

## Psychological Well-Being Among Medical Laboratory Technology Educators at A Higher Institution in Malaysia

Wan Faizzatul Husna binti Wan Mohamad Akil<sup>1\*</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Education and Social Sciences, Open University Malaysia (OUM), No 86, Jalan Dato Bandar Tunggal, Bandar Seremban, 70000 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.  
Email: wfaizzatulhusna@oum.edu.my

### CORRESPONDING AUTHOR (\*):

Wan Faizzatul Husna binti Wan  
Mohamad Akil  
(wfaizzatulhusna@oum.edu.my)

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### ABSTRACT

Effective teaching and learning strategies are one of the most important factors in achieving any educational institution's mission and vision. However, to ensure teaching and learning methods are relevant to the curriculum, which is very challenging and complex, educators' psychological well-being plays a vital role in supporting all planning and whatever goals are to be achieved by educational institutions. This study was to explore the views and perceptions of educators from higher educational institutions offering a Medical Laboratory Technology Diploma Program with regards to the contributing factors to psychological well-being. This study employed a qualitative, semi-structured interview to collect data from three selected participants. The data was thoroughly analysed in several procedures before being reported. This study revealed five themes of contributing factors to educators' psychological well-being by sharing relevant perspectives, challenges, and strategies for overcoming them.

**Contribution/Originality:** This study will provide knowledge of contributing factors to educators' psychological well-being by sharing relevant perspectives, challenges, and strategies for overcoming them among Higher Education (HE) educators. Moreover, by uncovering educators' perceptions, this research fills a gap in the existing literature by shedding light on deeper contextual variations and issues that exist among Medical Laboratory Technology educators in Malaysia that have not been carried out before or could not be found.

## 1. Introduction

Teaching profession is an important aspect of social services in developing human capital. The academic team should be up to date on the newest innovations in the processes of leadership, management, resource management, and educational goals. Even though in the fast-paced global era, countries demand that the education process be implemented with new strategies in line with the country's progress, it is also crucial for educators to equip themselves with knowledge and abilities not just in the areas of teaching and learning but also in the management of their own psychological well-being. Several previous research have emphasised the significance of educators' well-being in

influencing student motivation (Alves, Lopes & Precioso, 2021; Viac & Fraser, 2020), teaching and learning effectiveness (Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2021; Viac & Fraser, 2020), instructional practise quality (Cansoy, Parlar & Turkoglu, 2020; Burić, & Kim, 2020; Gu, Wang & You, 2020; Huang, Yin & Lv, 2019), and student performance (Glazzard & Rose, 2019; Bal-Taştan et al., 2018). Therefore, numerous factors must be considered to ensure that educators' well-being is not affected and that the quality of their work is not impacted. Insomnia, anxiety, and fear; sadness or a lack of cheerfulness; an inclination to cry; irritation or irritability; the inability to make decisions; the inability to evaluate problems; and the inability to solve problems are examples of psychological effects (Donaldson et al., 2020). The Malaysian Psychological Well-Being Index (IKPM) is an effort designed by the Public Service Department (JPA) to assess people's mental and emotional well-being across several dimensions. The average of 494.4k responders is 6.5. This suggests that Malaysians' psychological well-being is generally moderate (Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2022). Therefore, psychological well-being is the primary aim that every individual must acquire in order to achieve success in life.

Despite the fact that the concept of wellbeing has long been ingrained in the life of education and academic profession. Educators' well-being is integrally related to the larger network of the teaching profession. The increasing prevalence of mental health issues among educators was indeed having a significant impact on services, resulting in a failure to manage work and a tendency to behave outside of normal boundaries. This is supported by a study conducted by Othman and Sivasubramaniam (2019), which showed teachers had a high prevalence of depressive (43.0%), anxiety (68.0%), and stress (32.3%) symptoms. Indirectly, this condition may also have an impact on students' psychological well-being. Furthermore, the COVID-19 outbreak situation that hit the country in the last three years has increased work pressure among educators because of the need to adapt to technology, plan appropriate teaching methods, ensure work continues in a pandemic situation, and manage family members who are at home due to a restriction order or a family member infected with COVID-19. As a result, such situations have a significant impact on educators and may influence their psychological well-being. This study carried out a qualitative study that aimed to understand the perspectives of educators in the Medical Laboratory Technology Program with regards to their psychological well-being.

The well-being of educators should be given more serious consideration. The psychological, social and well-being of educators influences their teaching performance (Bal-Taştan et al., 2018; Harmsen et al., 2018; Barni, Danioni & Benevene, 2019; Glazzard & Rose, 2019; Burić & Kim, 2020). Understanding the extent of the factors that contribute to the psychological well-being of educators in higher education can help to protect teachers' mental health and professional development (Haydon, Leko & Stevens, 2018; Isa & Palpanadan, 2020). Without a substantial focus on improving educators' psychological well-being, teaching efficacy may decrease, learning outcomes may affect, and educators' burnout may continue (Ismail & Noor, 2016; Smetackova et al., 2019; Özgenel & Yilmaz, 2020). This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the educators' perceptions with regards to psychological well-being?
2. What are the challenges that educators face?
3. How do educators overcome any challenges that arise?

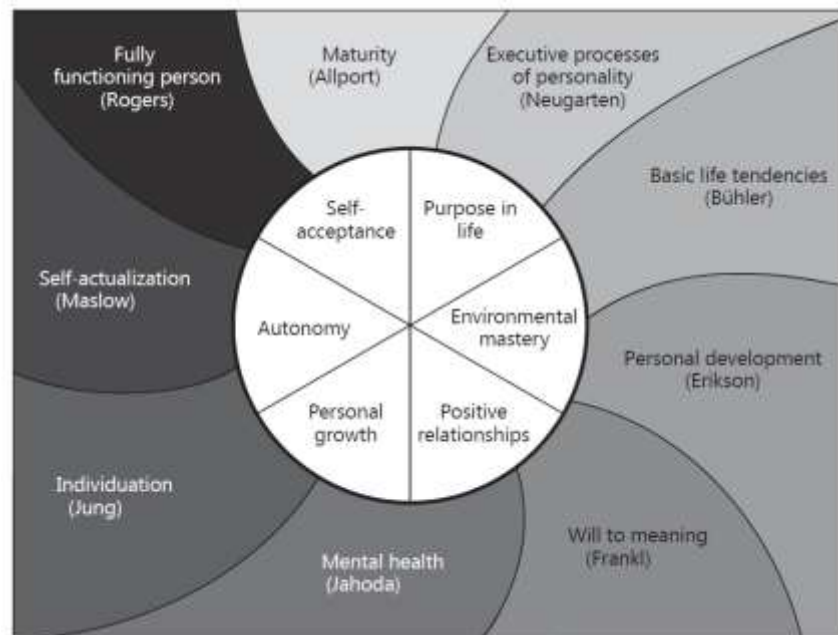
## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Theoretical underpinning

In recent years, both the scientific and general literatures have shown a strong interest in the concept of well-being. It is being emphasised all over the world as something that should not be easily overlooked. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is "a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (World Health Organization, 2004). However, according to Burns (2015), the concept of well-being can have quite varied connotations depending on the field and personal perspective.

Indeed, psychological well-being can be described as a multidimensional model (Ryff, 2014). Psychological well-being is developed in this multidimensional model by merging several personality theories, developmental theories, and psychological approaches. Lifelong development perspectives and happy mental health are two types of personal development paradigms. These points of confluence served as the foundation for condensing the six main components of well-being (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Core dimensions of psychological wellbeing and their theoretical foundations



Source: Ryff (2014)

In other hands, the notion of spiritual well-being emerged in the 1960s as part of the social indicator movement in the United States, with the goal of measuring the population's quality of life and the elements that contribute to it. Self-reporting and subjective measures of well-being are regarded as reliable predictors of life satisfaction. The inclusion of spirituality as an indicator was a latecomer to these metrics, with Paloutzian and Ellison developing the Spiritual Wellbeing Scale in 1982 for that purpose (Wood-Dauphinee, 1999; Bakhouché, 2019). The scale has two dimensions, namely, vertical and horizontal. The vertical dimension refers to one's sense of well-being in relation to God, often known as religious well-being. The horizontal dimension assesses a sense of existential well-being in connection to ultimate concepts. Both dimensions entail

transcendence and, while partially distinct, affect each other to promote spiritual well-being (SWB). Spiritual well-being might be thought of as a continuous variable rather than a binary one. It is not a matter of whether we have it or not, but of how much of it is publicised. Spirituality, on the other hand, has emerged as a resource for maintaining psychological well-being. Previous studies on the topic of religion and psychological well-being speak volumes and give solid evidence to demonstrate the favourable relationship between religiosity and psychological well-being. Several studies have been conducted in this context. The findings have been consistent in that components of religious activity are related to favourable mental health outcomes. These conclusions are supported by evidence from cross-sectional and longitudinal research, as well as studies based on clinical and population samples (Villani et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2020; Özgenel & Yilmaz, 2020; Paloutzian et al., 2021). The OECD created a framework for assessing individual well-being (Durand, 2015; Durand, 2018; Auld & Morris, 2019). This paradigm was initially introduced in the 2011 publication "How's Life?". This framework covers eleven dimensions that are vital for well-being today and are divided into two broad categories: material factors and living quality.

Deci and Ryan developed self-determination theory (SDT) to explain how to develop intrinsic motivation as well as how to increase motivation when external stimuli are present (Zaki, 2016). As mentioned previously, positive psychology is concerned with positive emotions and ways to develop and enhance an individual's strengths and potentials. SDT is useful in creating positive psychology. Autonomy refers to the capacity to govern one's own behavior. Competence is defined as the perceived ability to master and achieve. Relatedness refers to a person's sense of belonging to or connection with individuals to whom they wish to feel related. Autonomy is supported by allowing people to choose, embrace their emotions, avoid judgement, and accept personal responsibility for their actions. Rewards, penalties, deadlines, assessment judgements, and other constraints all have an impact on autonomy. Challenges and positive feedback that increase self-efficacy while avoiding negativity boost competence. An atmosphere that promotes genuine compassion, mutual respect, and safety promotes connectedness. It is also suggested that when these requirements are met, a person feels more well-being and motivation. For example, if an educator feels autonomous, competent, and related to or connected to his or her job in the classroom, he or she is more likely to be healthy and motivated in his or her profession, which is crucial for effective teaching.

## **2.2. Educators psychological well-being**

Educators' well-being has gained a lot of attention over past decades. Teaching or educating is a tough, challenging career that is prone to stress or even burnout and has a high turnover rate. The expectations placed on educators are varied and complex. Despite transferring knowledge and information, they must also ensure that all students gain the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as comply with the mission and vision of the institution, ministry, or even the world. This is important to produce a person who is competent enough to handle the obstacles of the 21st century. Besides that, educators are expected to do additional responsibilities such as promoting students' social and emotional skills development, adapting to students' individual differences, and working together with other stakeholders to ensure their students' overall development. In addition, they are also required to adapt to technological and digital needs, as well as employ information and communication technology in the classroom to build higher-order abilities in their students. Educators must also be competent at gathering and analysing data about their classroom and responding to it. Most educators work in

classrooms that are varied in terms of their students' ability levels, socioeconomic status, and demographic composition. Not to be ignored regarding funding freezes and cuts that limit the amount and quality of resources to meet the current challenges and demands. Furthermore, educational institutions are becoming more bureaucratic and overburdened with non-teaching activities, particularly administrative tasks. There is no doubt that educators, whether teachers, lecturers, or any academician, are among the professions with a high stress level (Ismail & Noor, 2016; Arbae et al., 2019; Isa & Palpanadan, 2020), and that this appears to be increasing globally (Fitchett et al., 2018; Haydon, Leko & Stevens, 2018; Harmsen et al., 2018; Bottiani et al., 2019; Xu, 2019). For another example, Ismail and Noor (2016) discovered that the main source of stress among academicians was career growth, which included university conditions and necessary publications for promotion. Other sources of stress include administrative interactions, particular student issues, instructor perceptions, and state mandates (Haydon, Leko, & Stevens, 2018). Social factors are also among the factors that have a significant relationship with stress among educators (Isa & Palpanadan, 2020).

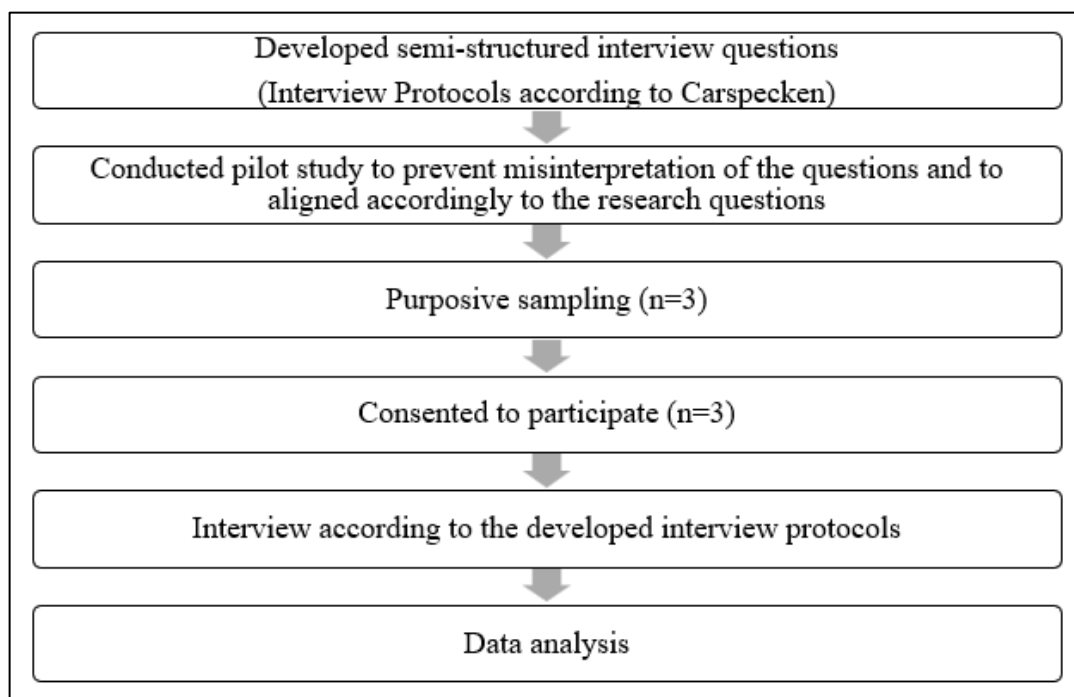
Crisis circumstances, such as COVID-19, which has recently impacted all countries worldwide, are also among the factors that might have an influence on educators' psychological well-being. For example, educators had to develop and adapt suitable teaching and learning approaches immediately to ensure their students able to gained knowledge during restriction movement control. According to a study in Spain (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2021), when schools reopened following the COVID-19 epidemic, a large number of teachers displayed anxiety, despair, and stress symptoms. Furthermore, gender, age, employment stability, the degree of education at which they teach, and parental status all have an impact on this symptomatology. According to Schonfeld, Bianchi, and Luehring-Jones (2017), large-scale research shows that teachers are more likely than other professional groups to be exposed to workplace violence, which can have negative mental health repercussions. Therefore, teachers' mental health must be protected in order to maintain the standard quality of teaching. Working situations like the ones described can create a stressful work environment, which affects educators' well-being. Low levels of educator well-being could lead to high turnover, poor performance and absenteeism. The quality of educators' instruction and practise is also jeopardised because stressed or burned-out educators are unable to function effectively in the classroom. As a consequence, it is not surprising that educator well-being has emerged as a key topic in policy and public debates.

The study of well-being has become increasingly popular in psychological science. Well-being has been examined from different lenses under the guise of personality/social, clinical, health, industrial/organisational, cognitive, community, and developmental psychology, as well as human factors and behavioural neuroscience. Cultivating individuals' internal resources may help educators to be more productive, which is possible through psychological empowerment. Investigating the elements that strengthen such an effective variable of psychological well-being may yield some interesting findings in understanding precursors of quality education at educational institution. Therefore, psychological well-being was explored in this study. The identification and examination of Medical Laboratory Technology educators' perceived well-being, whether emotional or psychological, is of the utmost importance in this study due to the nature of the subject they teach, which requires great emotional engagement and interpersonal relations, as well as the additional stressors they may encounter such as anxiety, a high workload, and intercultural issues.

### 3. Methodology

This current research study utilised a qualitative research approach to provide an in-depth understanding of subjective perspectives regarding the psychological well-being of educators. Refer [Figure 2](#) for overall flow of this study. The Higher Education Institution (HEI) where the study was conducted is located in the capital city of Malaysia, which is Kuala Lumpur. This study recruited three (3) educators from a selected HEI in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, through purposive sampling. The participants were chosen from various roles and responsibilities at the respective HEIs. All of these educators are involved in teaching Medical Laboratory Technology students. Data were included only for the selected participants who consented to participate (n = 3). According to Fridlund and Hildingh (2000, quoted by [Bengtsson, 2016](#)), "in qualitative research, data are often based on 1–30 informants".

Figure 2: Study flow



A semi-structured interview protocol with three parts was established according to the theoretical underpinnings, which included questions regarding the interviewees' demographic information (Part 1), perspectives, and all related research questions (Part 2). All responses were treated with confidentiality. Pilot studies using semi-structured interview questions were conducted with multiple volunteers with educational backgrounds to avoid misinterpretation and guarantee that the questions were aligned with the study aims and research questions. Following that, the questions were slightly tweaked before starting the real interview process. Research strategy for interview protocol is developed prior to the study utilizing Carspecken's Qualitative Research Method. Carspecken proposed that the researcher conduct a preliminary brainstorming session to generate two lists of questions and specific concerns to investigate. The first list should identify issues that can be investigated, while the second list should explain the information needed to respond to questions as they arise. Those participants were represented by Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and Participant 3 (P3). The institution is denoted as Institution A.

Permission to conduct this study has been granted to the relevant HEI's authority in order to collect empirical evidence to support the theories in this study. After gaining approval, several participants were approached to see if they would collaborate and contribute data for the study. The procedure of getting permission and approval to conduct a study and finding participants takes about three weeks. Those participants signed a consent form, and they were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Besides that, the nature of the study, what was expected of them, and how the data would be used were all explained to participants via an information sheet and consent form. Each participant was promised confidentiality, and the intention to publish any further findings was made explicit. Three participants were interviewed by the researcher, with each interview lasting 15–45 minutes. All interviews were collected and transcribed for content, which included important contextual characteristics such as laughter, extended pauses, and certain nonverbal actions. All identifying indicators were removed from the transcripts, and each participant was given a pseudonym. The interviews were done between the 11th to 15th of July 2022.

Several steps are taken in order to examine the collected data. The transcribed interviews were classified manually, line by line. The complete responses to each question were analysed multiple times to develop an understanding of the participants' responses. The responses are then mapped and classified in accordance with the appropriate themes. During the writing process, thematic analysis is utilised, and the results section includes key findings along with a discussion relating the analysis to the literature review.

## 4. Findings and discussions

### 4.1. Educators psychological well-being

Part 1 of the interview required participants to provide basic demographic information, such as their name, gender, responsibilities, period of employment at the current institution, and overall length of teaching experience. [Table 1](#) summarises the pertinent information received from participants. All participants have at least fifteen years of experience at the institution teaching the Medical Laboratory Technology program.

Table 1: A summary of information related to the three participants in institution A.

Participants Criteria	Institution A		
	Participant 1 (P1)	Participant 2 (P2)	Participant 3(P3)
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Current responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Managing students Affairs</li> <li>2. Teaching basic science and hematology courses</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching</li> <li>2. Prepare teaching materials</li> <li>3. All related responsibilities for course coordinator</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Managing Human Resources including all support units</li> <li>2. Managing all teaching and learning activities, examination and all relevant responsibilities as educator.</li> </ol>
Length of employment	20 years	15 years	20 years

Participants	Institution A		
Criteria	Participant 1 (P1)	Participant 2 (P2)	Participant 3(P3)
Overall length of teaching experience	12 years	15 years	20 years

## 4.2. Part 2: Educators' perspectives

Participants were asked to offer their thoughts on the word "psychological well-being" for this part. They were asked to clarify the term as they understood it. Participants were also questioned about the difficulties they encountered while in institution A and how they coped with them. Finally, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on what should be done to improve educator well-being in Institution A, as well as who should play that role.

### 4.2.1. Defining the term of "psychological well-being"

P1 believes that this psychology is similar to the character carried by a person, the use of language, and the behaviours of a person. While for her, well-being implies "normal". If she is in a condition of sanity, she will consider the consequences of the words said. For her, one must consider whether her comments will be accepted by others, whether they would make others unhappy, or whether what she said is right. Thus, for P1, psychological well-being is reached when the individual is constantly positive—not a person who frequently criticises herself but also does not blame others alone. As for P1, she works hard and not only for money. If something is lacking, she will endeavour to improve it and address it. She doesn't really want praise and doesn't mind being insulted. To her, she was an imperfect human being. Despite being chastised, she was not readily swayed. She would take the good and remove the bad, since fighting would never have an end. P1 emphasises that, as an educator, she just needs to look at the outcomes of her students' performances. Students and the clinical staff, for example, value her contributions. She highlighted the need for positive and healthy thinking. She believes that if people look back at those who are much more struggle, one will see that they had done it much better.

P2 considers teaching to be her passion. Apart from teaching, she has other interests such as cooking and reading to keep her psychology in good shape. There is nothing to disturb her at work, and she will complete her tasks on time. However, there are times when she feels stressed. When she is given an unexpected task that must be completed immediately, she will relax for a second, and then she will strive to finish the tasks because she knows that others will have difficulties if she is unable to do it. However, if the workload was overwhelming, she would find a way to take breaks to relax. Sometimes it can last up to a week. Because her psychological well-being is more important to her, it must be determined whether her mental and physical health are good. She also constantly thinks positively when performing something and avoids conflicts with others. P2 also takes the attitude of asking when she does not understand a certain task and will ask at the appropriate time. She thought that if people were pleased with her, she would be happy as well. This is what is meant by psychological well-being, according to her sense.

Something captivating for P3, where she associates psychological well-being with mental health. For P3, it is a condition in which a person feels pleased and satisfied with themselves and with life, and there are no signs of depression, melancholy, or sadness. P3 added, it is hard to manage students if the educator is unhappy. She contends that educators must attain psychological equilibrium. Although there may be instances when

it feels unhappy, it must be remedied immediately. Table 2 summarises the pertinent information received from participants with regards to Question 1 of Part 2 (Educator Perspectives).

Table 2: A summary of information related to question one of Part 2 (Educator perspectives).

Interview Questions	Key Answers from Participants
What do you think is meant by the term psychological well-being? Please explain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Psychology is similar to the character carried by a person, the use of language, and the behaviors of a person (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Well-being implies "normal" (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Consider other acceptance before giving comment (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Positive thinking (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Having some hobbies to maintain psychological well-being (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Choose not to affect others (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Having a good rest (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Ask for help if needed (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Related with mental health (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Feels pleased, satisfied with own selves and with life (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>No signs of depression, melancholy, or sadness (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>When feels unhappy, it must be remedied immediately. (P3)</i></li> </ul>

#### 4.2.2. Challenges and ways to overcome

Among the challenges faced by P1 is when the tasks assigned seem to have no guidelines, and any mistakes that occur end up causing P1 to be held responsible. P1 was often offended by a colleague's criticism, even though she had done her work wholeheartedly. Even her own family was overlooked. When P1 wanted to improve the institution, her suggestions were ignored because there were still those individuals who did not want to change and make improvements. Her role as Deputy Director of Student Affairs was demanding because she had to manage students until late at night. P1 felt more overwhelmed since the student's coordinator was so reliant on her and couldn't think or make decisions on their own. She felt all the burdens being placed on her. P1 believes that the best way for her to overcome the challenges is to focus only on her job and not interfere with others' work. She also believed that personal and professional lives should not be intertwined. Time management is important. for example, arranging leave and arriving early at work. She also spends a lot of time listening to religious talks and learning about how vital it is to forgive others. For P1, she always felt grateful to be given the opportunity to study since working at institution A. As a result, P1 constantly thinks positively about herself. Although she believes that the Excellent Service Award should be granted based on actual criteria rather than seniority, she always adhered to the concept of patience and finished any task that was assigned to her.

Among the challenges faced by P2 is that she must always be in a state of readiness. This is because if one of her team members has an emergency, she must replace the class and sometimes adjust the timetable to ensure that teaching and learning sessions are not affected. Another example is when she had to attend a course and had to replace her class

earlier, or had to provide replacement assignments to students, or had to ask another team member to cover her class. Since many courses are now online webinars, she can watch the webinar recordings after class. Another challenge is when any of her family members have health problems, causing her to take time off or leave and needing to rearrange her class schedule. Other ways stated by P2 to ensure her psychological well-being is balanced are to have a positive attitude, take a break and enjoy personal hobbies, and avoid conflicts with colleagues.

P3 believed that she confronted several challenges throughout her service at Institution A. She had to handle human resources at Institution A other than teaching. As a consequence, she had to cope with all types of human behavior, from employees to students. She encounters difficulties when she needs to deal with underperforming personnel and attendance issues. While challenges relate to students are such as punctuality, lack of attention during teaching, and low academic achievement. particularly during the COVID-19 outbreak period, which began in 2020 and lasted up to two years. During that time, P3 was struggling with online teaching methods as well as integrity issues with online tests. In addition, P3 is also in charge of completing key performance indicators (KPIs) for the director. She was required to conduct research and submit findings at the training management division level. The issue she was facing at the time was a lack of collaboration among the assigned research team members. The worst part is that she receives the same tasks year after year with no rotation among different educators. Furthermore, as a course coordinator, she was required to respond to student queries even after office hours. As a result, P3 had less time for herself and her family. She was also frustrated at being unrecognised despite having met all of the directors' KPIs. She was turned down for promotion in favour of juniors who had made no major contributions. P3 also admits that her emotions and motivation are dwindling as a result of the challenges she is encountering. In terms of autonomy, the director delegated authority to her to decide on actions related to the area of her work. When it came to overcoming the problems she encountered, P3's most frequently repeated phrase was "believing in the sustenance that God has given." She had to rely on her religious convictions all the time. She complies with the appropriate workflow standards in order to handle the institution's personnel issues. If it is about students, she will consider the context of the relevant issue; if it is about discipline, she will approach the student division; if it is about academics, she will consult with the Head of Program. She would frequently contact weaker students to discuss and identify problems that needed to be addressed. For the issues that arose during the COVID-19 outbreak that necessitated online teaching and learning, she attempted to adapt to the technology available and enrolled in additional courses. In her opinion, incompetent educators should be trained so that they can accomplish whatever task is assigned to them without relying just on one individual.

**Table 3** summarises the pertinent information received from participants with regards to questions two and three of Part 2 (Educator Perspectives).

Table 3: A summary of information related to question two and three of Part 2 (Educator perspectives).

Interview Questions	Key Answers from Participants
What are the most common challenges you faced in this institution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tasks assigned have no guideline (P1, P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Suggestions to improved were ignored (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Demanding responsibilities (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Must always be in a state of readiness (P2)</i></li> </ul>

Interview Questions	Key Answers from Participants
How do you deal with the challenges?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Given same task every time, no rotation (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Offended by a colleague's criticism (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Family issues (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Handle problematic staff and students (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Coping with pandemic covid-19 (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Always felt grateful (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Be patience (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Thinks positives (P1, P2, P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Listening to religious talks (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Believe in God (P1, P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Team cooperation (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Open to discussion (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Focus only own job (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Trained others employee to be able to perform any task a not just rely on one person (P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Taking a break to relax and enjoy own hobbies (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal and professional lives should not be intertwined (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Time management (P1, P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Avoid conflicts (P2, P3)</i></li> </ul>

#### 4.2.2. Opinion and suggestions

When asked about who should be responsible for improving educators' well-being in Institution A, P1 stated that it is everyone's role. The first step for her is to comply with the regulations stated by the services. Furthermore, P1 emphasised that educators must have a desire to learn, be willing to accept reprimands, be open to sharing and exchanging ideas, learn how to manage, continuously be positive and considerate of one another's relationships, have top management constantly provide motivation, have no need to be too close to anybody since any misunderstanding will lead to negative impact, consider others' feelings, be honest in doing work, provide the same level of care to everybody, allocate enough time for themselves, avoid listening only from one viewpoint, increase listening to religious talks, and do only tasks that a person is able to do.

In contrast to P2, she argues that directors must analyse each educator to determine how to enhance every educator in the institution. Every educator should be given the opportunity to further their studies to a higher level, or at least provide opportunities for short courses. Therefore, for P2, a session with a counsellor should be possible. Counselors are more secretive and confidential since they facilitate sessions and discover solutions to problems that concern educators. Finally, P2 suggests that the tasks should be reviewed with the relevant educators first in order to provide suitable guidance. Tasks should not be left to the assigned educator alone, and a team should be formed for difficult work.

In general, P3 recommends that any serious problems be referred to a counselor. However, she makes suggestions that are similar to P2, which is that directors play a crucial role in ensuring educators' psychological well-being is stable. For P3, the director must be more sensitive when there are employees who appear to be outside the realm of normal. The director must investigate the source of the problem in order to restore the situation, whether the staff is unappreciated or overburdened with work. Directors must ensure that each employee's task is balanced, and they must always show gratitude in order to inspire personnel. For P3, having family support and an understanding attitude while having to complete work at home and not having time to be with the family

significantly helps her maintain psychological well-being. Sometimes, P3 would also gain some encouragement from her co-workers. She also frequently confronts other colleagues to clear up any misunderstandings. She also admits that whenever she is depressed, she prefers to be alone. Therefore, she will return to her religious beliefs, where everything will be fairly repaid. She is certain that every good deed will be rewarded. Although she agrees with P1 that the excellent service award should be properly evaluated and that the director should acknowledge personnel who make the institution's name achieve national recognition.

**5. Discussion**

Based on the perspectives of the participants. They were discovered to grasp what is meant by psychological well-being. Despite facing many problems in life, they were able to live well and did not exhibit any signs of despair throughout the interview. Although they appeared sad and depressed when delivering stories about the difficulties they experienced, they remained excited when discussing how they overcame them. By referring to all of the findings in this study, several themes emerged as contributing variables to psychological well-being: positive attitudes, spiritual convictions, family and friend support, personal responsibility, and personal growth, as illustrated in Figure 3. Whilst Table 4 displays all of the themes along with the key findings.

Figure 3: A summary of emerging themes of perceived contributor factors to psychological well-being of educators in Institution A.

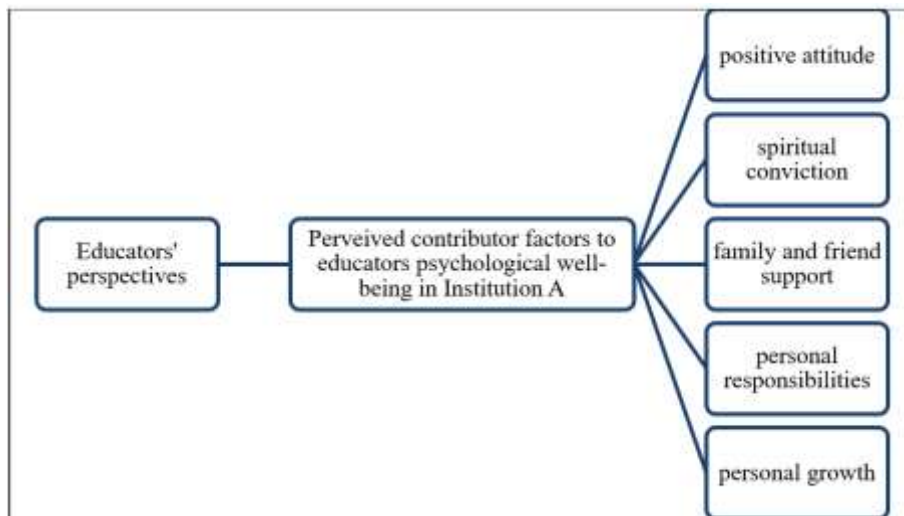


Table 4: A summary of key points of contributing factors of psychological well-being among educators in Institution A.

Themes	Key points
Positive attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Always felt grateful (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Be patience (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Thinks positives (P1, P2, P3)</i></li> </ul>
Spiritual conviction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Listening to religious talks (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Believe in God (P1, P3)</i></li> </ul>
Family and friend's support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Team cooperation (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Open to discussion (P3)</i></li> </ul>

Themes	Key points
Personal responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Family understanding (P1, P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Personal and professional lives should not be intertwined (P1)</i></li> <li>• <i>Time management (P1, P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Avoid conflicts (P2, P3)</i></li> <li>• <i>Focus only own job (P1)</i></li> </ul>
Personal growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Taking a break to relax and enjoy own hobbies (P2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Learning opportunities (P1, P2, P3)</i></li> </ul>

Positive thoughts, feelings, and actions in the face of adversity were seen by participants as essential in boosting an individual's psychological well-being. Adolescents with more positive attitudes than negative attitudes (i.e., positive, optimistic, and balanced attitudes) reported better educational and psychological outcomes than adolescents with more negative attitudes ([Andretta, Worrell, & Mello, 2014](#)). Well-being therapy is a psychotherapy method that may be used to promote psychological well-being and resilience. a number of randomised controlled trials demonstrating a decreased vulnerability to depression and anxiety following specific psychotherapeutic interventions leading to a positive self-evaluation, a sense of continued growth and development, the belief that life is purposeful and meaningful, the possession of quality relationships with others, the ability to manage one's life effectively, and a sense of self-determination ([Fava & Tomba, 2009](#)). Positive psychological well-being in the workplace has been related not just to individual performance but also to a broader variety of organisational outcomes such as customer satisfaction and staff turnover ([Turner, 2019](#)). [Van Cappellen et al. \(2016\)](#) explored the role of positive emotions, especially self-transcendent positive emotions such as awe, appreciation, love, and peace, as mediators of well-being. Understanding the causal processes that link psychological well-being with these outcomes will provide useful additional information for both practical and theoretical purposes.

Religion exists in all human communities, and despite growing scepticism about its significance, spirituality, along with religiosity, has been repeatedly linked to psychological well-being ([Sharma & Singh, 2019](#)). In this study, participants' psychological well-being was also influenced by their spiritual convictions or beliefs. Participants described listening to religious speeches and having a strong belief in God. Participants indicated that they would rely on spiritual belief as situations were more difficult to handle emotionally and mentally.

Furthermore, the exact manner in which each participant's relationship with family or friends influences their psychological well-being was distinct and varied. For example, each participant's specific sources of negativity and actions were distinct. By using an example, P1 and P3 both mentioned having a difficult colleague, but their issues were unique. P1 was challenged by a clash of comments and critiques, but P3 was challenged by dealing with difficult staff. As a result, P1 made a decision to avoid her coworker, but P3 opted for catharsis by seeking affirmation and confronting the relevant personnel. These two participants had the same sorts of problems that related to their colleague and staff, but were diverse in their details. As a result, relationships with colleagues may have an influence on their psychological well-being and may be a source of both happiness and negativity. It implies that certain interpersonal dynamics, such as whether working with others can improve or harm a participant's well-being. They must understand how to manage and handle it effectively so that it does not negatively impact their psychological

well-being. Participants stated that they had significant happiness from supportive relationships with family and friends when either family or friends tried to understand, listen to, and assist them. Essentially, such supportive connections would help individuals feel cared for, loved, and present even while they were facing difficulties.

Teaching is clearly a tough profession, and despite occasional episodes of work-related stress and even burnout, the majority of teachers remain deeply invested in their roles. This study also shows that self-responsibility is important in maintaining psychology's well-being, as have other previous studies (Jena, Pradhan, & Panigrahy, 2018; Shir, Nikolaev, & Wincent, 2019; Barni, Danioni, & Benevene, 2019). Participants mentioned the significance of first learning to accept themselves if they want to make changes. They may face difficulties breaking through emotional barriers to neutralise themselves if they do not realise their personal responsibility.

Participants described the significance of focusing on personal development and progress. Some individuals discovered external strength in the form of abilities that enabled them to be strong and confident. For example, all participants are given the option to continue their studies, and no application to attend an additional course is ever turned down. In reality, P3 is a trusted person to fulfil some of the tasks outlined in the director's key performance indicator.

Psychological well-being improves life quality. In this sense, internal resource development may be considered crucial for enhanced learning outcomes. How teachers feel about their professional identity is linked to their feeling of well-being, which is linked to their sense of efficacy.

## 6. Conclusion and recommendations

This research reveals that there are numerous factors that contribute to psychological well-being among educators in Institution A. Positive attitudes, spiritual convictions, family and friend support, personal responsibility, and personal progress are some of the factors that contribute to psychological well-being (Ryff, 2014; Zaki, 2016). It is also clear from this research that each person's life and challenges are unique. The findings of this study can aid in understanding how people deal with problems in order to maintain their psychological well-being. Furthermore, there should be an additional professional functional programme focusing on educators as well as a platform for educators to express their pressures and find ways to overcome them. For example, the Malaysian Ministry of Education's Psychology and Counseling Division created the Awareness, Wellness, and Teacher Psychology Program in 2021, which consisted of three components: being aware, alert, and acting. The program's goals are as follows: to provide educators with psychoeducation, knowledge, and feedback on psychological well-being as a guide to use when confronted with circumstances that affect their psychological well-being; to inform educators about the readiness of the Ministry of Education Malaysia's counsellors to assist them in managing their feelings and behavior; and to mobilise leadership at all levels to distribute information and raise awareness about psychological well-being among educators.

Besides that, flexible and creative thinking, pro-social behaviour, and high physical health are all related to psychological well-being (Huppert, 2009; Kang et al., 2020; Alfonso-Benlliure et al., 2021). An individual's mental capital and psychological well-being are strongly impacted by her or his early surroundings. While a poor early environment might

result in permanent behavioural and neurobiological abnormalities, compensation is possible later in life (Huppert, 2009). Our well-being is influenced by external conditions, but our actions and attitudes may have a bigger impact. Interventions that promote good activities and attitudes have an essential role in improving well-being (Huppert, 2009; Fancourt & Finn, 2019). A general strategy may help lessen the overall number of persons suffering from common mental diseases in the long run.

Further study can be conducted to identify particular interventions that may aid professional development programmes in developing a model to better prepare educators, as psychological well-being is crucial in affecting their performance. Even more future studies can be conducted to evaluate whether these ideas of interventions can become reality.

### **Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate**

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

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