

Adapting to the Evolving New Normal: View from a Case of Philippine In-Service Teachers Post-Pandemic

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Abstract. Post-pandemic, teachers in the public and private institutions alike grappled with both unprecedented and expected changes in the education system. In the context of an evolving new normal, this study aimed to capture and examine the level of adaptability of selected senior high school (SHS) English teachers to this phenomenon, with a focus on their pedagogical practices and professional development. This study involved 41 SHS English teachers in the province of Pampanga, Philippines. Using an adapted instrument, participants completed a survey designed to gauge their adaptability across various dimensions of pedagogy and professional development. A descriptive-quantitative research method was employed, and statistical tools, including frequency tally and percentage, mean, Pearson's r , chi-square, and t-test, were used to analyze the collected data. Findings revealed that the respondents have very high levels of adaptability in the domains of teaching strategies, crisis responses, and professional development engagement. These insights provided a substantive foundation for formulating a professional development program tailored to the contexts of SHS English teachers. The study underscores the importance of adaptability in navigating pedagogical challenges and highlights the role of data-driven strategies in supporting teacher growth and educational advancement.

Keywords: New normal; Post-pandemic; Professional development; Teacher education; Teacher training

1.0 Introduction

First used during the 2008 financial crisis, the term “new normal” once again made the list of buzzwords after the most recent pandemic, which, as of the time of writing, has brought the world to its knees (Manuti et al., 2022). Undoubtedly, one of the most affected sectors of society — education across the globe — has never been the same again (Alam et al., 2022). In the same realm, this “new normal” meant movement to (and fro) and between the traditional face-to-face classes and remote or distance learning (and teaching) for both students and teachers (Scherman et al., 2023). Challenges were inevitable. The literature is rife with reports of the hardships both educators and learners faced during such a drastic paradigm shift.

In the Philippines, the 2020 pandemic only exposed the long-standing challenges in the education system, more than anything else (Chi & Cuyco, 2021). Post-COVID, the Philippine education system had no choice but to embrace the new normal in teaching and learning. As frontliners in the education sector, teachers inevitably shouldered most of the heaviest burdens of the paradigm shift (Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020). In response to the

crises arising from the pandemic, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented a variety of alternative teaching and learning modalities, including homeschooling, self-directed learning modules, online learning, radio- and television-based modalities, and blended distance learning, among others. In addition, one of DepEd's key measures was the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP). Developed through a collaborative process, the BE-LCP aimed to sustain educational delivery while prioritizing the health and safety of learners, teachers, and school personnel. In anticipation of the eventual, but gradual, resumption and sustenance of classes in 2020 and 2021, DepEd also launched a National Learning Recovery Program to assist schools in addressing learning gaps resulting from the pandemic-induced disruptions. All these and more found the teachers at the center of a storm of changes, challenges, and adjustments (Oducado et al., 2024; Rivera, 2022; Agayon et al., 2022; Mananay et al., 2022; Rodriguez, 2021).

On a larger scale, the pandemic and its aftermath seemed to have served as a litmus test not only for flexibility but also for adaptability among educators worldwide (Selvik & Herrebrøden, 2024; Bonifacio et al., 2023; Mulder, 2022; Dayagbil et al., 2021). To teachers in the Philippines, being adaptable and flexible in times of such a crisis and its aftermath seemed nothing new (Lansangan & Orleans, 2023; Zara et al., 2022; Agayon et al., 2022; Dayagbil et al., 2021; Munda, 2021). Scholarship is rich and varied, not only in the resilience and creativity of Filipino teachers, but also in their flexibility and adaptability. Theoretically, resilience and coping are both associated with adaptability. However, there are slight differences as cognate processes (Martin et al., 2012), but both are subsumed within the larger model of adaptability (Martin et al., 2013). Among educators, adaptability is a relevant construct due to the nature of their work and experience (Collie & Martin, 2017). The ability to adapt to manage these changes efficiently is vital for teachers' work in the classroom, staff room, and beyond. Teachers must respond to the diverse and changing demands of students by adjusting the lesson pace, adapting their behavior to different students, or using different means to expound or demonstrate key points more clearly. They must adapt to unforeseen situations in classroom supervision by standardizing responses to emotions that might arise, such as irritation, rage, or glee, and expressing tolerance or considering other ways to address challenges.

In the context of an "evolving new normal" (Meyer et al., 2021; Carraher-Wolverton, 2022; Vartiainen, 2023), how does adaptability look among educators at the secondary level? In the post-pandemic Philippine classroom setting, this is what the present study aimed to describe. The researchers sought to examine the level of adaptability among secondary school teachers in selected schools in the province of Pampanga, Philippines, and, based on the findings, synthesize and develop a relevant professional development plan to promote and enhance adaptability among teachers during unprecedented crises. Relevant theories informing this study are Martin et al.'s (2012) tripartite model of adaptability, where adaptability is understood to comprise of cognitive adaptability, behavioral adaptability, and emotional adaptability; Zimmerman's (2002) self-regulated learning theory, which subsumes adaptability; and Winne and Hadwin's (2008) fourth phase of self-regulation, which operationalizes adaptation as those appropriate cognitive and behavioral adjustments or modifications deemed necessary to meet one's learning goals better. Another theory involved in conceptualizing adaptability in the context of educators is that of the conceptualization of innovative teacher behavior by Thurlings, Evers, and Vermeulen (2015), explaining that such is "a process in which new ideas are generated, created, developed, applied, promoted, realized, and modified by employees to benefit role performance" (p. 1). As this definition suggests, teachers use innovative behavior to improve their teaching practice. Of note, there is some overlap between innovative behavior and adaptability, as both involve adjusting or modifying thoughts, behaviors, or actions.

This study makes a novel contribution to the existing literature on teacher training and development, especially in the local context, by providing data for a research-backed, relevant, and up-to-date professional development initiative for educators. Tied to the emerging context and theory of an evolving new normal, this study stands out among others. It is especially significant for the participants and beneficiaries in the research locale. Ultimately, the findings are likely to contribute positively to the overall consideration of the current Philippine teacher education system and culture.

2.0 Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design. Using a standardized survey questionnaire, the study gathered data from 41 SHS English teachers in selected private and public schools in Pampanga, Philippines. The instrument, validated by experienced educators, consisted of two parts: the first captured demographic information, while the second assessed teacher adaptability in terms of teaching practices, crisis response, and professional development using an adapted version of Martin et al.'s (2013) Adaptability Scale.

The ethical conduct of the study was guided by established principles of research integrity and the Philippine Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participation was strictly voluntary, with informed consent obtained from all respondents. Their privacy and anonymity were ensured through the use of codes and secure data handling. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the Assistant Schools Division Superintendent of Pampanga and other participating school administrators and authorities. The teacher-respondents were briefed about the study's purpose and assured that their responses would remain confidential.

Data collection was conducted through Google Forms and analyzed using various statistical tools, including frequency tally and percentage, mean, Pearson's r , chi-square, and t-test. These tools were applied to examine the relationship between demographic variables and teacher adaptability. The Likert scale guided the interpretation of responses, providing insights into levels of agreement across different adaptability domains. The results served as a foundation for designing a professional development program tailored to the needs of SHS English teachers in both private and public educational settings.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 below shows the demographic profile of the respondents. The researchers collected data from 41 SHS English teachers in selected schools in Pampanga.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Profile.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
23 – 29 years old	26	63.41
30 – 36 years old	7	17.07
37 – 43 years old	2	4.88
44 – 50 years old	4	9.76
51 – 57 years old	2	4.88
Total	41	100.00
Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	13	31.71
Female	28	68.29
Total	41	100.00
Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	27	65.85
Married	14	34.15
Total	41	100.00
Number of Years in Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	5	12.20
1 year - 5 years	24	58.54
6 years - 10 years	6	14.63
11 years - 15 years	3	7.31
16 years - 20 years	1	2.44
Above 20 years	2	4.88
Total	41	100.00
Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's Degree Holder	28	68.29
with M.A. Units	3	7.32
M.A. Degree Holder	7	17.07
with Doctoral Units	2	4.88
Doctoral Degree Holder	1	2.44
Total	41	100.00

In terms of their demographic profile, the respondents consisted of 26 (63.41%) who belonged to the age bracket of 23-29 years old, 7 (17.07%) in 30-36 years old, 2 (4.88%) in 43-43 years old, 4 (9.76%) in 44-50 years old, and another 2 (4.88%) in 51-57 years old; 13 (31.71%) males, and 28 (68.29%) females; 27 (65.85%) who were single, and 14 (34.15%) who were married; 5 (12.20%) of them with less than a year into the teaching field, 24 (58.54%) of them with a year to 5 years in the field, 6 (14.63%) of them with 6 years to 10 years experience, 3 (7.31%) with 11 to 15 years, 2 (4.88%) with above 20 years, and 1 (2.44%) with 16 to 20 years; 28 (68.29%) who were with a Bachelor's

degree, 3 (7.32%) with academic units in Master's degree, 7 (17.07%) with a completed and earned Master's degree, 2 (4.88%) with units in Doctorate, and 1 (2.44%) with a completed and earned Doctorate degree.

Demographically, the majority of the teacher-respondents in the current study are aged 23–29. Most of them are female teachers, are single or unmarried, and hold a bachelor's degree. In this regard, a few but noteworthy assumptions may be made, such as that at least in the research locale, the teaching population seems to be relatively young; that these educators are still in their early years of career in the field, and as observed (Liu et al., 2018), still have the vigor and motivation, as well as idealism and flexibility that should help them better in navigating the realities of the field. In addition, novice teachers, especially those of the present generation, are observed to be more technologically inclined and dynamic than their predecessors (Mariano Galvan et al., 2023). In terms of gender, the demography of the present study aligns with the global and recent trend in gender in education: most in the field, whether local or abroad, are females (Sebastian et al., 2022; Heinz et al., 2021). According to Mogadime et al. (2024), this phenomenon reflects only the traditional views of both women and the profession in society.

Meanwhile, the literature on the matter is rich in evidence regarding the impact of female educators in the field compared to their male counterparts. For instance, female teachers are observed to have higher levels of interpersonal and communication skills (Ehrich et al., 2020); hold a more positive view on teaching (Alnahdi & Schwab, 2023); and are more effective at increasing learner achievement than their counterparts (Hwang & Fitzpatrick, 2021). Finally, the fact that most of these educators hold a Bachelor's degree is also noteworthy. A bachelor's degree is an entry point not only in the business of teaching, but also most, if not all, of the rest of the so-called white-collar jobs or professions, at least in the Philippine context.

In the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) by the Department of Education (DepEd) (2017), most of the respondents in the present study belong to Career Stage 1 or Beginning Teachers, characterized as having “gained the qualifications recognized for entry into the teaching profession,” one of such qualifications being a Bachelor's degree. With the demand of the current curriculum and all the other ongoing changes both in the local education system and abroad, however, teachers in the Philippines are specifically challenged to level-up their competencies and keep up with the trends and issues in the profession; thus, further studies or a post-graduate education seems to be inevitable or is highly encouraged (David et al., 2020). Particularly because of this that while it may be promising to see such a young population of educators, it must be a point of discussion too their post-graduate education or so-called continuous professional development, most especially if such same population are still mostly only holders of bachelor's, and without yet even just a few or beginning units in the Master's level, among others. Even so, this demographic picture of the respondents remains relevant and even explanatory of the general findings of this study, that is, the same respondents generally have high levels of adaptability.

3.2 How do the Respondents Adapt their Teaching Practices in Times of Uncertainty and New Situations?

Table 2 below shows how the teacher-respondents rated their adaptability in teaching during times of uncertainty and in new situations. It can be seen that, except for item 8, when uncertainty arises in the community, I can minimize frustration or irritation so I can deal with it effectively. The respondents rated themselves at a Very High level of adaptability across all remaining statements, all of which received Strongly Agree responses. The recent pandemic exposed deep-rooted challenges in the Philippine education system more than anything else (Chi & Cuyco, 2021), and in adapting to the post-COVID landscape, the sector had to embrace new modes of teaching and learning quickly. To address the disruptions, the Department of Education (DepEd) introduced various learning delivery options, including homeschooling, modular learning, online platforms, and broadcast-based education. Throughout these transitions, teachers remained at the center of rapid changes and challenges, requiring continuous adjustment and resilience (Oducado et al., 2024; Rivera, 2022; Agayon et al., 2022; Mananay et al., 2022; Rodriguez, 2021; Korkmaz & Toraman, 2020). Anchored in this context, the researchers aimed to describe and examine the level of adaptability among secondary school teachers in selected schools in the province of Pampanga, Philippines, to develop a relevant professional development plan that promotes and enhances adaptability among teachers in times of unprecedented crises. The objectives of the present study were met with promising results. For instance, when adapting teaching practices amid uncertainty, the respondents rated themselves very high in adaptability across almost all indicators. They strongly agreed that they could revise their thinking, seek out information, and modify their practices as needed. Notably, they also demonstrated emotional adaptability, such as minimizing frustration and drawing on positive emotions. However, the score for

minimizing frustration was slightly lower ("agree" rather than "strongly agree"), suggesting that while cognitive and behavioral adaptability were strengths, emotional adaptability might have remained a challenge for some. The same respondents also scored very high in adaptability in responding to crises and in professional development during workplace changes.

Table 2. *Respondents' Level of Adaptability in Terms of Teaching in Uncertain and New Situations*

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation	
			Level of Adaptability	
1. In teaching, I can consider several possible options to help me in a new situation.	3.51	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. In teaching, I can revise how I think about a new situation to help me navigate it.	3.56	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I can adjust my thinking or expectations in the classroom to assist me in a new situation if necessary.	3.54	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. In teaching, I can seek out new information, helpful advice, and valuable resources to effectively address new situations.	3.76	0.58	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. In uncertain situations that arise in the community, I can develop new ways of going about things (e.g., a different way of doing something or finding information) to help me through.	3.41	0.71	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. To assist me in a new situation that arises in the community, I can adapt my approach if necessary.	3.51	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
7. In teaching, I can reduce negative emotions (e.g., fear) to better handle uncertain situations.	3.34	0.66	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. When uncertainty arises in the community, I can minimize frustration and irritation so I can better deal with it.	3.22	0.65	Agree	High
9. To help me navigate new situations that arise in the community, I can draw on positive feelings and emotions (e.g., enjoyment and satisfaction).	3.46	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	3.48	0.51	Strongly Agree	Very High

3.3 How do the Respondents Adapt their Response in Times of Crisis?

Table 3 below shows how the teacher-respondents rated their adaptability in responding to crises.

Table 3. *Respondents' Level of Adaptability in Terms of Their Response in Times of Crisis*

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation	
			Level of Adaptability	
1. I quickly analyze options for dealing with danger or crises and their implications.	3.32	0.61	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I maintain emotional control and objectivity while keeping focused on the situation at hand.	3.32	0.65	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I step up to take action and handle danger or emergencies as needed.	3.34	0.62	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I remain calm under a highly demanding workload.	3.29	0.72	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I manage frustration by focusing on constructive solutions.	3.29	0.68	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. I demonstrate resilience in stressful circumstances.	3.44	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
7. I maintain high levels of professionalism in difficult situations.	3.56	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. I act as a calming and settling influence to whom others look for guidance.	3.44	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
9. I demonstrate enthusiasm for learning new approaches and technologies for conducting work.	3.54	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
10. I do what is necessary to keep my knowledge and skills current.	3.66	0.62	Strongly Agree	Very High
11. I quickly learn new methods to complete work tasks.	3.59	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	3.43	0.54	Strongly Agree	Very High

It can be seen that all respondents rated their adaptability in teaching during crises as Very High, across all statements and situations. Elsewhere in this paper, adaptability among educators, both abroad and locally, seems to be a natural trait, either inherent or ingrained. For instance, in the work of Selvik and Herrebrøden (2024), teachers handling students with special education needs (SEN) described their experience during the pandemic and after, and were shown to have taken the opportunity to be creative and resourceful with their work, despite the initial challenges and setbacks, to adapt better and continue providing quality and necessary education amidst such a disruption and change. Aliwalas (2024) also described the same phenomenon of adaptability and flexibility among her study participants in their experiences teaching literature online during and immediately after the pandemic. In Bonifacio et al. (2023), the drastic changes brought by the pandemic and its aftermath not only required adaptability and flexibility among the teacher-respondents in the study but also shaped their

generationally induced perspectives on professional development and the social value of the teaching profession in the face of this phenomenon.

Accordingly, alongside these transformations and challenges of the time, there should be a call to rethink and reframe both obsolete and evolving teaching practices and teachers' professional development. Noting urgent limitations and challenges, Chin et al. (2022) echoed this and, through their findings, shared that immediately after (rather than during) the pandemic, most teachers needed (and engaged with) professional development related to online teaching and digital (technological) literacy. Lansangan and Orleans (2023) also uncovered the role of adaptability, among others, in educational assessment for teaching Science in the context of post-pandemic education. The continuity of the teaching-learning process during (and after) the same pandemic underscored the resilience of teachers in the Philippines, showing that, even in the face of such a catastrophe, education should never stop.

3.4 How do the Respondents Adapt their Professional Development in Times of Changes in their Work?

Table 4 below shows how the teacher-respondents rated their adaptability during professional development amid changes in their work. All the respondents rated themselves at a Very High level of adaptability in their professional development during times of change in their work, across all statements and situations.

Table 4. Respondents' Level of Adaptability in Terms of Their Professional Development in Times of Changes in Their Work

Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Interpretation Level of Adaptability	
1. I adjust to new work processes and procedures.	3.61	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
2. I anticipate changes in the work demands.	3.49	0.64	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. I actively participate in training that will prepare me for change.	3.66	0.66	Strongly Agree	Very High
4. I seek out assignments that will prepare me for change.	3.46	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
5. I take action to address deficiencies in work performance.	3.56	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
6. I analyze information in unique ways.	3.41	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
7. I generate new ideas in novel situations.	3.41	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
8. I turn problems upside down and inside out to find fresh, new approaches.	3.39	0.63	Strongly Agree	Very High
9. I integrate seemingly unrelated information and develop creative solutions.	3.37	0.70	Strongly Agree	Very High
10. I entertain wide-ranging possibilities others may miss.	3.44	0.67	Strongly Agree	Very High
Composite	3.48	0.55	Strongly Agree	Very High

3.5 Is There Relationship Between Respondents' Levels of Adaptability and Demographic Profile?

Table 5 below presents the tests of the relationship between respondents' levels of adaptability and their demographic profiles.

Table 5. Test of Correlation Between the Respondents' Levels of Adaptability and Their Demographic Profile.

Items	Years of Teaching	Correlation	Educational Background	Correlation	Seminars Attended	Correlation
Level of Adaptability in Teaching	0.323	Not Significant	0.955	Not Significant	0.964	Not Significant
Level of Adaptability in Times of Crises	0.282	Not Significant	0.996	Not Significant	0.999	Not Significant
Level of Adaptability in Terms of Professional Development	0.477	Not Significant	0.772	Not Significant	0.129	Not Significant

Note: If the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05 level of significance, reject H_0 ; otherwise, fail to reject H_0 .

The findings above indicate that there is no significant relationship between respondents' levels of adaptability and their demographic variables, including years of teaching experience, educational background, and the number of seminars attended. This means that teachers' ability to adapt across contexts – whether in teaching, during times of crisis, or in professional development – does not depend on their demographic characteristics.

Both novice and experienced teachers, regardless of whether they hold undergraduate or graduate degrees or

have attended numerous seminars, demonstrate similar levels of adaptability in their professional practice. This finding suggests that personal attributes and contextual factors more influence teachers' adaptability than demographic variables. Factors such as intrinsic motivation, growth mindset, openness to innovation, and institutional support systems may play a greater role in shaping how teachers respond to changes and challenges in their work environment.

The result also implies that adaptability is a universal professional competency that cuts across demographic differences. Teachers' capacity to adapt to new instructional strategies, technological integration, and crises, such as the abrupt shift to online learning during the pandemic, appears to stem from their professional disposition and situational engagement rather than from their formal qualifications or length of service.

This finding aligns with recent studies emphasizing that adaptability is a dynamic, learned behavior that develops through exposure to diverse teaching contexts, reflective practice, and continuous learning. The absence of a significant correlation may indicate that the school environment imposes similar adaptive demands and offers similar opportunities for all teachers, regardless of their background. Thus, institutional policies and professional development programs should focus less on differentiating support by demographic factors and more on building adaptive capacities through mentorship, collaborative learning, and experiential training.

From a practical standpoint, this result underscores the importance of cultivating adaptability as a core professional competency in teacher education and continuing professional development. Educational leaders should design interventions that strengthen teachers' resilience, flexibility, and readiness for change, qualities increasingly vital for navigating disruptions and innovations in the education sector.

3.6 Implications for Teacher Professional Development?

In this study, the teacher-respondents demonstrated very high levels of adaptability across the domains of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional adaptability. According to Martin et al. (2012), these domains respectively refer to: (a) cognitive adaptability, or the capacity to think flexibly and evaluate one's situation or phenomena in light of changing circumstances; (b) behavioral adaptability, or the ability to modify one's actions and strategies to respond effectively to new or uncertain conditions; and (c) emotional adaptability, or the regulation of affective tendencies and reactions when faced with unexpected events or disruptions.

These high adaptability ratings signify that teachers demonstrate strong professional resilience and flexibility in responding to crises, instructional shifts, and changes in the educational environment. Cognitive adaptability was reflected in their ability to navigate instructional challenges, particularly in adapting their teaching strategies to the uncertainty of the times. Emotional adaptability was evident in their composure and self-regulation during crises. Meanwhile, behavioral adaptability was apparent in their active engagement in professional learning and in their adjustment to evolving teaching modalities.

Notably, the findings revealed no significant relationship between teachers' levels of adaptability and their demographic profiles, including years of teaching, educational background, and number of seminars attended. This absence of correlation implies that adaptability transcends demographic distinctions and is instead influenced by teachers' intrinsic dispositions, professional attitudes, and contextual experiences rather than their age, qualifications, or length of service. Such a result underscores that adaptability is a core, universal competency that can be cultivated among all teachers, regardless of their demographic background.

This insight carries substantial implications for teacher professional development. Since adaptability does not vary significantly across demographic lines, professional development programs should be inclusive and comprehensive, designed to nurture adaptable thinking and responsive teaching behaviors among all teachers. Training initiatives should not assume that more experienced or more credentialed teachers are inherently more flexible, nor that less experienced ones lack the same capacity. Instead, development opportunities should emphasize adaptability as a professional disposition that requires continuous reinforcement through reflective practice, peer collaboration, and experiential learning.

In the context of the paradigm shifts triggered by crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, this study contributes to the growing call for evidence-based, responsive, and future-oriented teacher education programs. As part of the implications of this work, there should be sustained institutional support for professional development plans

that promote teachers' adaptability and overall professional well-being (Dayagbil et al., 2022). Specifically, such a program should:

- (a) Focus on maintaining and enhancing teachers' adaptable and resilient mindset in the face of crises, disruptions, or systemic changes in education;
- (b) Institutionalize flexible and blended learning modalities, integrating distance and technology-enhanced instruction alongside traditional classroom approaches;
- (c) Revisit and align teacher education curricula with adaptability-focused competencies, ensuring teachers are equipped for dynamic and unpredictable educational contexts; and
- (d) Contextualize professional development based on teachers' actual experiences and institutional conditions, emphasizing adaptability as a daily practice rather than a crisis response.

In light of these, the professional development framework emerging from this study should be theoretically anchored in Martin et al.'s (2012) model of adaptability and supported by the current finding that demographic characteristics do not predict adaptability levels. This means that adaptability training should focus on developing cognitive, behavioral, and emotional flexibility through problem-based learning, simulations, reflective inquiry, and peer mentoring. Ultimately, adaptability in the context of teacher professional development is not a fixed trait determined by demographic background, but a malleable professional competence that can be fostered through deliberate, sustained, and inclusive learning opportunities. Enhancing adaptability ensures that teachers remain agile, resilient, and effective in responding to the continuous transformations shaping 21st-century education.

4.0 Conclusion

The most recent pandemic has shown that even a "new normal" is not static, but continuously evolving, shaped by rapid technological, social, and educational changes. In this evolving normal, teachers stand as the central figures of adaptation, innovation, and continuity in learning. This dynamic environment demands not only pedagogical resilience but also sustained adaptability. In this study, the researchers examined and described the levels of adaptability among a select group of secondary school teachers in Pampanga, Philippines, focusing on their cognitive, behavioral, and emotional adaptability amid crises and educational change.

Findings revealed that the respondents demonstrated a generally very high level of adaptability across all domains, reflecting their strong ability to think flexibly, act responsively, and regulate their emotions amid uncertainty. Moreover, the results indicated no significant correlation between teachers' adaptability levels and their demographic profiles, suggesting that demographic characteristics do not shape adaptability but rather that it is a universal, intrinsic professional attribute cultivated through teachers' experiences, reflective practices, and institutional environments.

This finding carries meaningful implications for teacher education and professional development within an evolving new normal. Since adaptability does not depend solely on experience, qualifications, or formal training, professional development initiatives should be inclusive, ongoing, and grounded in adaptability theory. Such programs must holistically address the cognitive, behavioral, and affective aspects of adaptability, encouraging teachers to engage in reflective learning, collaborative problem-solving, and innovative pedagogical experimentation. In doing so, adaptability becomes a maintained and enhanced capacity rather than an introductory concept.

As education continues to evolve, it is vital to design evidence-based professional development frameworks that support teachers' adaptive capacities and overall well-being. These frameworks should enable teachers to thrive amid ongoing transformations such as digitalization, blended learning, and policy shifts – hallmarks of the evolving normal in education. The current findings thus affirm that adaptability should be institutionalized as a core professional competency, empowering teachers to navigate future uncertainties with resilience, flexibility, and confidence.

In sum, the teacher-respondents in this study could greatly benefit from a comprehensive, sustained plan to enhance and sustain adaptability, recognizing it as a lifelong professional pursuit in the face of continuous change. Finally, while this study offers valuable insights, it also acknowledges its methodological and contextual limitations. Further empirical and longitudinal studies are recommended to explore how teachers' adaptability develops and operates in diverse educational settings. This study, as an initial step, contributes to the growing

discourse on teacher adaptability in the context of an evolving new normal, where constancy lies not in stability but in the capacity to adapt. A data-driven, context-sensitive approach to teacher professional development and curriculum research will be essential to sustaining this adaptability as education continues to transform.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

All researchers actively contributed to the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, writing, editing, and overall direction of the study.

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The authors declare that no funding was received for this study.

7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in this study.

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