a program that is applicable to their new teacher population.

Limitations

The number of participants in the study was fairly low, which presents a limitation to the study. Furthermore, within the small participant population, there were additional characteristics represented that should have led to forming even more specific sample groups. For example the participants' ages and life experiences may have played

a large factor in determining work and cultural adjustability. Therefore group interviews with similar age and life experience groups would have resulted in more in depth discussion of their experiences with cultural and work adjustment, as well as retention.

With regards to intent to stay, 50% of the participants were not sure, 5.6% were not returning, and 44.4 % were returning the following year. The study would have been more meaningful if only individuals who were sure of their decision to stay or leave were used in the sample population. It was difficult to determine what factors lead to an individual to stay or leave, if they were unsure of their decision in the required study timeframe.

Recommendations for Future Research

In analyzing the survey and interview data, it is evident that there are numerous factors that play into successful work and cultural adjustment. These factors include an individual's CQ, maturity, lifestyle, gender, age, learning style, and personality. Further research or extension of this study would be beneficial in determining the importance of each category and the corresponding descriptors, concerning successful work and cultural adjustment leading to retention.

Although research is emerging and present in regards to these various categories of adjustment, particular area that would be of relevance would be to look further into the adjustment of the most recent generation of individuals that are entering the workforce – Generation Z. With the large increase of international schools worldwide, it is imperative to understand Generation Z teachers who join international schools, especially if they are new to the country and new to the international school environment. There are studies available on how to provide and assist Generation Z individuals in the workplace

(Iorgulescu, 2016; Singh & Dangmai, 2016; Kapil & Roy, 2014), but research on their adjustment to work abroad is limited. Further research into Generation Z cultural adjustment would be beneficial to any international organization, including international schools worldwide in order to retain such teachers.

Further research on the effects of induction programs or cross cultural training programs in the international school setting would also be beneficial to understand new teacher adjustment and retention. Most the studies on supporting new teachers, mention the importance of induction programs (Ronfeldt, Leob, & Wyckoff, 2017; Hammerness & Matsko, 2013; Kane & Francis, 2013), but it would be beneficial to know some crucial factors within the induction program that can support new teachers' adjustment effectively in order to achieve job satisfaction leading to retention.

Conclusion

This study has found that there are specific categories in both cultural and work adjustment domains determined by the new teachers in a mid-sized international school in Thailand. These categories include Curriculum and Instruction, Guidance and Support of Educational Practice, and Perceived Organizational Support in the work adjustment domain. In the cultural adjustment domain, the categories were Initial Set Up, Daily Life, and Characteristics of the Host City. Descriptors of each category were identified through group interviews. Each descriptor was identified as being a positive or negative experience for the participants. The balance between these positive and negative adjustment experiences may be correlated with a new teachers' adjustment and intentions to stay or leave their position. Schools in Thailand can take into account some of these

categories when putting together induction programs or support systems in order to assist new teachers in their adjustment to their new jobs.

If the descriptors are determinant of a teacher's successful adjustment leading to job satisfaction, the study site has several categories it will need to improve. In the category of Guidance and Support of Educational practice, all five descriptors were negative experiences. Should those had been positive experiences, perhaps there would have been a higher percentage of participants who would be sure to return after their contract was over. Similarly, five out of the seven descriptors for Initial Set Up were also indicated as negative experiences. Should more support been provided in this area, perhaps adjustment would have been stronger and more effective. Nevertheless, being able to narrow down the specific categories and descriptors of adjustment to an mid-sized international school setting in Thailand, gives some insight as to what administrators may need to focus on to support the new teachers.

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Appendix A

New Teacher Adjustment Survey

Demographic Information

Please complete the following questions by clicking on your response.

1. What department are you teaching in?

Early Years

Primary School

Middle School

High School

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. Nationality

[Open Answer]

4. Age

20 – 29

50 - 59

30 – 39

Above 60

40 – 49

5. Religion

[Open Answer]

6. Ethnicity

[Open Answer]

7. Marital Status

- Single Separated
 Married Other
 Divorced

8. Number of Children

- 0 3
 1 4 or more
 2

9. Number of Years Living Overseas

- 0 – 1 year 8 – 10 years
 2 – 4 years Over 10 years
 5 – 7 years

10. Highest Degree Earned

- Bachelors
 Masters
 Doctorate
 Others

11. Teaching Certification

Early Years

K – 6

Middle School

High School

By Subject

12. Number of Years Teaching Overseas

0 – 1 year

8 – 10 years

2 – 4 years

Over 10 years

5 – 7 years

13. Number of Years Working in the Current School

0 – 1 year

8 – 10 years

2 – 4 years

Over 10 years

5 – 7 years

14. Will you return after your contract is over?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Cultural Adjustment

15. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

16. I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

17. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

18. I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

19. I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

20. I know the rules (e.g. vocabulary and grammar) of other languages.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

21. I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

22. I know the marriage systems of other cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

23. I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

24. I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

25. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

26. I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

27. I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

28. I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

29. I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

30. I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

31. I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

32. I vary the rate of speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither Disagree or Agree | |

37. How would you describe the match between your lifestyle and your supervisor's lifestyle?

No Match Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

38. How would you describe the match between your work style and your supervisor's work style?

No Match Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

39. How would you describe the match between your personality and your supervisor's personality?

No Match Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

40. How would you describe the match between the things you value in life and the things your supervisor values?

No Match Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

41. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group members' lifestyle?

No Match Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

42. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group members' work style?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

43. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group members' personality?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

44. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group goals on competition with other groups?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

45. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group's goals on the amount of effort expected?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

46. How would you describe the match between your goals and your group's goals on rewards?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

47. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group's emphasis on helping others?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

48. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group's emphasis on fairness?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

49. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group's emphasis on achievement?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

50. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group's emphasis on honesty?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

51. How would you describe the match between your goals and your organizations' goals on competition with other organizations?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

52. How would you describe the match between your goals and your organizations' goals on the amount of effort expected?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

53. How would you describe the match between your goals and your organizations' goals on rewards?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

54. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your organization's emphasis on helping others?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

55. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and organization's emphasis
fairness?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

56. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your organization's
emphasis on achievement?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

57. How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your organization's
emphasis on honesty?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

58. How would you describe the match between the characteristics of your current job (e.g.
autonomy, importance, and skill variety) and those you desire for a job?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

59. How would you describe the match between your interests (e.g. social vs, unsocial, artistic vs. inartistic, conventional vs. unconventional) and those you desire for a job?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

60. How would you describe the match between your personality traits (e.g. introvert vs. extrovert, agreeable vs. disagreeable, and dependable vs. undependable) and those required by the job?

No Match

Complete Match

[] [] [] [] [] [] []

Appendix B

New Teacher Adjustment Interview Questions

1. What were some adjustments you had to make in the workplace that were difficult?
2. What were some adjustments you had to make in the workplace that were easy?
3. What were some adjustments that you had to make that were culturally difficult?
4. What were some adjustments that you had to make that were culturally easy?
5. What are some suggestions you will make in order to help new teachers in adjustment and retention?