

**Cultural Adjustment of High School Teachers
from Taiwan in Kinmen**

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Major: International Human Resource Development

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National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan
June, 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am truly blessed by God to have many knowledgeable, patient, and kind professors guide me during my time in IHRD this lovely and warm institute. My heartfelt thanks first go to my thesis instructor Dr. Wei-Wen Vera Chang. She is the model of how an outstanding teacher can be. Being a junior high school teacher myself, I always take her passion for pursuing knowledge and her sincere care for students as great an example to follow. Also, without help and instruction from my thesis committee members, Dr. Chih-Chien Steven Lai and Dr. Pai-Po Lee, I could hardly make further improvement on this research. Besides being highly knowledgeable, their personal qualities are excellent as they are very empathetic, caring and approachable.

For my family, I donate my greatest gratitude to my mother who constantly reminded me to finish this study and provided as much assistance as she could. Sometimes I think of the parenting styles raised by Baumrind in 1966, and I thank God for giving me a pair of good parents adopting the “authoritative style” she mentioned. When my dad and mom discipline me, their attitude is firm, but they are still responsive to my needs without being indulgent. Two years ago, my brother received his master degree while being at work. Thanks him for encouraging me to write thesis even with work on weekdays. And thanks for the joyful company of my dogs, Miam-Miam and Hsiao-Guai, the most beloved babies in my family, though Miam-Miam was called to the heaven this March. I hope Miam-Miam now sees his sister has made another progress in her life. He will be engraved and cherished in my heart no matter where I am.

To my partners Kelly, Maria, Jessie, Roy, and Darren who all have already graduated, I show my appreciation for all the advice they gave me. They are friends forever and ever to me. Besides, I really thank Alan a lot for being such an ardent helper. When I could not leave Kinmen, he aided me very much to solve emergent conditions about my paper in Taiwan.

Finally, I give my profound thank to my husband, Eric Hong. He took care of almost all

the house chores to let me concentrate on my study. His understanding and consideration was the key to my graduation.

Thank you all, my lord Jesus, my dear families, teachers, and friends.

ABSTRACT

The mobility of workforce is common. In Taiwan, people qualified as being teachers are hard to become formal ones due to intense competition of teachers' entrance exams. Thus many of them choose remote islands of Republic of China to take teachers' entrance exams. This research studied formal teachers from Taiwan now in Kinmen as they have experienced some cultural adjustments. Although a large number of literatures explore expatriate adjustment, none of the previous literature aims at exploring the adjustment issues of teachers from Taiwan in Kinmen.

The purpose of this study is to examine the working adjustment, psychological adjustment, and general adjustment experiences that teachers from Taiwan have. It is hoped to provide useful information for incumbent teachers, administrators, or for people considering teaching in Kinmen.

This study presents findings from the qualitative approach of the adjustment journey of 13 teachers who have spent 2 to 6 years in Kinmen. It involved methods of interviews, participant observation, and document analysis more than an academic year. There are some particular things that teachers from Taiwan need to adapt to. It was found that Kinmen natives elder teachers can enjoy more privileges in many ways, and no position rotation system in schools. Natives tend to use people relations to solve problems, and there are many other challenges that teachers from Taiwan discovered. A piece of advice for schools in Kinmen is to build fairer environment in schools so to increase teachers' coherence therefore being able to create brighter future for the education in Kinmen.

Key words: Kinmen, cultural adjustment, teacher adjustment

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The study elaborates the background of doing this research in great details. The scope looks from the broad issue of workforce mobility whether in international or local field, to the focus of teachers' workforce mobility between Taiwan and Kinmen. The fact that more and more teachers in Kinmen are from Taiwan leads to the importance of exploring these teachers' experience and their adjustment, in order to understand their needs or satisfaction influenced by the culture of Kinmen.

Background of the Study

International Mobility

Nowadays the growth of globalization or international trade is accompanied by the international mobility of individuals who transfer knowledge, technologies, ideas, and other capabilities, and the international mobility is regarded as a kind of movement of capital (Solimano, 2006). In business field, some companies are successful but some face defeat. A few people regard that business strategy is the key factors and some believe it is due to organizational structure problem. Black and Gregersen (1999) concluded that in fact, having abundant human capital is the most important factor in creating and maintaining competitive advantages. Many organizations acknowledge this fact and so the international mobility of workers has increased, which is analogous to the capital mobility (Barro & Sala-i-Martin, 2003). Appointing overseas assignments or choosing suitable people as expatriates have become crucial and increasing amount of decisions for companies (Anderson, Charmaz, Josselson, McMullen, & Wertz, 2011).

The factors determining international mobility derive from a combination of push and pull factors. While sending countries wish to decrease the supply pressure (push factors), receiving countries hope to fill significant labor shortages (pull factors) (Bobeva & Garson, 2004). At world level, international mobility can generate positive benefits as knowledge

flows intensify and the match between supply and demand for skills improves (Jolly, 2003).

Local Mobility

While the global circulation of workers, especially highly-skilled workers across frontiers is intensifying, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2003) stated that structural unemployment could also be lowered by encouraging greater labor mobility within one country. The United States and Canada both own stretched-out geography, but the differences in regional unemployment rates are larger and stickier in Canada. Coulombe and Day (1999) provided the finding that the mobility problem of Canada is concentrated among the less skilled workers. The youth Canadians with bachelor or graduate degree can migrate to another province more easily (Coulombe, 2000).

It suggested that human capital is a strong determinant of migration. Whether it is about cross-border mobility or regional mobility in one country, for both sending and receiving sides, there are potential gains derived from the relocation of labor from regions with a surplus of workers to regions with labor shortages (Fassmann, Haller, & Lane, 2009).

Cross-cultural Adjustment

As people relocate from the place they used to live to another meaning they also relocate from one culture to another. Every culture has its particular values which are widely shared by a specific group of people. When individuals are under to a new cultural context, they will find that some of their previous values and beliefs become useless. To adapt well to a new culture, the individuals have to understand the new culture's underlying values and how these values lead to appropriate behaviors. The changes they make can be regarded as cross-cultural adjustment. Often cross-cultural adjustment is not an easy job for people whether their new working or living place is abroad or still within their own country, because any adjustment may disorder people's routines and that generally followed by situations that challenge an individual's self-esteem (Barker & Willis, 2008).

Mobility of Teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen

In Taiwan, the working mobility is also common. Many people have the experience of doing different jobs at different places in Taiwan. Every year, from May to August, the news of prospective teachers' busy running about registering and taking teacher entrance exams around many places is already well-known to citizens.

Regarding the present situation in Taiwan, more and more people intending to be teachers come from Taiwan to Kinmen to take teacher entrance exams to give themselves the opportunity to teach. The background that more and more people from Taiwan try to obtain positions in schools in Kinmen is as below. Since 2004, the quantity of people who are qualified as being teachers have been more than the numbers of job vacancies in public school in Taiwan (Huang, 2006). The situation of excess supply of teachers has not changed yet. Under this condition, society is aware of the fairness of teachers' exams and criticizes schools that do not join teachers' joint entrance exams thus secure some people's advantages through clandestine exams. In order to avoid people's suspicion, many public schools join teachers' joint entrance exams held by governments of different cities or counties including schools in Kinmen. The Kinmen Education Bureau has held teachers' joint entrance exams since 2005, consequently, not only Kinmen natives have the opportunity to teach in Kinmen, people from Taiwan or other islands also have open access to teach there.

That is to say, there exists the combination of push and pull factors between Taiwan and Kinmen. Many people qualified as being teachers are hard to find jobs at schools due to less and less job vacancies in Taiwan. While in Kinmen, the open information of recruiting teachers of schools and the teachers' joint entrance exams making people be assured of the fairness issue thus increasing people's willingness to go far to Kinmen registering and taking the exam. On the part of Taiwan, the supply pressure of too many qualified teachers can be relieved to some degree. On the other part, Kinmen can own the wilder talent pool which is favorable for schools in Kinmen for selecting suitable teachers.

Differences between Kinmen and Taiwan Culture

The culture of Kinmen is unique. Its greatest difference from Taiwan is that Taiwan is a place with a lot of immigrants while Kinmen natives tend to move to other places for schooling opportunities or career development (Lu, 2011). So people in Taiwan, especially in cities of Taiwan, have learned to interact with others from different backgrounds, while the elder or middle-aged Kinmen natives who stay in Kinmen for most of their lifetime are less exposed to multicultural environment (Fang, 2005). Besides, During the Kaomintang's retreat to Taiwan between 1949 and the 1980s, Kinmen suffered from great tension being the front line of Nationalist-Communist conflict. People's activities in Kinmen were restricted by curfew and only limited interaction with outside world was permitted. Not only the geographic and historical reasons play big parts in shaping Kinmen's culture, its main economic activity, tourism, also makes Kinmen an extraordinarily exuberant green place without industrial pollution or traffic jams (Crook, 2011). A quarter of the whole Kinmen area belongs to Kinmen National Park which is not allowed to be open to development. Apart from fishing, small-scale agriculture, tourism business is the pillar of Kinmen's economies. Owing to the more peaceful relations of ROC (Republic of China) and PRC (People's Republic of China) now, it is possible to travel directly between ROC and PRC. Last year over two million citizens of PRC went to Kinmen to visit or transfer to Taiwan (Yang, 2011).

Anthropologists believe that culture is shaped by many different objective conditions: spatial, social, economic, and organizational (Nanda & Warms, 2010). As noted above, with such special background consisting of historic, geographic, economic factors, the culture of Kinmen is very particular compared to that of Taiwan.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment of Teachers from Taiwan

Now that more and more teachers from Taiwan work in Kinmen, is there any spark when teachers from Taiwan clash against native Kinmen residents, teachers, students, or the

parents? Usually, shared nature of culture enables people to predict—within broad limits—the behavior of others in the society. Conversely, people become disoriented when attempting to interact in a culturally different society because they do not share the same behavioral expectations as members of the society (Andreatta & Ferraro, 2009). Plus, the move to a new environment is cited as one of the most unforgettable events in a person's life as for most sojourners some degree of culture shock is inevitable (Bochner, Furnham, & Ward, 2001).

Thus it is important to have research on cross-cultural adjustment issues of the teachers from Taiwan. They work and reside in Kinmen, a place its culture other than that of their upbringing residence. It is constructive for both teachers from Taiwan and the schools in Kinmen if the teachers can well adapt to the culture of Kinmen. To a certain degree, there is uniformity in schools, but when people get down and work with others, the most profound things should be paid attention to are the differences. The differences may appear slight, but the nuances can be enormously important. And the nuances are the embodiment of cultural difference. Andreatta and Ferraro (2009) gave a general definition that culture is everything that people have, think, and do as members of a society.

Through interacting with Kinmen natives, teachers from Taiwan develop ways to adapt to Kinmen culture. Noticing the process of acquiring Kinmen culture of these teachers inspired the researcher's interest in understanding the way they go through enculturation. The researcher has found that teachers from Taiwan and teachers growing up in Kinmen are two different groups in schools. In a working context, colleagues can work in harmony, but when it goes to private life, there is a clear distinction between teachers from Taiwan and those who originally live in Kinmen. People usually spend their leisure time and discuss personal things with their own group members. The situation let the researcher even wonder the reasons behind resulting in this phenomenon.

Need for the Study

Realizing the Importance of Cultural Adjustment of Teachers from Taiwan

Capital is in forms of tangible and intangible. Human capital belongs to the later one, but it is also important for yielding useful outputs over periods of time. In schools, excellent equipment at schools is a good capital in a sense, but every school needs teachers to carry teaching jobs or implement school policies. Only with good teachers or administrators can it be possible for schools to operate well. Better adjusting to Kinmen culture helps teachers from Taiwan conduct their work contentedly thus creating the possibility to lead the schools they serve to prosperous prospects. This study hopes to have the schools or Kinmen Education Bureau be aware of the importance of teachers' adjustment issues which may affect the operation of schools.

As difficulties, confrontations, or conflicts are unavoidable experienced by newcomers (Selmer, 2005), the teachers from Taiwan face challenges more or less related to cultural differences. If teachers can adapt to the culture in Kinmen, they may have fewer problems in working or living there. The drive of staying in Kinmen is demonstrated by teachers who keep adapting themselves to the new environment despite challenges they face in Kinmen.

Having Teachers from Taiwan in Kinmen Becomes a Current Trend

As mentioned above, in decades ago, positions in schools of Kinmen were historically dominated by the natives of Kinmen. The information about recruiting teachers was not necessarily announced on line so the information was mainly known by people in Kinmen. Another reason is that competition for being a formal teacher was not that intense before, and fewer people would consider teaching in Kinmen.

But now the situation has changed, vacancies for teachers in Taiwan are much less than before and the information of teacher vacancies is open to public in every county in ROC. Also, the process of selecting teachers is fairer than before. The chief judge grading the

competitors is a professor from Taiwan, not natives in Kinmen; and the problem of favoring Kinmen natives is no longer a big concern. Therefore, the proportion of teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen is getting increased. Accordingly, with open access to the information about teacher vacancies, and with less and less teacher vacancies in Taiwan, it is inevitable that teachers will continue coming from Taiwan to serve in Kinmen.

Cross-cultural adaptation is a significant challenge that derails newcomers' success (Pitts, 2009). It is necessary to conduct study for shedding light on the area of adaptation of the teachers from Taiwan in Kinmen since teachers from Taiwan are still on the increase and may even become the main proportion of the total amount of teachers in the future. Accordingly, the researcher finds the importance of looking into this unique teacher group whose number is still on the rise.

Pioneering on Having Attention on this Specific Field

Although there are empirical studies that have been done with regard to the issues of expatriates from companies, and few concerning the adjustment problems of transnational marriage in Kinmen, yet none has been found according to the settings of teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen.

Therefore, this domain now stands in need of research for understanding the problems that teachers from Taiwan may face and the process of their cultural adjustment. Since much less attention is being devoted to this area, it would appear that this study is the forerunner to pose an important issue in understanding the particular group—teachers from Taiwan working and living in Kinmen. Questions concerning adjustment condition of those teachers remained unanswered. This study is as well valuable to people who consider teaching in Kinmen helping them be prepared for the cross-cultural adjustment in the new environment.

The result of this study is thus significant in order to add to the body of knowledge in the field of cross-cultural studies among teachers on distant islands. Besides, it can create

awareness on issues of cross-cultural challenges and adjustments, not only to the teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen, but also to Kinmen natives in general in order to build a more productive workforce in years to come.

Research Purpose

Cultural clashes between foreign and local values are inevitable in which sojourners experience challenges (Phinney, 2003). The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges resulting from cultural differences faced by teachers from Taiwan in Kinmen and the adjustment made to cope with these challenges.

The study is conducted to provide useful information to persons working in schools or Kinmen Education Bureau and persons considering teaching in Kinmen. Additionally, it is hoped that knowledge of the sources of challenges of adjustment to Kinmen culture will be useful for schools in Kinmen to considerate if any actions can be taken to help teachers adapt well in Kinmen. So it should also be the goal of this study to provide guidelines for deans or notable persons in education field in Kinmen hoping to ensure success of both teachers from Taiwan and the schools.

Research Questions

The problem of this research is to study the challenges concerning cultural differences that teachers from Taiwan encounter and to examine whether they are able or not to overcome difficulties. Finally the school administrators in Kinmen can understand wheather the environment in schools is friendly to all the teachers.

1. What are the working adjustment experiences that teachers from Taiwan have in Kinmen?
2. What are the psychological adjustment experiences that teachers from Taiwan have in Kinmen?
3. What are the general adjustment experiences that teachers from Taiwan have in Kinmen?

Delimitations of the Study

This study is limited to teachers from Taiwan now in four junior high schools and two senior high schools in Kinmen; teachers serving in the junior high school on Lesser Kinmen are not included.

The use of a purposeful sample limits the inferences available. The study only includes teachers from Taiwan now in Kinmen. Caution has to be taken when drawing conclusions about people working in any government institutions in other remote places. Findings from the study may be representative of teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen, but may not accurately represent the perspectives of teachers in other places of ROC.

Representativeness of the sample population is by teachers from four junior high schools and the senior high schools of Kinmen. The nonrandom sampling is preferable in the situation of this study because only a small group of people will be observed and interviewed. According to Durrheim (2008), a small nonrandom sample consists of a few information-rich cases helps the researcher to understand the particular in depth and other contexts or groups similar to those studied.

Definition of Terms

Cultural Adjustment

Cultural adjustment can be seen as a process as individuals who were brought up in one cultural context move into a new cultural context, they tend to change their behaviors or mindset in order to adapt to the new environment. It is associated with individuals' emotional states, cognitive perceptions, and personal traits thus referring to individual's subjective well-being or satisfaction in their new cultural environments. (Kennedy & Ward, 1996; Apud, Johnson, & Lenartowicz, 2006). So adjustment represents the fit between individuals and the mainstream cultural context, which is the culture of Kinmen in this study.

Homeroom Teacher

A homeroom teacher is considered to serve as a pastoral role for their students, as well as an educational one since the homeroom teacher still has to teach a specific subject for several classes. A homeroom teacher in schools of Kinmen has to be with the students beginning from at least 7:00 in the morning to read with them, have tests for them, or supervise students' sweeping work. Then from 11:45 to 13:15, the homeroom teachers have lunch with their students, direct them doing cleaning work, and take a nap with them.

Aside from these routine daily works, there are many other unexpected events causing from their students that a homeroom teacher has to handle. For example, settling fights or quarrels between students, responding suggestions or even complaints from parents, correcting students from any misbehavior such as breaking public property of schools, cheating on tests, being rude at teachers or classmates, encouraging and soothing students from bad mood, and leading class activities like relay race, etc.

Subject Teacher

In contrast to homeroom teacher, a subject teacher less bothers to handle students' behavior problems or lead any class activity. What subject teachers need to focus is teaching a particular subject for students. Their time is free before 8:00am and from 11:45am to 13:30pm. No official responsibility is on them if students have problems outside the subject teacher's class. There are still some subject teachers in schools in Kinmen are willing to spend time in consulting or disciplining students, but these are not obligated.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The geographic and historical reasons make culture of Kinmen different from that of Taiwan. Unlike people in Taiwan, especially in cities of Taiwan, residents whose family-of-origin are in Kinmen have direct or indirect relationships since Kinmen is an island of just 153 km² and was isolated from outer world due to being a military reserve before mid-1990s causing residents on Kinmen hold strong connection with each other. Besides, middle-aged and elder residents of Kinmen have been deeply influenced by battles between Republic of China and People's Republic of China which lasted until 1978; Yang (2001) stated those residents stress conformity, discipline, and group honor, and these values are not that emphasized by young people growing up in Taiwan.

Hence, the teachers from Taiwan live and work in Kinmen, a new culture environment. Selmer (1995) pointed that differences in culture create most of the issues that cause adjustment difficulties for sojourners. In order to reinforce the willingness to stay in Kinmen of teachers from Taiwan, and to reduce the turnover in schools, it's crucial for teachers from Taiwan become comfortable with or acculturated to the culture in Kinmen.

Cultural Distance

Although Kinmen is administered by ROC, its unique position and historical background makes its culture different from Taiwan. When teachers from Taiwan perceive models of dissimilarity between people's interaction in Taiwan and Kinmen, psychologically they feel the cultural distance. Cultural distance refers to the differences in norms, values, and working methods between the parties (Woodside, 2010).

For teachers from Taiwan, the culture of Kinmen is the host culture. The amount of difference between native and host culture will be proportionally related to the amount of stress that teachers from Taiwan experience. Clearly, the higher the differences in social structure, life style, values, and etc, the greater an individual perceive the cultural distance. It

is conceivable that to be exposed to unfamiliar cultural influences is stressful. The literature even argues that where there is cultural distance, there is culture shock (Bochner, Furnham, & Ward, 2001).

Culture Shock

Oberg (1960, cited in Bochner & Furnham, 1986) coined the original meaning of the term culture shock as a negative, passive reaction to some unfamiliar and noxious circumstances. Nowadays, the proposition of culture shock is more positive; it does not emphasize only the depressing part of culture shock, but appreciates people's responses to new cultural challenges as a necessary and active process (Marx, 2001). That is to say, after confronting culture shock which stands for some reactions such as confusion, anxiety, frustration, inappropriate social behavior, or feeling isolated, etc, people who are in a new culture can benefit from the process of adaptation.

Not everyone feels the same degree of culture shock. Research suggests that the degree of difficulty experienced by sojourners is directly related to cultural distance between their own culture and host culture (Lee, Ng, & Soutar, 2007). Due to their finding, it is worthwhile to investigate if the teachers, especially from prosperous cities of Taiwan, face much shock since their original value systems and behavioral norms may create problems in this new culture environment.

U-Curve Theory

The theory related to culture shock and concerned to cross-cultural adjustment is the U-Curve Theory (UCT) as figure 2.1, which explains the adjustment process. Descriptions of UCT generally include four stages though the names of stages are slightly different in literatures.

In the first stage (honeymoon stage), individuals are excited about the new culture and show interest in some fresh scenes. Following the first stage comes the culture shock stage. Individuals feel disillusionment and frustration when they must seriously cope with living in

the new culture on a day-to-day basis. Then the adjustment stage depicts that individuals gradually learn how to behave appropriately. Finally, the mastery stage describes individuals have well equipped for functioning effectively in the new culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1991).

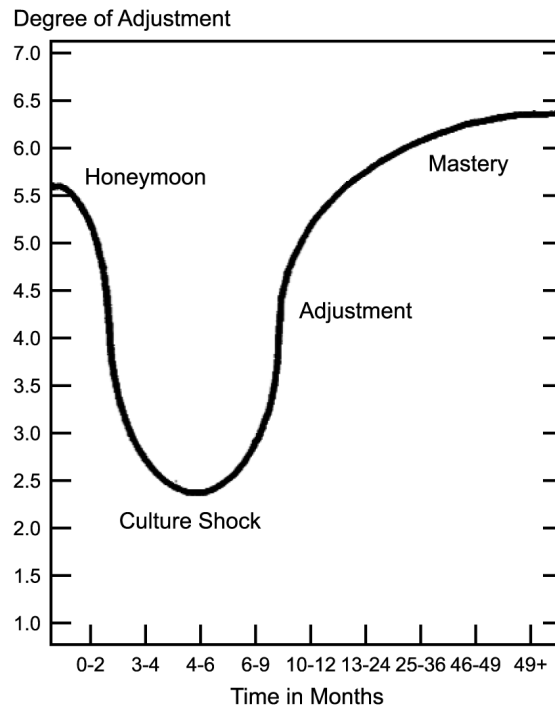


Figure 2.1. U-Curve model. Adapted from “The U-Curve Adjustment Hypothesis Revised: A Review and Theoretical Framework,” by J. S. Black & M. Mendenhall, 1991, *Journal of International Business Studies*, 22(2), 227. Copyright 1991 by the Journal of International Business Studies Issues.

In this study, after probing into the mind of several teachers from Taiwan, we can see if U-curve pattern emerges. The causes of adjustment at all stages may not be the same. The theory suggests that the use of time since living in a new culture is a key factor. The proper way to examine UCT is to study a sample of teachers from Taiwan at several times over a course of their assignments in Kinmen. But due to the lack of a longitudinal approach in this study, it is too hasty in accepting or rejecting the UCT pattern for this study. However, the

pattern could still provide a logical grounding for discussing the cross-cultural adjustment process of the teachers from Taiwan.

Acculturation Strategies

Spielberger (2004) organized the four acculturation strategies: integration, separation, assimilation and marginalization. A brief explanation is that individuals who maintain their in-group identity and, at the same time, maintain relationships with members of other groups are considered to have integration strategy. People who postulate an exclusive value on the maintenance of their own culture distinctiveness and do not cherish intra-groups relations are assumed to adopt a separation strategy. Those who are less concerned with the maintenance of their in-group identity but value intra-groups relations are thought to adopt an assimilation strategy. For individuals who matter neither their in-group identity nor relationships with members of other groups are thought to be marginalized (Berry, 2005).

Other research has shown that the way people relate to their social groups of reference as well as other relevant social groups in society has important impact on their psychological well-being and personal satisfaction (Fave, 2006). Now teachers from Taiwan have formed a close group and often do leisure activities together after work or on weekends, but the natives and teachers from Taiwan do not show hostility against each other.

Importance of Adjustment

For people who progress along the stages of being in a new environment, inevitably, the phase of adjustment occurs. In this phase, the literature put much emphasis on expatriates, who need to learn and understand the culture and logistics of the new country (Harrison, Shaffer, & Gilley, 1999).

Before discussing the particular relevance of expatriates of companies between teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen, it is perhaps useful to briefly introduce the main idea of expatriates.

The basic criterion of being an expatriate is that the individual is employed on behalf of a foreign resident employer for a limited period of time working in a host country.

Though teachers from Taiwan are citizens of ROC as people born in Kinmen are, they still have to deal with problems resulting from the particular culture of Kinmen. Besides, teachers from Taiwan all had signed at least a four-year contract about serving in schools of Kinmen, which is similar to expatriates who cannot serve in the host country without time limitation due to the contract with their company. So in a sense, teachers from Taiwan are similar to expatriates who are not citizens of a specific place of which they work in and plus have to overcome problems about cultural adjustment.

In the literature, we can see the reasons for expatriate failure (returning home country or ending the assignment before the assignment in a host country is completed) are highly influenced by not overcoming the consequences of culture shock (Christensen & Harzing, 2004). Those reasons for expatriate failure have been summarized by Briscoe and Schuler (2004) such as dissatisfaction with quality of life in foreign location, dissatisfaction with compensation and benefits, and lack of cultural and language preparation, etc. Cross cultural adjustment has proven to be related with the turnover, early returns, absenteeism, and work performance of expatriates (Inkson & Parker, 1999).

As the link between effective performance of expatriates and the process of cultural adjustment is strong (D'Annunzio-Green, 2004), the researcher assumes it is logical to link the problems of teachers from Taiwan and those teachers' acculturation states. If teachers from Taiwan cannot adjust themselves well, they may be like expatriates desiring for premature return which is damage to both the teachers and the schools.

Dimensions of Adjustment

Black and Stephens (1989) proposed three dimensions of expatriate adjustment: (1)work adjustment, (2)interaction adjustment, and (3)general adjustment. Work adjustment measures

the degree to which the expatriate feels psychologically comfortable in his or her overseas work role. Interaction measures the degree to which the expatriate feels comfortable interacting with host country nationals. General adjustment measures the degree to which the expatriate feels comfortable in the new living environment, including adjustment to housing, food, shopping, etc. The researcher outlined what the two scholars proposed as in figure 2.2.

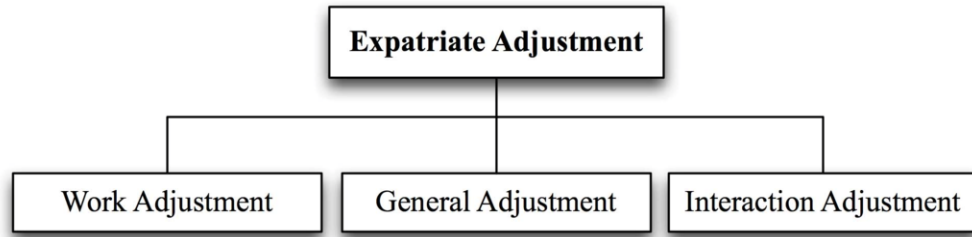


Figure 2.2. Dimensions of expatriate adjustment. Adapted from “The Influence of the Spouse on American Expatriate Adjustment and Intent to Stay in Pacific Rim Overseas Assignments,” by J. S. Black & G. K. Stephens, 1989, *Journal of Management*, 15(4), p538. Copyright 1989 by the Journal of Management Issues.

The three-dimensional view of expatriate adjustment provides a theoretical framework for this research. In later research, it will be necessary to examine whether the Kinmen local friendships can help the teachers from Taiwan overcome culture shock and any feelings of loneliness or isolation and also to examine if their stress coping to work and living in Kinmen is heavy.

Determinants of Adjustment

After Black and Stephens (1989) proposed a model of determinants of adjustment to international assignments, Harrison, Gilley and Shaffer (1999) expanded and tested the model by examining two additional individual factors and three positional factors as moderators of adjustment determinants:

1. Job factors

Job factors refer to a set of tasks and duties performed by a given individual and they are measured using questions about autonomy in job, role clarity, role discretion, role conflict and role novelty, etc.

2. Organizational factors

There are three perspectives of organizational factors, supervisor support, coworker support, and logistical support.

3. Non-work factors

There are mainly two kinds of non-work factors according to Black and Stephens (1989), culture novelty and spouse/ family adjustment. Culture novelty refers to the perceived distance between host and parent country cultures, and has been found to hinder non-work adjustment (Harrison et al., 1999).

4. Individual Factors

Factors include achievement, relational and perceptual skills, previous assignments and language fluency. The scale measuring achievement focuses on goal attainment, and social self-efficacy focuses on the development of interpersonal relationships.

5. Positional Factors

Positional factors have something to do with the nature of the work and stress at varying hierarchical levels and functional positions. There are three factors to this category, hierarchical level, functional area and assignment vector.

The three-dimensional view of adjustment and the model of determinants of adjustment provide a theoretical framework. They give some clues to the interview questions for this study and also suggest the researcher to observe the participants from those aspects. The non-work factor of cultural distance will receive special attention to in this study.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter introduced the research approach and procedure, data collection, and data analyses; these would be described separately as below.

Research Approach

Reasons for Doing Qualitative Approach

The purpose of this study is to explore the challenges that teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen face and how they adjust themselves. The phenomena studied in this research cannot be deduced but require empirical observation or interaction. The researcher wishes to capture the lived experience from the perspectives of those who live it and create meaning from it. Generating big narratives and theories does not go with this study. What this study desires to understand is the milieu, subcultures, lifestyles, and ways of thoughts of the teachers from Taiwan and all of that requires situational narratives. As recommended by Brinkmann and Kvale (2009), the ways in which participants view their worlds and create meaning from diverse life experience are myriad and can be best explored by qualitative approach.

Qualitative research seeks to understand the world as seen by those who live in it (Hatch, 2002). It produces knowledge that is contextual, linguistic, narrative, and pragmatic (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2009). This study adopts qualitative approach enables the researcher share in the understandings and perceptions of the participants and to explore how they structure and give meaning to their daily lives.

Phenomenological Qualitative Approach

One major genre of qualitative research is phenomenological approach. It seeks to explore, describe, and analyze the meaning of individuals' lived experience (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). This study applies a phenomenological qualitative approach, in which the

researcher attempts to explore the lived experiences in terms of challenges and adjustments of teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen in the context of cross cultural setting.

According to Lichtman (2009) the focus of phenomenological approach is on the rich description of the essential structures of the experience. In phenomenology approach, conducting in-depth interviews is a common method for gaining access to individuals' worlds. As a scientific undertaking, phenomenological researchers often search for commonalities across individuals, meaning to seek general knowledge on the basis of evidence (Anderson et al., 2011). So in this study, the researcher tries to search for the commonalities of participants' experiences rather than only focusing on what is unique to a single participant.

Data Collection

Methods

Since there are strengths and weakness to any single data collection strategy, using more than one data collection method can allow the researcher to combine strengths and also correct deficiencies of any source of data. This study thus has the methodological triangulation, which is the use of multiple methods to study a single problem (Anderson, Lofland, Lofland, & Snow, 2005).

For this study adopts qualitative approach, the instrument of data collection method includes observation, interviewing, and document analysis. These are used for exploratory purposes as the researcher take interest in; they are for generating new information, not for testing hypotheses.

Observation

According to Gold (1958), Lofland & Lofland (1994), & Mulhall (2003), there are four types of participant observer roles.

1. The complete participant:

The researcher becomes member of group being studied but does not tell members

they are studied. Since the group members do not know they are involved in a research, some people may question the use of this approach on ethical grounds.

2. The participant as observer:

The researcher spends long time with the group as an insider and lets members know they are studied. Similar to the complete observer, the participant is also an insider of the group, however, tells other people he or she is conducting a research.

In this study, the researcher takes on this kind of role for the participants who are teachers of Jincheng School, as the researcher is also a Jincheng School teacher. Although the participants are aware that they are being observed, they still can behave naturally as they trust the researcher and as they feel easy about the researcher's presence (Lofland et al., 2005). That is what the researcher expects during the observation on the Jincheng teachers from Taiwan.

3. The observer as participant:

The researcher spends only a limited amount of time observing group members and informs them they are being studied.

In this study, the researcher takes on this kind of role concerning the group members are not teachers of Jincheng School. Because the researcher in this study is a teacher of Jincheng School, the chance she interacts with teachers from other schools is during time of after-work and weekends. She is more like an observer than participant toward teachers in others schools.

4. The complete observer:

The researcher takes on the roll of a totally outside observer. And people being studied do not know they are being observed.

As DeJong, Monette, & Sullivan (2010) pointed out, the most commonly and also the most useful styles are the participant as observer and the observer of participant because the participants are voluntarily involved in the study. Besides, the researcher can

take both insider's and outsider's role, which avoids the risks of losing objectivity or not understanding the participants. The researcher in this study thus took these two kinds of roles as stated above.

Interview

In-depth interviewing

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2006), interviews may be the dominant strategy for data collection. Interviews are used to collect descriptive data in the other person's own words in order for the researcher to develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) offered the advice that participants or interviewees must be selected for conducting an in-depth interview. Selecting the pool of informants, or sample, is a matter of figuring out what portion of the population the researcher seek to study and then locating individuals who are members of the group.

In this study, data are gathered involving face-to-face in-depth interviews and the participants were specifically chosen to be teachers (administrative staff in schools is not included). Teachers deal with matters such as student behaviors, communication with parents, and collaborative working with other teachers, but administrative staff do not need to bother. Thus it is more appropriate to specify only teachers to be the participants for this study.

This reflects a purposeful sample based on the teachers from Taiwan to Kinmen who are available and willing to be interviewed in person. The researcher asks several open-ended questions to each participant during the in-depth interviews. The open-ended interview style enables the interviewees to express their attitudes and feelings. The interviews are also shaped by probing questions the researcher raises seeking further details and actual examples.

Semi-structured interview

The open-ended interview style stated above is different from structured interview which stresses the uniformity of questions and responses. A semi-structured interview is

based on open questions and has much flexibility in responding. Open-ended questions as compared to close-ended questions help the researcher better probe into the issues he or she is interested in (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010).

Active listening

An important tip for conducting in-depth interviews successfully is for the researcher/interviewer to be an active listener helping respondents feel free to share their story, pass on their knowledge, and provide their own perspective (Wengraf, 2001). Active listening is the interviewer's willingness and ability to hear and understand. The interviewer must listen with a completion and attentiveness that is not rigorous and in tune with nuance (Hoppe, 2007). The researcher practices active listening during interviews aims at motivating the interviewees to provide more descriptions and explanations concerning their process of cultural adjustment.

Singh (2009) pointed out some techniques remark active listening such as being interviewee focused, non-interruptive, non-judgmental, and acceptive of difference. So during the interviews for this study, the researcher needs to give the participants enough time to think out their responses and reserve judgment about the attitudes, values, or lifestyle of the respondents.

Document Analysis

Rapley (2007) reported that qualitative document analysis emphasizes on uncovering the richness of meanings and interpretation embedded within the text of some personal documents. Those documents are not prepared specifically for a request from the researcher.

The researcher for this study carries out an examination of texts or daily posts on the participants' blogs or their social network profiles like Facebook. The texts can provide insights into the participants' beliefs, identities and relationships that help the research have more authentic sources of information. In addition, some schools' regulations about students'

proper behavior on time of reading in the early morning, sweeping work, and noon time should be useful for this study.

Sample

Selection of schools in Kinmen

There are a lot of elementary schools in Kinmen. Some has less than 100 students. In high school stage, there are four junior high schools in Greater Kinmen, and one in Lesser Kinmen. Each township owns a junior high school. After graduating from a junior high school, a student goes to either National Kinmen Senior High or National Kinmen Agricultural & Industrial Vocational Senior High School. Higher level of educational system includes National Kinmen University whose former name was Kinmen Technology Institute. Kinmen also has branch campuses of Ming-Chuan University and National University of Kaohsiung.

The reason why the researcher explored experiences of only teachers in high school stage is as follows. The mentality and status of maturation differ a lot for students in different ages, so the researcher chose participants teaching in only high school stage in order to avoid the possibility that the challenges coming from handling nursing work as elementary school teachers may do, or pressure from writing or directing papers of university professors. Students' behaviors and things which have to be taken care of have more in common in high schools, so the difficulties teachers may face do not vary due to highly different job content.

Among the five junior high schools, Jincheng has the most students, about 1,400 students and with 33 classes for this school year. Kinmen Senior High School has more students than Kinmen Vocational High School, because lots of students in the vocational high school drop school themselves or being flunked out of the school for their constant bad behaviors or grades. Therefore, teachers have more number in Jincheng junior high school and National Kinmen Senior High School than other high schools in Kinmen. So a large

proportion of participants are chosen from these two schools in this study to fit the principal of proportionality.

Selection of participants

The sample size is set for 13 teachers. Basic criteria for selecting interview participants would be two in this study. First, the teachers' hometowns have to be places in Taiwan, not Kinmen. Second, the participants need to have spent more than two years in schools in Kinmen, and the longer the better.

Criterion based on the length of time working in Kinmen is helpful for the participants to recall the various challenges they have ever dealt with. New comers from Taiwan may not face as many events as those who have stayed at least two years and 10 months in Kinmen. Teachers start working on August from the year they obtain the job position. So teachers who start working in August, 2010 and 2011 are excluded from selection criterion for this study. Another reason for putting the length of time as a criterion is that it is more favorable for the researcher to understand the mental changes the participants have been through in all their years in Kinmen.

Information of the research participants

Through observation, interviewing, and document analysis, the researcher studied teaching and living experience experienced by 13 teachers from Taiwan currently working in Kinmen (11female / 2 male). The participants work in Jincheng, Jinning, Jinhu, and Jinsha junior high schools, and some work in National Kinmen Senior High School and one in Kinmen Vocational High School. As mentioned before that the participants were sampling is supported by Merriam (1998) that it based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore select a sample from which most can be learned.

Since gaining rapport with the interviewee is important for doing qualitative interviews

making the respondents feel safe, comfortable, and valued so that they can generate meaningful and useful data (Lichtman, 2006), all the participants in this study are personally acquainted with the researcher. The small sample size of this study generated perspectives aimed at stimulating thinking and identifying useful avenues for new research and not findings for generalization.

Table 3.1

Profile of Participants

Name	Current position	School	Place of origin	Duration of stay in Kinmen
Lily	director/ teacher	Jincheng junior high school	Taipei	4 years and 10 months
Claudia	homeroom teacher	Jincheng junior high school	Taipei	2 years and 10 months
Francis	homeroom teacher	Jincheng junior high school	Taichung	3 years and 10 months
Yvonne	homeroom teacher	Jincheng junior high school	Tainan	6 years and 10 months
Lydia	homeroom teacher	Jinning junior high school	Kaohsiung	2 years and 10 months
Henry	homeroom teacher	Jinning junior high school	Tainan	3 years and 10 months
Gina	homeroom teacher	Jinhu junior high school	Tainan	3 years and 10 months
Amy	homeroom teacher	Jingsha junior high school	New Taipei City	2 years and 10 months
Jenny	director/ teacher	Kinmen Senior High School	Tainan	3 years and 10 months
Sunny	director/ teacher	Kinmen Senior High School	Kaohsiung	4 years and 10 months
Peggy	homeroom teacher	Kinmen Senior High School	Taipei	4 years and 10 months
Alice	homeroom teacher	Kinmen Senior High School	Taoyuan	2 years and 10 months
Brian	homeroom teacher	Kinmen Vocational High School	Taipei	2 years and 10 months

Credibility of the Study

The multiple methods of data collection are to enhance the internal validity (credibility) of the qualitative research. The model of determinants of adjustment proposed by Black et al. (1991) as written in the section of literature review help with the designing of the interview questions in this study. After interviewing the first two participants, the researcher added the final question to have further understanding of the participants' desire in staying in Kinmen. The willingness of staying in Kinmen is also one of the indicators of their adjustment status. Since the researcher ~~is~~ took the role of "participant as observer" in Jincheng School, the researcher could easily observe some participants' work condition for a long time thus helped identify the real work situation of these participants. In this study, triangulation method also includes reviewing existing document of schools and remarks made by participants on line to make sure the credibility of this research.

Data Analysis

Each interview was digital audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher. After the interview had been conducted and observation had begun, data analysis involving coding field was carried out. The researcher listened to the interviews repeatedly and read the transcripts many times until themes or categories emerged. The researcher identifies them in the data and reinforced them with actual instances from the transcripts. Interpretations related to cross-cultural challenges and adjustments were made based on the emerged themes.

Figure 3.1 presents the example of coding process. The recurring similar concepts of data provided by different interviewees were captured and coded. Any particular comment of a single interviewee was eliminated according to the phenomenological approach this study refers to.

Q7: Have you ever met any difficulties in facing Kinmen natives? Please provide some practical examples.		
Code of the interviewee	Original Data	Coding
B	Every time I attended social occasions, the natives especially the elderly always used ways <u>from persuasion, urging, to forcing us to drink kaoliang liquor</u> and I really don't like it at all. Kaoliang liquor tastes good but it is too strong for me. The <u>meals for socializing are a lot here</u> . Those natives did the same thing to guests as well. But guests only have to stand it once, and we need to drink the alcohol more than we can bear <u>many times</u> .	Drinking kaoliang liquor is a must High frequency of meals for socializing

Figure 3.1. The first example of the coding process

Q10: How long do you desire to stay in Kinmen? In your opinion, will there any factors that can prolong or shorten the time you just mentioned?		
Code of the interviewee	Original Data	Coding
D	I still take teachers' joint entrance exams in Taiwan every year. So once I am admitted to a school in there, I will leave here. Actually <u>it really depends on whether my boyfriend can come to work in Kinmen or not. If he can come here to stay with me, I don't think it's necessary to leave here in the near future, but if he cannot, I think I will continue taking the exams to give myself the chance to go back.</u>	Couples are geographically separated (Insights for the section of discussions)

Figure 3.2. The second example of the coding process

The following Table 3.2 presents the categorizing result of the study

Table 3.2. *Data Analysis Structure of Adjustment*

NO.	CODE	NO.	CATEGORY	NO.	THEME
1.1.1	Leadership in school	1.1	Organizational behavior	1	Working adjustment
1.1.2	Intern communication				
1.2.1	Working hours	1.2	Organizational management		
1.2.2	Job content and teacher's specialty				
1.2.3	Rules in school				
2.1.1	Privacy issue	2.1	Interaction with Kinmen natives	2	Psychological adjustment
2.1.2	High frequency and no deep conversation				
2.1.3	Having courtesy to the elder				
2.2.1	Not frequently but with deep conversation	2.2	Interaction with people from/ in Taiwan		
2.2.2	Problem of friends' or family's stereotype				
2.3	Social support	2.3	Social support		
3.1.1	Good landlord and safety	3.1	Living	3	General adjustment
3.1.2	High price and not much furniture				
3.2.1	Price of goods is higher than Taiwan	3.2	Shopping		
3.2.2	Doing shopping on-line				
3.3.1	Couples are geographically separated	3.3	Relational issue		
3.3.2	The outer pressure of getting married				
3.4.1	High frequency of meals for socializing	3.4	Meals for socializing		
3.4.1	Drinking Kinmen kaoliang liquor is a must				
3.5.1	Tight relations among natives	3.5	Relation overrides rules		
3.5.2	The elder teachers can have more rights				
3.5.3	Planning is not favored				
3.6	Natives' close relationship with Mainland China	3.6	Natives' close relationship with Mainland China		
3.7	Finding healthy leisure activities to engage in	3.7	Finding healthy leisure activities to engage in		

Framework of Research Findings

The resulting structure of categories and themes was then used to for the framework of the study. It is too arbitrary to judge whether a person adapts well to the culture in Kinmen. However, it is reasonable to say if a participant is personally willing to continually stay in Kinmen, not forced by any pressure, then the participant enjoys working and living in Kinmen and adapts well to the life there. People do not desire for staying in one place unless they like there or have practical reasons for staying there, and that is the reason why the researcher removes the latter factor to understand if participants are fond of Kinmen itself.

As mentioned in chapter two in this study, Black et al. (1991) proposed a theoretical framework of dimensions of adjustment which are adjustment to the job, adjustment to interacting with host country nationals, and adjustment to the non-work environment.

From coding some interview data, the researcher found some participants also formed a new problem of interaction with people from or in Taiwan. Taking dimensions proposed by Black et al. (1991) as reference, the researcher adapted the framework for the study including three kinds of adjustment: working, psychological, and general adjustment as figure 3.2. in the next page.

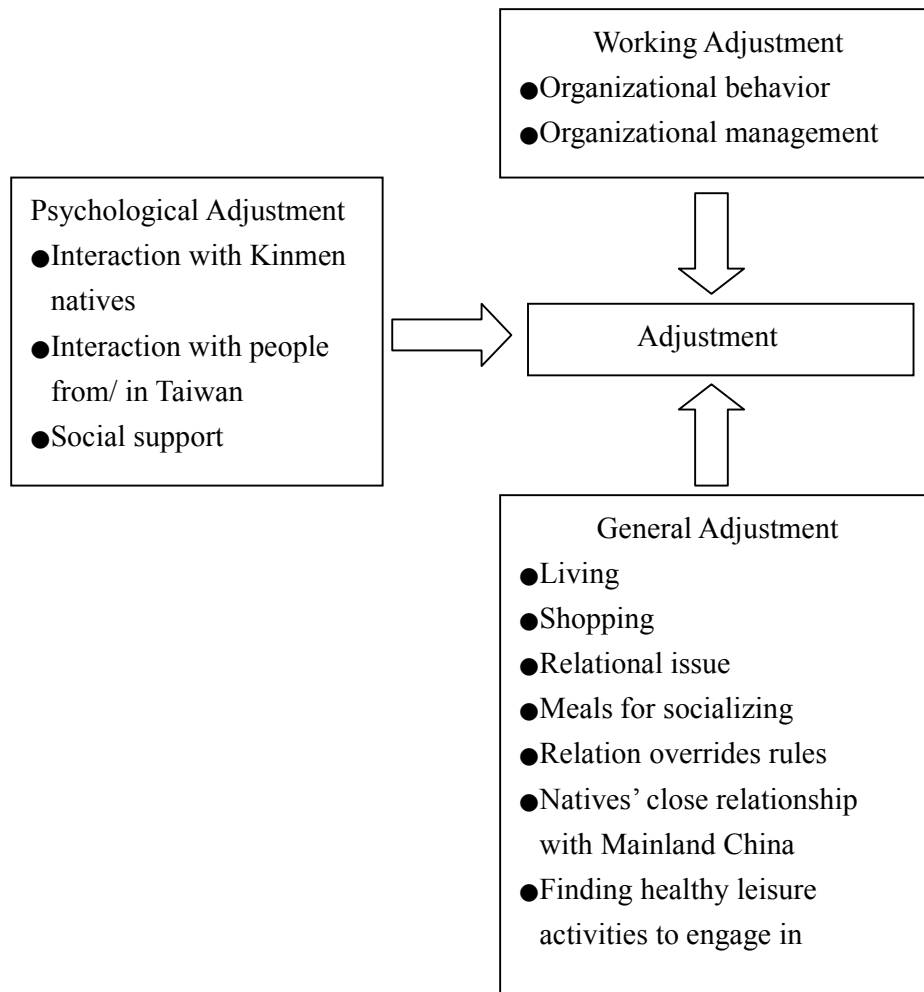


Figure 3.3. Research findings framework. Adapted from “The influence of the Spouse on American Expatriate Adjustment and Intent to Stay in Pacific Rim Overseas Assignments,” by J. S. Black, & G. K. Stephens, 1989, *Journal of Management*, 15(4), p538. Copyright 1989 by the Journal of Management Issues.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings and the extended discussion issues are placed in chapter four. The study tries to understand if the participants have any incidents of cultural adjustment in different schools or life in Kinmen. The research findings are introduced according to the three themes of the analysis of interview data. From the following presentation, it can be seen that the participants face more serious challenges of working adjustment. In working adjustment domain, the participants expressed their difficulties with tone of dissatisfaction and powerlessness. The way to interact with Kinmen natives or understanding how the natives handling things is another part that the participants are trying to learn. Positive experiences such as having nice landlords or living under safe public security were also truthfully presented. The researcher gave enough description by the participants to have readers understand the participants' genuine feeling and ideas.

The part of discussions identified several critical issues in findings. The issues include glass ceiling effect in Kinmen schools and homesickness. Glass ceiling effect may in fact result in young teachers' dissatisfaction and influence teachers' desire of staying in Kinmen. And separation with one's boyfriend/ girlfriend can deepen the homesick of teachers from Taiwan.

Findings

Theme One: Working Adjustment

The difficulties which the teachers pointed out were hard to be solved because they are mostly related to something rooted in schools— Deans or principals are hard to challenge, time schedule will not be changed in short time, and specific demands for students are things that teachers need to cooperate schools to execution.

Organizational behavior

Organizational behavior investigates the impact that individuals or groups and have on

behavior within an organization. It is an interdisciplinary field that includes sociology, psychology, and communication (Robbins, 2004). The participants found elder teachers possess more substantial leadership and schools are lack of upward communication.

Leadership in school

Every public high school no matter in Taiwan or Kinmen, has a basic personnel framework consisting of a principal, homeroom teachers, teachers who also have administrative duty, subject teachers, and also few civil servants. A school is not like a for-profit organization in which employees' payment or benefit is mainly decided by the company they belong to. Instead, public school teachers' payment, year-end bonuses and other welfare are regulated and secured by national rules but not by principals, besides, a principal also holds teaching position meaning who is still a homeroom teacher or subject teacher in the case he/ she does not be a principal yet has not retired.

Under such circumstances, within an organization, public school teachers should have more equal rights than usual employees in companies. In meetings, teachers should have rights to speak and offer their suggestions as well as the principal or deans can do. In Kinmen, principals and deans are all elder natives. However, different from the ideal state, one participant called her principal as "the emperor." And another participant described her experience of having meetings in school:

Whenever in a meeting, it's always the principal having the final say, and teachers' opinions are really just for references, and that's why our meeting time is usually quick, because we tend not to raise ideas; we only have to sit there, listen, and finish the snacks or meals prepared for us.

Another participant said how detailed her principal can interfere with:

When we were teaching, the principal sometimes suddenly opened windows of the classrooms and directly blamed students for not letting the air circulated. Or he even stepped into the classroom and picked up some little litter. To me, and I know some other Taiwan colleagues; do

not appreciate the principal's "enthusiasm." I think he can tell teachers that he prefers windows to be open, or he can softly speak to the teachers to let us ask students pick trash up.

When the researcher discusses the above instances with another participant, she said, "My principal and the academic dean have done similar things to my class, too. They would immediately demand what they want for the class despite the teacher was still in the process of teaching."

The participants referred to their feeling as "not being respected" or even described the principals or deans' such behavior as "rude." They expressed the instances with voice of shock and disbelief, as if they have never be treated like this before, or as if they do not believe such class interruption should happen. From their description, it is obvious that the principals and deans may not know the fact that teachers expect more authority during class time. A participant mentioned, "Well, I guess maybe it's because they grew up in a world of military control, so they feel no wrong with the management way of centralization."

A participant shared her experience about teaching in Taiwan. She said,

In the two different schools I stayed as an intern teacher and a substitute teacher, people [staff in schools] fully respect teachers' interaction with students in class and do not interfere in teachers' classroom management unless the teacher does something unacceptable. The schools gave us more discretion than the school now I am working for.

Intern communication

Influenced by the climate that principals and deans have the greatest power in school, downward and lateral flows of communication are more common than upward communication. That means communication that flows from the principal/ deans to teachers and flows between teachers happen more often in schools. A participant talked about the actual situation during meetings lack of upward communications in her school.

It's actually useless to speak out our opinions in meetings. Although they [deans or principal]

always ask, “Anybody has other questions or ideas?” but rarely there are teachers raising more words. At the beginning I felt it’s odd. But later I understood why. Teachers from Taiwan in fact are deemed to have no status to ‘challenge’ those heads as they are elders, so any new ideas different from the way people did would just be seen crazy, and no heads value those crazy ideas proposed by a young teacher from Taiwan. And why don’t other senior native teachers speak much? (...) from my observation, they tend to solve problems under the table, meetings are just routines, and that becomes a tacit understanding among teachers here. It’s a waste of time to me when meetings are only meaningless forms.

A participant shared similar story, too, about the common of lateral communication but rare upward one. The following contains the context and her reason.

We only complain about some unfair things with each other [other co-workers], because we know there’s nothing we can do about those things like no system of rotation between homeroom teachers and subject teachers. It’s not fair to make some teachers be homeroom teachers forever, while some can always be subject teachers. Schools in Taiwan, rotation has been done for years. But how dare we question this unreasonable phenomenon? Senior natives are like kings and queens; their status is unshakable in school. It’s actually the privilege the school reserve for them. So how can we say and change anything?

Upward communication is necessary when it concerns offering suggestions or opinions of changes. However, teachers from Taiwan have noticed some special organizational climate such as giving senior natives the best treatment is a must, or senior natives have the real power by schools’ allowance, so they have learned to talk some grievance only in private, and feel powerless to give chiefs some advice. A participant said, “one can be onto the blacklist if he/she has ever proposed any ‘rebellious’ suggestion in public.

Organizational Management

About teachers’ working hours in Kinmen, the participants said they have to begin daily

working early, have no time for resting during noon time, and need to attend many research-and-study programs for teachers on weekends. For schools' positions, no match between job and its required specialty happens, which caused the participants who are responsible for things beyond their specialty a lot of pressure. The participants talked about the need to stress uniformity among students and schools prescribe right manners in many details.

Working hours

In Kinmen, senior high schools begin their early-reading activity at 7:00a.m., and junior high schools begin theirs at 7:15a.m. Homeroom teachers have to come to school by or before that time. There is no breaking time for junior high school homeroom teachers at noon, but senior high school ones can take a rest during noon time. Here is the statement of a participant from a junior high school.

I come to school around 6:45a.m to watch my students doing cleaning work of outside area. Sometimes the road is full of leaves and litters, it's impossible to clean our responsible area well if students don't start working early, which means I have to be here early too. Without teacher's watching, students may get lazy. Sometimes at thinking of my ex-colleagues in Taiwan don't have to be in class until 7:30, I feel more homesick and also a little frustrated. I can't imagine I have to wake up this early every day until their graduation. (...) but I guess after this grader's graduation, I will still be a homeroom teacher.

After watching students cleaning outside area, homeroom teachers need to stay with their students during early-reading period to 7:45am, and then from 8:00am, the first period begins. Having taught for the morning time, homeroom teachers in the junior high schools still can't take a rest during noon time (teachers in the senior high schools can), and the reason is described as below.

The most unbearable thing for my work I think is the everyday tiring noon time. Having lunch

is supposed to be a relaxing moment, but I have to supervise students' lunch manners, from lining up nicely, wearing hats and masks for persons scooping dishes, starting eating together, eating quietly, to wiping plates and other hygiene problems. School has different teacher every day rank every class' lunch behavior to have competition. Truly I can't eat well under with all these work. The more tiring thing is that I need to supervise students cleaning classroom area after they finish their meals. Why don't the schools arrange a particular period of time for cleaning as schools in Taiwan do? Watching outside cleaning area in the early morning and classroom cleaning area at noon time is really a great burden for homeroom teachers.

Another participant expressed her stress about noon time, too.

It's such a hurry to finish so many things before 12:30pm. Every noon is like a battle to me. I am busy with keeping students' order and hygienic manners, urging them to finish cleaning works after lunch. As soon as the bell rings at 12:30pm, all the classes should quickly turn from a busy status to a silent status— sleeping. The school requires everyone to sleep with their eyes closed! And homeroom teachers have to make sure they do it. It's another battle to me to make all of them fall into sleep or pretend sleeping.

Some participants grumble about research-and-study programs often occupy their weekends, especially for small schools with few teachers. A participant said, "The Kinmen compulsory education advisory group holds lots of learning programs for us, and many of the courses are on weekends, I feel no rest on the following weekday if I go to the courses on weekend."

Another participant from a rather small-sized school said,

In big schools, a teachers takes shifts of having courses, maybe once in couple months, but for teachers in small schools like me, we have to take courses designed for teacher at least once a month, and often more than once a month. Because the Kinmen compulsory education advisory group asks each school to have certain number of teachers join the programs, and there are only few teachers on the rotation list for my school, so it's soon to take another turn of having

course for us. You see, (showing her pocket calendar to me) in this month, three weekends are taken by research-and-study programs, I really feel tired with that, but I dare not skip the courses as some elder teachers often do. They are immune from criticizing, which teachers like me are not.

Job content and teacher's specialty

Kinmen Education Bureau does not allow substitute teachers to take administrative work, but only formal teachers can. That is different from Taiwan where substitute teachers can be directors. The result is that some positions that require teachers with certain specialty cannot find qualified people. The second best solution is to ask young formal teachers to do those administrative works no matter what are their specialties. No elder teachers accept to do work that may double their burden for doing job they are not good at.

In one school, two participants talked about their experience of taking administrative job that does not fit their specialty at all. One said, I was very unhappy before when being the director that has to be responsible for school's information technology (IT) problems. They [the school] didn't care I am a science teacher and totally not a computer person. They just needed someone to fill in the position." The other participant who is a social studies teacher and now taking care of this job said similar thing, "When Internet disconnection problem happens in school, my phone keeps ringing all the time, teachers call me and ask me to fix the problem soon. Whenever this kind of thing happens, I want to dig a hole right away and hide myself in it, to avoid those crazy phone calls." A participant in another school said, "In my school, the previous counseling director and the one now are not counseling education teachers. The counseling education teachers are all elder ones, they all refuse to take this responsibility and no one dare to settle this problem, so it's always a teacher teaching other subject to do the work. "

Rules in schools

Schools in Kinmen emphasize order and uniformity a lot. In morning assembly, early-reading period, lunch time, or nap time, students' behaviors are all under scoring, and basing on these scores, schools announce and reward classes who are the winners. A participant said, "Every noon I have to supervise my class' order and hygienic manner on scooping dishes. After they all sit in their seats with food in their plates, they will wait for me to say 'start eating,' so they can begin eating lunch all together. I didn't come out with such idea; it's the school's rule. If I don't obey such rule, my class' grades on this item would be very low."

A participant talked about her feeling about this kind of competition.

In Taiwan, schools also hold similar competition on order and tidiness, but the grading range doesn't go as far as the school here. I mean, why do my class' scores on assembly should be deducted when my students don't wear exactly the same? They wore uniforms, weren't they? If the weather is cold to some people but fine for some others, I think it shouldn't be a problem if some students wear jackets and some don't.

Another participant shared her thoughts about maintaining uniformity of nap time.

Nap time is for students, not for teachers. Apparently teachers can hardly fall into sleep, or we may not know if students do other things while we're sleeping. School grades every class' performance on that. But I don't appreciate with this regulation. I think it should be the homeroom teachers' power to allow students to do other silent things besides taking a nap. Few students don't want to sleep at all and we need to force them to do so. Isn't it a torture for both of the parties? The school I stayed in Taiwan, some students take a nap, some sit still with a peaceful mind in the back of the classroom, and some read by themselves, the school didn't ask for uniformity for every class, and I prefer that way, it's more natural and humane for both teachers and students.

When the researcher asked the participants about whether they still follow their schools'

regulation, their answer is yes. Why do their action different from their attitude? One said, “Many senior teachers who have taught for dozens of years don’t find these rules strange, and they attach importance to competitions on order and tidiness. I would be seen as a freak if I weren’t one of them.”

Theme Two: Psychological Adjustment

Instead of naming “interaction adjustment” in this part, the researcher put the theme as psychological adjustment to contain broader information provided by the participants. The participants found the way to interact with Kinmen natives is much different from their interaction model they used to have. They have the stress of facing probing questions about personal things asked by natives, and they need to maintain image after work as students or people they know can be easily encountered on streets. The participants are frequently getting in touch with Kinmen natives though without deep conversation. And internet to them is a key to interact with friends or family in Taiwan. They also have interacting problem with people in Taiwan due to some stereotype about Kinmen their family or friends hold. The positive experience they shared is receiving social support from colleagues and family.

Interaction with Kinmen Natives

The participants find it is hard to protect some privacy as interacting with Kinmen natives. And they interact with natives often, but mostly for working only. They also have to pay attention to being very respectful to senior teachers.

Privacy issue

Kinmen natives tend to ask many questions about others’ personal issues, and that causes trouble to some participants. One of them said. “They seem like don’t know when to stop asking me questions about me. Where I live now, single or not, people I know in Kinmen, things like that. Not only colleagues keep asking this sort of questions, neighbors or

shopkeepers too. Are they really interested in me? I can feel they have no hostility, but I am just not used to it.”

Another participant said a pattern of those questions.

When they see a new face, they usually start the conversation with “Are you Kinmenese or Taiwanese?” and then they would ask like, “What do you do in here?” “Which school do you serve in?” “Are you a formal or substitute one?” “Do you know somebody in your school? He or she is an acquaintance to me.” “Where do you live now?” “Any plan about buying a house here?” They keep asking tons of questions to me in a short period of time. In fact, I don’t like to be deeply known by those I am not familiar with, but with those questions, it’s hard to hide something personal.

A participant talked about why she is not willing to talk about herself to others. She said, “At first, I didn’t think too much and answer all the questions about me, but later I found that in a small place like here, news spread with fast speed, so soon I be known by people I even don’t know. It’s weird to me. Now I have learned to talk less about myself.”

A participant extended her view on this issue. She said, “Maybe the shopkeepers think chatting helps gain relationship with clients. But to me, I like the way ‘business is business.’ When they [shops] try to build closer rapport with me, I begin to feel the burden. Having pure client-and-store relationship is what I am comfortable with.”

Many of the participants mentioned they cannot relax outside.

One said more specifically, “I didn’t have to act like a serious teacher after work in Taiwan, because I was just a normal person on the street, seldom people recognized me. But here, things are different. It’s easy to bump into students, parents, colleagues and others I know. If I wore too informal or walked with a male friend, I would become one of the characters among natives’ or students’ gossip topic.”

High frequency and no deep conversation

When asked about getting more in touch with natives or people from Taiwan, all the participants replied “the natives.” But then they added the view that “Quality should be more important than quantity.” “Kinmen natives are more than people from Taiwan. Because of the work, I talk things over with the natives more often, but content is related to business only.”

A participant also said, “Weather, information of shops, school’s activities and other school things are what I would talk with colleagues. If it’s about expressing my own point of view about some persons or school’s policies, it’d be better not to talk to natives. Or all the people will quickly know what I have said.”

Having courtesy to the elder

Being polite to the elder is especially important in Kinmen. Although the elder person might not do things worthy of other’s respect, people still have to show great respect or sometimes even tolerance to that person. A participant told, “When I first got here, I didn’t pay attention to nodding and greeting senior teachers on corridors or stairs in school. Later when I knew they categorized me into impolite ones, I was surprised. I didn’t know they see these small details that seriously until then.”

There were participants complaining about some old natives tend to receive the benefits and enjoy others’ respect yet avoid responsibilities.

The elderly have the privilege to do easy job. They can choose which classes to teach; they refuse to be substitute homeroom teachers; they don’t train sports teams and no one can do anything about it; they can be subject teachers till retirement. Since even the principal and deans do not correct their behaviors, then in what qualification can we fix this situation?

Another one said, “One of the survival rules here is to act out courtesy to those who are senior in school. Having a superiority complex due to one’s seniority is normal and acceptable in Kinmen.” And one participant said, “Seniority matters a lot here. The old

natives like to stamp their authority with their old age, and with many old teachers in my school, it's difficult to make them cooperate with each other. Each of them is a king or queen. And they all desire for special nice treatment.”

Interaction with People from/ in Taiwan

The participants do not interact with people from or in Taiwan a lot, but they can share what is really on their minds with each other. Some of their relatives or friends in Taiwan hold some fixed opinions about Kinmen, and the participants need to work on breaking their stereotype.

Not frequently but with deep conversation

Different from interacting with Kinmen natives limited to superficial topics, the participants indicate they can share some load on their minds to people from or in Taiwan. One said, “I never talked my complaints or thoughts about the school to any natives. To me, they are like a formidable circle, they have their own world.”

The participants mentioned they rely on Internet media a lot to communicate with their trustful friends. Through using MSN, Skype, Facebook, blogs, and other e-sources, the participants maintain connection with people across the Taiwan Strait, and also, Taiwanese colleagues in Kinmen. One explained the reason, “In school, there's no personal space for us to talk privately. Some elder native teachers do, they have access to some unused spaces and gather there, the rooms have been places tea pots, tea cups, and other things accompanied chatting. Obviously those are their territories; ours is on the Net, so Net is indispensable for young teachers like me to talk freely without being noticed by others.”

Problem of friends' or family's stereotype

A few participants talked that they face a difficulty communicating with people who have never been working in Kinmen, and those are their friends or family in Taiwan. Here is

a participant's statement.

When I talked the challenges I encounter in Kinmen to people I know in Taiwan, mostly their reaction was like "How come? Students there must be pure and naïve!" Or even before I say anything, they would say first, "How is Kinmen? Isn't the place pure?" However, the reality is that plenty of tress on this island doesn't mean the children are pure. Now the Internet reaches far and wide, and other kind of media too, and the students know things no less than the students in Taiwan. Few of them also have serious behavior problems, and the phenomenon of students' smoking is prevalent. The landscape is more natural than cities in Taiwan indeed, but it's not an island of heaven as people outside here imagine. At the beginning, they sounded like distrust me when I talked some hardships related to my work.

More participants mentioned a typical comment of people from Taiwan, many would say, "The monthly bonus for officials/ teachers in remote islands is great. What a sum of extra money!" But the reaction of the participants was not that thrilled, "There is not much left and even insufficient if it is paid for the high rent fees here and flight tickets."

Social Support

"It's my colleagues' credit for helping me get over many difficulties in the beginning stage of working here." One participant said with gratitude. Another said, "When I was a fresh homeroom teacher, there are a lot of regulations in the school that are new to me. I would have spent more time getting familiar with the school's requirements without some kind colleagues' help." A participant who is a director also shared, "The budget of my first case was overwhelming, the total was 980,000 NT dollars. But thanks to some colleagues' guidance, the case finally could be closed smoothly."

Many participants mentioned their connection with their family in Taiwan is tight. "My life here is actually lonelier than in Taiwan. In weekdays, life is working during day time and then being back home all alone in a suite after work. Hearing my parents' voice is warm to

me.” Some said they never felt before that family can be so important. “My families are reliable listeners to hear me talking about school things. Words are easily spread by mouth here. I don’t need to be worried that people may tell others my thought if the listeners are my families and they are far from here.”

Theme Three: General Adjustment

The theme of general adjustment contain a lot of content related the real incidents the participants encountered in life. The most mentioned thing is the culture of drinking kaoliang liquor. Some participants did have culture shock about having to drink a lot of kaoliang liquor and still cannot get over with it. The second challenging thing for the participants is to know many natives solve problems or get some advantages through their relations, rather than through formal methods. Nevertheless, this theme contains the most comment of praise from the participants in some other domains.

Living

Other than working, the participants spend much time at home or doing activities outdoors. Living environment plays a big role in leaving the participants impression on Kinmen. They have positive comment on landlords and social security, but they also expressed the renting fee is high.

Good landlord and safety

When asked about living condition in Kinmen. Most participants praise the good public security in Kinmen. Two participants even said they often don’t lock their door as many natives do. In Kinmen, it’s normal to see people hanging helmets on scooters, not putting them inside scooters, which shows that leaving helmets outside is nothing need to be concerned.

About the different landlords of the participants, they also get good comment from their

tenants. None of them would hurry tenants to give the rent fee. Some participants moved to other suites before the expiry of their contracts with the original landlords. But all their landlords didn't take the deposit away. One participant said, "My renting contract with the previous landlord was for a year. But I decided to change a place to live by the sixth month. She [the landlord] gave me back all my deposit after she checked my room. I didn't expect she would do that! But I heard landlords here tend to refund the tenants' deposit as long as the suite is not damaged. How nice is that!"

High renting price and not much furniture

Different from good experience with the safe living environment and nice landlords, the participants found the renting fee is not as friendly as people think, especially in Jincheng township. "My suite is very small. It's no bigger than 2 pings, and it costs me 5,500 NT dollars a month, the fees of water, electricity, and internet are not included. The price is almost the same as in some outskirts of Taipei. (One ping is 3.3057 square meter)." What the participant dictated was true in Kinmen. A small suite is no less than 5,000~6,000 NT dollars a month, and a suite with a simple cooking area can be 8,000~10,000 NT dollars a month. Some people may think renting fee is cheap in Kinmen, but it's actually almost the same as the current prices in Taitung, Kaohsiung, and New Taipei city.

Besides, the suite usually contains only a bed and a desk. A participant mentioned, "I still have to buy a small refrigerator and a closet for my room." Another one said, "Washing machine, appliances for heating food, a chair, and a closet were not equipped in my suite before, I bought them afterwards. My case is not exceptional. My other colleagues dealt with the same thing as well." So for living in Kinmen, the responsibility of buying some necessary furniture or appliances does not usually fall on landlords, but on tenants.

Shopping

Many products in Kinmen are sold with higher price than those in Taiwan, and the participants begin to shop on-line to have more varieties of choices of goods and sometimes with cheaper price.

Price of goods is higher than Taiwan

Many participants feel the same things sold in Kinmen are more expensive than those are in Taiwan. A participant told,

From my experience in these four years, I found only steamed buns are cheaper here. All the other things whether they are food or for use, are more expensive than Taiwan, and sometimes they are much more expensive. One time I wanted to have a plastic box putting under my bed, and I remember it cost more than 300 NT dollars in the store here, but I knew it can only cost a little bit more than 100 NT dollars in Taiwan, so I held my desire for buying it that time.

And the high prices of goods in Kinmen makes some participants keep bringing things from Taiwan. A participant said, “When I go back to Taiwan, I can’t help but buy some things and take them to Kinmen. At the thought of their prices in Kinmen, I feel it’s worthy to buy them.” And another one also expressed similar ideas, “I would rather carry things by myself through taking a plane but buying them in Kinmen with much higher price.”

One participant provided a brief analysis for the reason of the higher prices of commodities in Kinmen, “Things whether they are some raw material or finished products, have to be on ships or flights to here, and so the transportation charges are adding on the final prices of goods. But I don’t think it’s the main reason. The main reason should be the phenomenon of monopolization here. How can price competition happen among only few stores?”

The participant’s view of monopolization can be seen in an example. There is a stationery store near Jincheng gym. It didn’t lower down prices of its goods until a new

stationery store opened near it. The new one is a branch store of a chain shop from Taiwan, so prices of things in that store are the same as those in its chain shops in Taiwan. The original one near Jingcheng gym soon cut down goods' prices after the new open one began running its business.

Doing shopping on-line

As there are not many physical shops to choose products and also because of higher prices of goods in Kinmen, some participants said they do more shopping on-line in Kinmen than they did in Taiwan. A participant who is an avid reader said, "I never felt the e-bookstores are this important! All the books I purchased during my time in Kinmen are from e-bookstores. The books I order on-line are sent to 7-11 so it's convenient though some transportation charges may be added on them." A participant expressed her change of shopping behavior, "Many things cannot be found in the few physical stores here. I gradually turned my reliance on real shops to virtual shops. There are a lot of choices on e-shops or TV-shops, they solve the trouble of finding things I need and they sell things with rather reasonable prices."

Relational Issue

One hard thing for some participants is to suffer from being apart from their boyfriend/ girlfriend. They hope either they go back to Taiwan to teach or their boyfriend/ girlfriend can come to work in Kinmen. Some single female participants have pressure from elder colleagues who deem getting marriage is necessary for women.

Couples are geographically separated

Three female participants' boyfriends are in Taiwan. They desire a lot for the day they can be together with their boyfriends. One of them said, "It's really a test for both of us. I fly back at least once two weeks, but it's really difficult. As soon as I finish the 5 year contract

with Kinmen government and if my boyfriend and I are still together, I will leave Kinmen.” Another participant talked about how much she desires for letting her boyfriend come to Kinmen. “I am waiting for the good news of my boyfriend getting hired by National Kinmen University. This July he is going to be a doctor of life sciences and now he is applying to teach in Kinmen, and of course his coming matters a lot to my willingness of staying in Kinmen. We both can’t suffer from being apart for a long time.”

The outer pressure of getting married

Many participants in this study are over 30 years old. They do not hurry to get married, but some elder people around them care their marriage more than themselves. A participant said, “The elder teachers sometimes ask me when I decide to settle down, and they are also zealous about introducing men for me. They ask and do the same thing to other young teachers. Frankly I am not used to this kind of caring. Isn’t it normal to be single nowadays?”

Another participant has known how people comment on her single colleagues. She said, Three female teachers who are all over 40 in my school are single. Some married teachers and especially the elder ones, gave some comments about them such as ‘Oh...she is too capable... men may not handle such a capable woman’, or ‘Her figure may be the problem, she will be more good-looking if she is thinner.’ The comments are kind of materializing women to me. Though I disagree the view of deeming marriage as an important element for making women complete, I am now afraid if I am still single in the future that some strange comment may also spread behind me.

Meals for Socializing

The participants have to join in many socializing meals especially those who carry administrative duties. At the meals, Kinmen natives usually constantly persuade non-natives to drink much kaoliang liquor. That cause some participants have some burden in mind.

High frequency of meals for socializing

One of the things that the participants, specifically those who are directors, mentioned they have to be accustomed to is to join many social meals. They said, “After a tiring daily work, the only thing I want to do is to take a break at home or do some leisure activities with friends, so every time the dean or principal tells me to go to a social meal at night, I feel reluctant but still have to show up.” And other sharing of thoughts: “Most people join in the social meal are not acquaintances to me, but they and school deans , principal, and some important others know each other well, so they feel free and can make jokes on others at meal gatherings. Teachers like me act as foils to their meetings.”

A participant provided her understanding to explain the high frequency of social meals in Kinmen.

Dozens of years before during tense period with mainland China, Kinmen was still under curfew and schools asked teachers to take night shifts at schools. Teachers during that time had no place to go to but chat and had dinner with each other to have fun. Thus naturally elder native teachers have deemed social meals as part of their life. Besides, when guests come to schools to make a speech or for other activities by evening, they sometimes can't catch flight to go back to Taiwan, and schools will have dinner with guests to manifest politeness. In Taiwan, it's easy have a round trip within one day for school guests, so arranging meals for guests is not necessary for schools in Taiwan. However the special location of Kinmen makes schools on this island need to do more to play the role of hosts well.

Drinking Kinmen kaoliang liquor is a must

Accompanied by the social meals, is Kinmen kaoliang liquor, the pride of Kinmen. Kaoliang liquor is the alcohol of sorghum. The incorporation of Kinmen kaoliang liquor was established in 1952, and has been flourishing for over half a century. Every native has received 6 dozens of kaoliang liquor a year for free since they were young, and many families

have stored stacks of kaoliang liquor at home. Natives have learned to drink kaoliang liquor for many years, and their favorite type is the alcohol content with 58%, but the strong taste of this famous alcohol remains fresh to some non-natives, and they may face the stress of having to drink it for many cups.

Almost every participant referred to the experience of being urged to drink kaoliang liquor causing them pressure at social meals. One participant said, “Many elder natives always keep urging others to drink more kaoliang liquor. They often say people can learn to drink a lot by times of practice. How can I drink only little of kaoliang as they are the deans, principals, officers from the government?” Another one who finds being urged to drink alcohol is detestable. She said,

No matter how many excuses cannot ward off the countless persuasions of asking me to drink kaoliang liquor. I dare not show my unhappiness in fear of ruining the happy atmosphere at meal. The contradiction is that the natives think people to be impolite to decline invitation of drinking; while I think they make others drink as much alcohol as better regardless others’ willingness is an act of disrespect.

A participant showed more understanding of this drinking culture and found her own way to cope with it.

I think they [the natives] keep inviting people to drink kaoliang liquor mainly because they see it as a precious thing and want to share it with those who haven’t learned how to appreciate it. Though knowing they have no bad intension, I can’t stand too many cups of kaoliang liquor still. So every time at the beginning of the social meal, I tell others that my limit quota is five cups. After drinking five cups, I stop drinking anymore. Now my colleagues all know that my kaoliang liquor limit is five cups, so they won’t force me to drink more of it.

Relation Overrides Rules

Kinmen natives have formed a close net of relationship. They have direct or indirect

relationship with each other, and they often solve problems by assistance of the people they know, rather through some formal channels. Planning well ahead may interfere future changes demanded by some important persons, so leaving rooms for changes at planning stage is required. And when rules affect the elder teachers' rights, rule can be modified.

Tight relations among natives

One of the greatest culture shock for the participants is to learn to accept the often change of rules in many ways. Kinmen is not a big place and people recognize each other easily. A participant talked about her experience, "When I was first in Kinmen, I bought things in a grocery store and the owner told me she is my principal's cousin. At that time, I felt surprised at the coincidence. But now I have met too many people who are related to the principal; they are his friends, close or far relatives, neighbors, or friends of his friends or relatives, etc, and they all claim to be familiar with the principal."

Since many natives think they know somebody, they try to use their relation to have little privilege in some ways. Many participants shared their different experience for this study. The followings are two examples happening in schools.

Many parents of my class seem to know the deans or the principal. Sometimes when something happens in my class, parents would go directly to the principal office or discuss directly with deans. But they should have talked to me, the homeroom teacher first, not to others who had no clues about what really happened in my class or who do not understand those students. The parents act as they distrust me and want to solve problems with people who they know. I feel like an outsider of their world when this kind of this happens. And then I would receive some guides or slight suggestions from superiors about how to handle the kids of those parents. I really feel like an outsider of the natives' tight circle whenever this kind of thing happens.

Another real incident is as below.

A student of my colleague's class dyed his hair in light color, and soon some other students in

her class begin to act like him dyeing their hair. Though Ministry of Education does not allow schools to bother students' hair style or color, the boy's homeroom teacher still hoped the boy can dye his hair in dark color thus she called his mother talking about this. But to her surprise, the mother called a high-rank officer in Kinmen Education Bureau, and then the officer called the dean of students' affairs. The next morning, my colleague was instructed had better not to interfere in the boy's hair matter. I don't remember this kind of things happen even once in the school I taught for a year in Taiwan.

Some participants took instances outside schools as examples. "A native told me that he doesn't have to worry to be fined because he has friends in Traffic Division here." Another one said, "A native I know work in Kinmen County Government, she said her friend works in Kinmen Environmental Protection Bureau, and her friend informed her every time before the public bathroom checks. The checks should be surprising ones, but they aren't surprising to her, so the bathrooms she supervises are able to get high scores."

The elder teachers can have more rights

Some participants talked their experience about that rules can be changed if they are against advantages of some senior teachers. From the Confucian's point of view, it may be a deed of virtue to show more respect for the elderly, however, under the circumstance that many teachers are very busy at school, some teachers favor that every teacher in a school should be treated equally. Participants from three different junior high schools in Kinmen all have mentioned some better treatments for the elderly. One described an instance below in more detail.

Only one senior teacher is willing to be homeroom teacher in our school, she is about 50 years old. The other senior teachers refuse to be homeroom teacher or do any administrative work; the only position they accept is to be subject teachers, who take care of teaching curriculum only. Every teacher knows that the job content of a subject teacher is the simplest, so schools in

Taiwan, at least the one I stayed before and the schools that my friends are serving in, practice the rotation system for years. If the rotation system runs healthily, it can ensure that every teacher has equal chances to take different positions. But now in my school, deans and principal say yes to senior teachers' request of being subject teachers for no time-limit, but in a school, the subject teachers have a certain quantity, thus meaning other teachers need to be homeroom teachers or do administrative work also without time-limit. The senior ones even can refuse to be substitute homeroom teacher for a few days when a class needs a substitute one. I do hope this unreasonable phenomenon can be changed someday in the future.

Another participant referred to a similar incidence. "In my school before a semester begins, some senior teachers go talk to the curriculum director or the dean to arrange things like which class or which periods they'd like to teach. The privilege is not open to young teachers...One of my colleagues tried to do as the senior ones, but obviously she failed. Her timetable is not as what she wishes to be."

Planning is not favored

An additional phenomenon is that the natives do not prefer planning things well ahead. Unless the planning is necessary, or they prefer to leave more room for any changes may made or required by some people. A participant said, " I think decisions should have been made at a planning stage to make the following work made more efficiently, but here, chairperson at a meeting often made conclusion like 'This issue still can be discussed later.' I guess it's because the fixed plan or decision made publicly will leave little space for further adjustment."

Another participant described more specifically.

I had some opportunities to take students to Taiwan to have competitions. Several times the dean told me not to book adults' flight tickets in advance, but only booked students', because no one knows in advance which big person may want to be with the students to Taiwan. If a big

person decides to be the leader of the students, then we have to replace the original leading teacher to the big person. This problem happened few times before, and it really caused me trouble in handling administrative work.

Natives' Close Relationship with Mainland China

People in Taiwan may feel hard to imagine how Kinmen natives' life strongly connected with Mainland China. Some participants said that they were amazed when they first knew a lot of colleagues who are natives own one or more houses in Xiamen or other places near Kinmen, and on weekends or during vacation, they sometimes choose to take a ship and spend time there. Besides the reason that Kinmen's location is much closer to Mainland China than to Taiwan, the flight ticket to Taiwan is also more expensive than ship ticket to Xiamen, thus many Kinmen natives have developed the habit of doing shopping in Mainland China. "I've visited some colleagues' house, they told me the furniture was chosen and sent directly from Xiamen or Fuzhou, and so were some tiles, doors, and windows! Only some decorations or lights were bought from Taiwan. They said it's a lot cheaper by doing this way. I guess few people in Taiwan would do the same thing." A participant said.

Finding Healthy Leisure Activities to Engage in

Though participants said there are no window shopping, no department store, and no night market in Kinmen making them miss Taiwan sometimes, they then said this kind of environment is better for them to find other activities to do. A participant who took courses in Kinmen Open University said,

For the first few months when I came here, I stayed at home after work because there isn't any shop to kill time...umm...but now Mosburger just opened... anyway, I only watched TV or surfed internet at that time, then I realized it's impossible to live like this for years. So I invited a colleague to take yoga courses in Kinmen Open University twice a week. The cost of the

course is very cheap compared to the cost in Taiwan! Maybe I should thank to the boring night life on street here, so to force me do other more meaningful things than shopping or dining outside.

As the participants said, Kinmen Open University offers courses with good price due to Kinmen Government's grant subsidy. There are other participants shared their experiences of having courses about cooking, English, dancing, etc. Their comments on the facilities, teachers and fee over there are positive.

Another participant who didn't have the habit of doing sport now has changed since she came to Kinmen. She said,

In Taiwan, good places for doing sport all cost money, except running fields in schools, and there are usually full of people. But here, there are so many places to do different kinds of sport, and they are free to use except the big indoor swimming pool charges only 30 NT dollars. I enjoy so much that whenever I use the aerobic weight training room, badminton court, table tennis room, or basketball court, I can use them for free and no need to share the area with many other people. The quality of doing sports in Kinmen is so great that the time I spent in doing sport in Kinmen is much more than it in Taiwan...Friends in Taiwan asked whether I am bored at night, and I thought they meant if I am bored without night life in big cities. My answer to them would be "no" because my sport life in Kinmen is more full of fun.

Discussions

The most striking finding in this study is that, although no regulations in any school in Kinmen prescribe any better treatment given to senior teachers, senior teachers can in fact deserve more privilege.

Above all special treatment of senior teachers, being subject teachers for many years is the most obvious one. It is really noteworthy that commonly all the teachers prefer being subject teachers than being homeroom teachers, and from the findings the fact is that in

Kinmen, none of the young teachers are subject teachers except those who are pregnant, and all the teachers from Taiwan are in the group of young teachers. This phenomenon makes the researcher wonder if there exists glass ceiling effect.

The glass ceiling effect was originally applied to barriers in the careers of women but then the meaning is extended as the unseen, yet unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements (Nevill, Pennicott, Williams, & Worrall, 1990). The researcher concerns the impediment that young teachers encounter in their quest for being treated equally. From the more serious point of view, schools in Kinmen have a “hidden” system of structural discrimination of young teachers.

Teachers from Taiwan are all young teachers; they not only carry more duties in schools, but also have to undergo the separation from family and boyfriend/ girlfriend. During the interviews, the participants expressed that being able to be together with their boyfriend/ girlfriend is a key factor influencing their desire of staying in Kinmen. Separating from people who they care has already made these teachers wish to go back to Taiwan after serving for years prescribed on their contract with schools. The researcher assumes and worries when these teachers sense glass ceiling effect in schools, they may have no desire for prolonging their time in Kinmen. Then schools in Kinmen need to recruit other new teachers afterwards, which can harm staff stability of schools in Kinmen.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Kinmen is a beautiful island with exuberant plants and unpolluted environment. It is a wonderful place for tourists to visit. But does this heaven-like island also be a nice place for working? From the participants' statements, Kinmen to them is not a flawless paradise though; there are still some rooms for adjustment for them or and also for schools. Some challenges can be overcome by the endeavor of adjustment made by the participants, while some difficulties faced by the participants were not easily solvable by themselves. Besides, there were positive experiences of staying in Kinmen from the participants. The following categories were made according to the level of adjustment. And for the final part, the researcher found the participants who have lived in Kinmen for more than four years have better adjustment thus to some degree verifying U-Curve pattern as figure 2.1. shown in chapter 2 of this study.

Discomforts that Are Hard to Be Relieved in a Short Time

Things that are almost impossible to be changed in the near future and cause the participants' grievances are organized below this item.

One related matter of to the work adjustment domains is the daily routine or regulations of schools. The teachers themselves need to adapt to things such as being early to school, stressing uniformity of students' behaviors, and watching students' eating order and hygiene matter, etc. For some teachers in schools with less staff, the troubling problem of attending many teacher learning courses on weekends is also not easily to disappear, unless one day, their schools can recruit more teachers to let them take turns attending courses.

Matters involved natives' style of handling or seeing things probably have the least chance to change easily. For example, the use of relationship with people they know in organizations to procure someone's demand is not unusual at all. For natives, they may find

it's natural to ask for what they desire with any relative, friend, or acquaintance who is in charge of a case, however, as Kinmen is a place that more and more non-natives work or live here, those who haven't been in Kinmen for a long time may feel they are unfairly treated since they have less advantage in the use of relationship thing. The participants are not used to the way doing things because from the researcher's inference, many of them come from places like Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung. In busy places, it is needed to set clear "rules of games" for different situations for there are too many people in busy places and the world would go in chaos if many of them didn't follow the publicly recognized rules. Since most people in big cities do not possess the influential power of depending special relations, they do official business according to official principals. Allowing many personal considerations to interfere with execution of public duty is not workable in a world full of people from various backgrounds. As Kinmen has much less residents, exceptional cases which do not follow the spirit of "business is business" happen more often and commonly.

Still in schools, an adjustment difficulty for participants is that they feel unfair to see some elder teachers can have more benefits and substantial rights and most importantly, the schools acquiesce in the fact. The senior teachers enjoy benefits such as being able to be subject teachers for years, no need to be even substitute homeroom teachers, skipping teachers learning courses without being corrected, and having more powerful influence at meetings. This phenomenon may not be changed with ease because it is hard to find someone in an important position in Kinmen educational field is willing to make reformation to cause senior teachers' displeasure. Any important persons in Kinmen educational field have friendly relations with senior teachers in different schools; they have known each other for dozens of years. People only can wait for an initiator who is capable of reforming something injustice in schools or the present situation will stay as it is now.

There is another thing related to senior teachers in schools which is hard to have any change lately. Almost all the deans and principals in schools in Kinmen are senior natives,

and especially some principals are about the age of retirement. They grew up during the period of under military control. During that time, residents had to strictly obey military order to fully cooperate with any military affairs. It was not allowed to question or fight against any prescription from the military officers. Therefore, subordinates' obedience may be deemed by some senior natives as a natural and right act. The participants said it was not easy to have upward communication in schools and meetings were merely formality; deans and principals rarely alter their minds of decision due to other teachers' advice. The fact has become part of the organizational culture in schools and may continue existing for a while.

The sense of one's privacy being trespassed or insist being ignored is another thing the participants themselves need to adapt to in Kinmen. Most people living in big cities or having chance interacting with many different people are taught or learned to respect others' private domain and the baseline for specific thing. Giving newly met persons larger psychologically personal space is a manifestation of being polite in case of offending others by saying or asking something inappropriate. But for those who have always lived in a place with not many people as Kinmen, the relationship among people is usually more than one kind since the interaction net is much simpler than that in a city. People usually become friends or acquaintances beyond single relation such as boss-subordinate, shop owner-customer, teacher-parent, etc. Under the assumption that people regardless their different backgrounds can all be familiar with each other, some natives assume people who they have just met can have closer relation with each other, and soon they might ask questions that should be asked only among close friends in some non-natives' concept. And some participants in this study felt being offended by keeping being asked with personal questions though people who ask those things may simply carry friendly intention.

The difference in setting clear or indistinct interpersonal boundaries for some participants and natives respectively can also have some connection to the adjustment problem that many participants mentioned the pressure of being urged to drink kaoliang

liquor no matter how they refuse. From the participants' previous experience, when they insistently say no to doing a specific thing, others would show understanding and do not force them to do so. The degree of being able to drink alcohols varies from persons to persons. For participants who cannot stand the strong taste of kaoliang liquor, no-sip-of-it is a kind of closed security zone they try to protect. But often natives overlook the boundary which participants set for their security zone. As those natives are all senior than they, the participants dare not show discontent, but they still feel culture shock by being constantly forced to do something they are clearly reluctant to do.

The current state of environment in Kinmen is another domain that the participants may have to learn to live with. Price of similar products is higher in Kinmen than in Taiwan comes from the reasons of transportation cost and monopolization of the different trades. The participants also can do nothing about the renting fee getting higher and higher. The market price of house rates is formed by multiple causes.

Difficulties that Can Be Overcome Through Actions

Streets at night in Kinmen are quieter than in cities in Taiwan. Most stores close early. If people want to have dinner after 7:30pm, they will have very limited choices of super shops. Many participants felt bored after work in their beginning stage in Kinmen, but they also talked about what other activities they found to engage in. Doing sports and attending interesting courses in Kinmen Open University are the top choices. Kinmen provides good facilities and sites for doing different kinds of sport, and the courses in Kinmen Open University are various and cheap.

Without many physical stores in Kinmen, the participants have used to buy things through virtual stores. For nowadays things from furniture to small gadgets all can be found in online shops, the participants felt it is not troubling to buy any new things in Kinmen.

Thanks to the advance of technology again, the problem of being apart with family and

friends in Taiwan can be eased to certain degree as having conversation through interacting software is convenient, but surely the internet cannot fully replace real company. As for some people's stereotypes about Kinmen, the stereotypes are able to be broken through communication between participants and their family or friends in Taiwan.

Differences that neither Good nor Bad

Although the participants showed a bit surprised at how frequent and close interaction Kinmen natives have with Mainland China, they are not affected by such living way of natives. None of the participants expressed they consider owning a house in Xiamen or have the habit of purchasing goods in Mainland China as many natives do. Some of them have visited there but only for tourism.

Having to attend a lot of social meals also received rather neutral comment from the participants. With the understanding that showing hospitality to school's guests who cannot fly back to Taiwan within one day is a polite manner, the participants can join in the social occasions with willingness. Attending social occasions is not a big deal; what bothers some participants is the accompanied alcohol.

Good Feelings toward Some Differences

The participants spoke of the social safety of Kinmen in laudatory terms. Helmet just being put on a scooter by the rider is a normal scene on streets and there are many people leave home without locking front doors sometimes. Kinmen is not a place with zero case of crime, but its public security is much better than Taiwan.

Having nice landlords gave the participants good impression about Kinmen. Landlords did not hurry tenants to give rent if the participants forgot to. They even returned deposit to tenants if tenants move out before the date written on the contract for lease.

At the beginning stage of working in Kinmen, some participants were grateful to native

colleagues' help and guidance in many ways more than things related to work. Without assistance from those ardent colleagues, the participants would spend more time fumbling about in an unfamiliar environment.

Longer Stay in Kinmen Is Related to Better Adjustment

Without statistic number for supporting, U-Curve pattern cannot be lined clearly; however, participants who have stayed for over 4 years in Kinmen did talk about more understanding of Kinmen culture and shared more sense empathy. They shared their experience with calmer tone and less sign of culture shock compared to those who stay shorter time in Kinmen.

Suggestions

The suggestions the researcher provided were for three groups of people. One kind of suggestions is for people who are not Kinmen natives and are now considering being teachers in Kinmen. Another kind is for those who are like the participants in this study namely the incumbent teachers from Taiwan in Kinmen. The other is served as reference for Kinmen Education Bureau or principals and deans in schools.

For People Considering Teaching in Kinmen

For those who decide to be teachers and regard Kinmen as one of their options of a place to teach, they need to be prepared in mind that challenges may occur due to the differences in many ways between Taiwan and Kinmen. If one expects the external environment or the milieu people interact can be the same as where they use to live, then maladjustment may happen after they begin to work. The above findings can help to take people to see the real world in Kinmen through the vivid dictation by the participants in this study who have lived in Kinmen for 2 to 6 years. Feelings toward the same incident can vary from person to person, and people who later start teaching in Kinmen may hold different sense of perception to it.

But some facts described by the participants are more neutral than the feeling the participants expressed, so the incidents did happen in Kinmen can provide reference value for people who are thinking about being teachers here.

For Incumbent Teachers

The best suggestion the researcher can give to the incumbent is to try to have liberal view and mindset facing any differences. Some researches with Big Five have identified that openness, extraversion, sociability, agreeableness, and emotional stability are associated with psychological and sociocultural adjustment in international students, expatriate businesspeople, and sojourners (Bird, Mendenhall, Oddou, & Stevens, 2008; Alessandri, Caprara, Eisenberg, Giunta, & Panerai, 2010). Adjusting the way we see the world instead of dreaming the world can become the way we like help us live positively. Though big cities in Taiwan where most teachers came from are obviously more developed than Kinmen, it does not mean at all that Kinmen is inferior. Kinmen has wonderful scenery with exuberant plants, clean beaches and sea, good variety of creature, and many historical relics. The chance to work in a beautiful place as Kinmen is a rare experience in one's lifetime and deserved to be cherished. Besides, with more understanding of the causes shape Kinmen culture will be a lot easier for incumbents to accept or integrate into it. And one in Kinmen has to see city life as something dispensable. Learn to have fun in the natural surroundings can help enrich one's life quality in Kinmen.

For Administrators in Schools in Kinmen

Last but not least, this part of suggestion is for deans and principals in Kinmen schools. For there were many participants referring to their desire of hoping schools can be have fairer organizational culture such as setting rotation system for teachers taking turns in being subject and homeroom teachers, and respecting regulations of schools rather than respecting

more of what senior teachers want.

The researcher finds the most urgent thing is to promote fair and just atmosphere in schools, which means to make sure teachers in schools have equal right regardless their difference in age. Respecting the elderly is a good tradition, but as workload for homeroom teachers is a lot heavier than subject teachers, younger teachers who have to be homeroom teachers without any year of breaking are bound to have grievance against schools' policy of letting the senior own easier positions for good. Furthermore, some senior teachers' act of talking to deans or directors under table making them teach the class and periods they want has made young teachers dissatisfied. It should be the decision of responsible dean or director to arrange classes for all the teachers in a school after overall consideration. The style of business is business is what teachers from Taiwan prefer due to their growing experience or because they have not stayed long enough to be able to build close relationship with some important people. When some senior natives procure their interest through special relations, schools may need to see things through the eyes of teachers from Taiwan.

If schools in Kinmen do not have determination on changing the above urging problems, it will be hard to expect teachers who feel unfairly treated can hold loyalty to the school they serve, and the result will be hastening the turnover of teachers in Kinmen. The basic conception of the equity theory (Adam, 1965) is that people do not trust the organization they serve when they find no relational satisfaction in terms of perceptions of unfair distributions of resources in any kind within the organization. Schools in Kinmen should make more effort on making the climate in schools is filled with fair and just, so to increase teachers' willingness to devote themselves to the education in Kinmen.

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APPENDIX A INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (ENGLISH)

The following lists present sample questions from the semi-structured interview

1. Background information:

- Name
- Original place in Taiwan
- Name of the school
- Position in school
- Time of stay in Kinmen
- Teaching experience in Taiwan

2. Questions include:

- i. Please introduce your job content and job responsibilities.
- ii. What is the frequency of you in contact or social with Kinmen natives and people from Taiwan? In what way (face to face, by phone, by e-mail, etc.)?
- iii. Many colleagues, parents, and students around you are Kinmen natives. Does that affect your working in any way? If yes, please provide some practical experiences for instances.
- iv. Please describe the changing process of your mentality at the beginning stage to work in Kinmen until now.
- v. In your opinion, what factors cause the change and influences you mention in question 4? Please provide some practical experiences to explain your change.
- vi. In your opinion, what factors or what kinds of activities help you adapt to working and living in Kinmen?
- vii. Have you ever met any difficulties facing Kinmen natives? Please provide some practical examples.
- viii. When you meet the difficulties or special events resulting from cultural difference, what strategy or solution you use to solve them?
- ix. What are the major differences such as organizational culture, ways of communication, rules, etc, between the school you worked in Taiwan and the school you work in Kinmen?
- x. How long do you desire to stay in Kinmen? In your opinion, will there any factors that can prolong or shorten the time you just mentioned?
- xi. If Kinmen Education Bureau or the school you work in would like to investigate your opinions about increasing the cultural competence of teachers from Taiwan like you, what suggestions will you offer them?

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (CHINESE)

致受訪者：

您好，我是國立台灣師範大學國際人力資源發展研究所的碩士研究生，目前正在從事一份與台灣本島教師任教於金門之文化適應相關研究，希望了解來自台灣本島並現任職於金門工作的教師，在工作領域、生活適應中所面對的各樣經驗、困難、挑戰、感受與對策。在此希望藉由您不吝分享之寶貴實務經驗，整理成論文背景資料，俾使後續研究有參考佐證之內容。

您的支持是本研究得以順利進行的關鍵，本次訪談內容僅供學術研究參考使用，訪談紀錄將以不具名方式進行，絕不對外公開您身份，請您安心接受訪問，謝謝。

國立臺灣師範大學國際人力資源發展研究所

論文指導教授：張煒雯

研究生：吳馨嵐

annie929@gmail.com

●基本資訊：

姓名	
來自於台灣何處	
所在的任職學校的名稱	
現在的職稱	
已任職於金門的時間	
在台灣實習或任教經驗	

●訪談問題：

1. 請介紹您目前的工作內容與職掌。
2. 請問您接觸來自台灣的朋友/同事的頻率與接觸金門當地的朋友/同事的頻率為何？以何種方式接觸(例如面對面、電話、電子郵件等等)？
3. 您所要面對的同事、學生、家長，多是來自於不同於您的文化背景，是否影響您的工作？
若是，產生的影響為何？煩請列舉實例說明。
4. 請描述您從一開始於金門工作至今，在不同階段產生哪些心理變化？
5. 您認為是那些因素使您產生了上述的改變與影響？煩請您舉實際的例子說明您的改變。
6. 您認為那些因素或活動幫助您適應金門的工作與生活？
7. 面對來自金門當地文化背景的人們，請問您曾經遭遇過什麼樣的困難、或是印象深刻的事件？煩請舉實例說明。
8. 承上題，當您遇到了該困難及事件，您是運用哪些策略來解決與面對呢？
9. 就您在台灣的學校工作經驗而言，請問在組織文化、內部溝通、規章條文等部分，與現在工作的環境有哪些重大差異？煩請舉實例說明。
10. 您願意繼續在金門工作多久的時間？請問您認為那些因素會造成您願意延長或減短留任金門的時間？
11. 若教育局或您任教的學校，希望調查您的意見，有關提升如您一樣來自台灣的教師的文化適應能力，您會提供哪些建議？