

Teachers' Adaptations to Administrative Shifts: The Experiences of Filipino Teachers in Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the teachers' adaptations to administrative shifts in Al-Hassa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which focused on changes in organizational practices, management principles, and school policies. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, semi-structured online interviews were conducted among purposively selected Filipino teachers with at least one school year of teaching experience. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis using NVivo software to identify recurring patterns and emerging themes related to administrative shifts, professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration. Findings revealed that Filipino teachers moved from flexible to structured systems with centralized scheduling, collaborative planning, multilingual communication, and technology integration, which developed accountability, efficiency, and expectations to institutional goals. Teachers showed resilience through time management, peer collaboration, mentorship, and continuous professional learning despite challenges such as language barriers and curriculum changes. Complying to local norms indicated cultural sensitivity and fostered smooth integration into the new working environment. Moreover, teachers' confidence, engagement, and performance were strengthened through supportive leadership, clear policy communication, and motivational practices. The study highlights that structured administrative support along with teachers' adaptations transform challenges into opportunities for innovation, skill development, and professional advancement. It emphasizes the significance of orientation, mentorship, lifelong learning, and mindset preparation as key strategies for sustainable adaptation. These findings provide a model for enhancement of effective onboarding and support systems that help teacher retention, well-being, and productivity in multicultural educational contexts.

Keywords: Teachers' Adaptations; Administrative Shifts; Filipino teachers; Cultural Integration; Professional Growth; Mentorship and Support systems

INTRODUCTION

The global prominence of Filipino educators has motivated many individuals to seek employment opportunities abroad. This movement is not only influenced by the appealing compensation packages but also to the prospects of professional growth and different experience with culture and educational systems abroad. Filipino teachers in the Middle East particularly Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia, establish an emulative foundation by integrating variety of teaching approaches and multicultural learning within foreign educational institutions. Such contribution enhances knowledge of global educational contexts and professional development (Jingyi et al., 2025). Filipino teachers encounter challenges associated with administrative shifts, including organizational practices, management principles, and school policies despite their strong commitment. Adaptations to administrative shifts require teachers to be resilient, adaptable, and culturally sensitive (Alkahtani, 2015). Filipino teachers who have relocated from the Philippine educational system often encounter substantial differences which

highlight the professional shift and transformation within their experiences in Saudi schools (Abdulcader et al., 2025). The opportunities and challenges arising from administrative shifts test teachers' adaptations while influencing school, teaching practices, and professional roles (Chen, 2024). Alignment and effective communication are significant for the success of cultural integration and contribution to school development. This study aims to explore teachers' adaptations to administrative shifts in Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia focusing on organizational practices, management principles, and school policies, encapsulating challenges and opportunities. It examined how Filipino teachers cope to the administrative shifts within organizational, managerial, and policy frameworks as well as how they adapt related to professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration. Finally, the study proposed adaptation model for Filipino teachers working abroad, ensuring smoother transitions and enhanced effectiveness in foreign learning settings.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teachers' Adaptation

Teachers adjust quickly when moving abroad. They handle new rules, traditions, and school routines differently depending on where they go (Rammata, 2017; Balderas, 2021). Turkish educators in Europe and southeast Asian teachers face real struggles with language, curricula, and cultural fit (Gul et al., 2020; Ho et al., 2023). For now, these pressures don't stop them from learning or adapting. International classrooms offer room to grow, build cross-cultural skills, and try new teaching ideas (Halicoglu, 2015; Ospina et al., 2020). Some changes happen naturally. Others take time. The results vary across regions and institutions.

However, teachers from the Philippines display different adaptive traits from other groups of expatriate teachers. Research has uncovered a high degree of refusal and at the same time willingness to change as well as dedication to student-centered practices even in the most culturally challenging environments of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Gilbang et al. 2024; Dela Cruz, 2018). Where foreign teachers, foreign educators' main concern would be the alignment of the school system, Filipino teachers are exposed to the ever-changing educational situation and cultural expectations that can be quietly communicated along with other learning problems (Robertson et al. 2016). Teachers have tendency to incorporate different kinds of instructions, for example, a mix of traditional and student-centered methods in their teaching. This is a great indication of their extraordinary adaptability shaped by their multicultural experiences in the Philippines.

Organizational, Management, and Policy Adaptations

International schools work with different methods such as global and local ones. Therefore, foreign teachers need to re-skill themselves in organizing, assessing, and digital tools. Group coaching, multilingual communication, and shared leadership are some ways to help this transformation; however, they may cause an increase in work and educational issues (Schmid, 2023; Brophy et al. 2015). Filipino teachers are quite different from other foreign teachers when it comes to their attitude towards strict rules and cooperative working. They are often more willing to meet the requirements of the school (Diokno et al. 2020). On the other hand, this willingness may lead to more work and stress. Ways of leading, especially giving positive criticism and motivating communication, are very important in changing teacher's desire and performance, and Filipino teachers highly regard it in the leader-follower relationship (Kraft et al. 2018; Collie, 2021).

Adjusting one's lifestyle to the rules and regulations can be a considerable challenge for foreign teachers, especially those working in regions with very strict laws like the Middle East (Zevin, 2015). Teachers are not only required to follow the educational standards and regulations of their school, but they must also show respect for the traditions of the local community. This even extends to conforming to the dress code (Magliveras, 2019).

Though these difficulties might be quite universal among foreign teachers, Filipino teachers generally display greater alignment to the local culture and their professional role which evidently shows that they are able to adapt more easily. Nevertheless, this mode of behavior may also serve to restrict their self-expression. Besides that, the rapid development of technology and changes in policies that happen so often not only intensify work stresses but also necessitate regular upgrading of skills, thereby highlighting the importance of school support (Howard et al. 2016).

Challenges, Opportunities, and Coping to Administrative Shifts

Foreign teachers often face changes in leadership, role ambiguity, and increased workload (Shah et al. 2023). Meanwhile, Filipino teachers have been attributed as resilient, cooperative, and professionally growth-oriented through their continuous efforts, as their main modes of coping with challenges (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021).

Despite these strengths, studies reveal that individual coping strategies are insufficient without organizational support. Creating professional communities, having open and approachable leaders, and giving teachers the opportunity to participate in decision-making are some of the factors that have a major impact on the process of adjustment (Wang et al. 2020). Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, educational reforms that emphasize decentralization and accountability are the drivers that determine the situations of teachers (OECD, 2020).

Professional Growth, Roles and Responsibilities, Teaching, and Cultural Integration

Administrative shifts can both prevent and improve teachers' professional growth. While unclear leadership may downgrade teachers' efficiency (Kim, 2019), supportive leadership and the availability of training opportunities can enhance teaching effectiveness (Cameron et al., 2021). Cultural factors should be woven in, for an excellent integration can lead to greater job satisfaction and stronger professional relationships (Almutairi et al., 2018). Filipino teachers are quite culturally competent. However, insufficient institutional support can result in dissatisfaction and eventually, the desire to leave the staff (Kwon, 2018).

Synthesis and Research Gap

Methodologically, there is a growing but still developing body of existing qualitative phenomenological studies that examine the way in which teachers' adaptations to administrative shifts. Theoretically, the current body of literature lacks a framework or theory that helps to explain how teachers understand and derive meaning from administrative shifts in their schools, particularly in a multicultural setting such as the one found in this study. Empirically, there was very little research on teachers' adaptations in the education system in Saudi Arabia and even less on the specific location of Al-Hassa. The experiences of Filipino teachers are underrepresented in the current body of literature as they represent a large percentage of the international education workforce, particularly as it relates to administrative shifts and institutional reforms.

Statements of the Problem

This study aims to explore teachers' adaptations to administrative shifts focusing on the organizational practices, management principles, and school policies

Specifically, the study ought to answer the questions:

What administrative shifts have been observed in school in terms of:

- 1.1 Organizational Practices;
- 1.2 Management Principles; and
- 1.3 School Policies?

What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by the teachers to administrative shifts?

How do Filipino teachers cope to administrative shifts in the following:

- 3.1. Organizational Practices;
- 3.2. Management Principles; and
- 3.3. School Policies?

How do Filipino teachers adapt to administrative shifts in terms of?

- 4.1 Professional Growth;
- 4.2 Roles and Responsibilities;
- 4.3 Teaching; and
- 4.4 Cultural Integration?

What adaptation model can be proposed for Filipino teachers working abroad?

Theoretical Lens

The study is founded on the Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 1984) which defines the way how individuals deal with changes as they look at four variables which are the following: situation, self, support, and strategies. In this study, Transition theory is used in an attempt to analyze how Filipino teachers cope to administrative shifts in organizational practices, management principles, and school policies within international contexts of education. The changes have implied shifting their working system and educational standards and to assimilate into foreign cultures. Teachers' adaptations depend on the attitude towards change (self), nature of change (situation), supports (mentors, colleagues), and strategies (changes in their teaching styles and their own cultural values).

In this vein, administrative shifts serve as inputs, coping to administrative shifts are processes, and adaptation outcomes-professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration-are outputs. The theory suggests the importance of achieving equilibrium between organizational expectations and the individual's coping resources and emphasizes the roles of mentoring, policy, and structure in promoting positive teachers' adaptation to administrative shifts.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model shows how Filipino teachers cope to administrative shifts in organizational practices, management principles and school policies when they take on new administrative responsibilities. Stemming from Schlossberg's Transition theory (1984), the model shows the variables of timing, changes in roles and degree of control in adapting to new administrative practices. Changes in roles in the administration of the school lead to difficulties in relation to the authoritarian hierarchy, cross-cultural challenges and restrictions of policies but also opportunities for professional growth, financial rewards and skills on different cultures. It emphasized the important support systems such as having a mentor, taking in training, and facilitating effective adaptation. Filipino teachers deal with these problems through using problem-solving and emotion-regulating coping strategies, exhibiting both reactive and proactive styles and relying on personal strength and available resources. Adaptation is reflected on advancement in the professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration, with an identity change from teacher to administration professional. The proposed adaptation model emphasizes the need for institutional support, which involves orientation, mentorship, lifelong learning through training, and mindset preparation, in enhancing the adjustment, job satisfaction and retention of the Filipino professionals who have worked in different cultures.

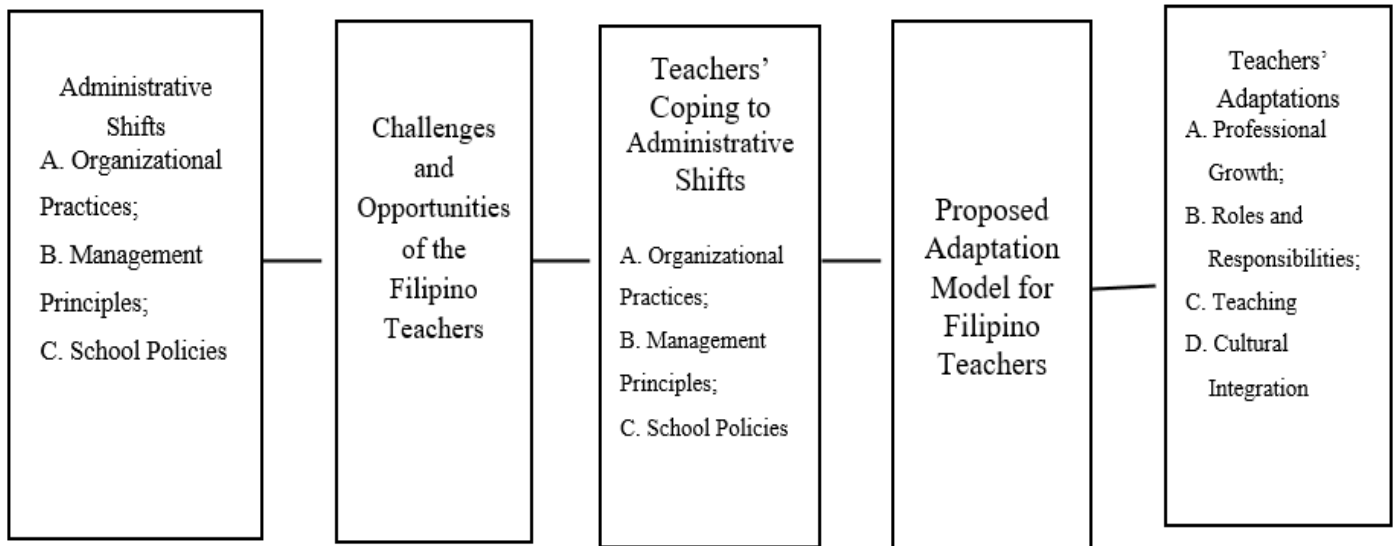


Figure 1: Schematic Diagram under the study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the teachers' adaptation to administrative shifts in Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia. Phenomenology was appropriate for examining participants' lived experiences and the meanings they attribute to administrative shifts within a foreign educational context. The study was anchored in Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1984), which explains how individuals cope to administrative shifts through the dimension of situation, self, support, and strategies.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, consisting of seven ($n = 7$) Filipino teachers currently employed in Al-Hassa who had completed at least one academic year of teaching. This criterion ensured sufficient exposure to the administrative and cultural environment. The sample size was consistent with phenomenological research, which caters depth of insight over large sample sizes and typically involves small population with rich information.

Data Collection

Semi-structured individual online interviews were conducted to gather information via Zoom and WhatsApp which lasted approximately 30-60 minutes and answers were transcribed verbatim. The interview guide was validated by the qualitative research experts. Revisions were made based on their suggestions and feedback before data collection. Participants were permitted to use English or Filipino to facilitate clarity of experiences on their own expression. The interviews focused on key areas such as observed administrative shifts in terms of organizational practices, management principles, and school policies, challenges and opportunities, coping to administrative shifts, teachers adapt to administrative shifts in terms of professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration, and proposed adaptation model for Filipino teachers working abroad.

Limitations of Online Interviews

Although online interviews offered a degree of flexibility and accessibility, there were constraints. These included difficulties in internet connectivity, limitation of non-verbal communication, and there was less interaction during the virtual interview compared with the in-person interview. In an effort to minimize these limitations, I requested clarifications if needed, and listened to the participants' verbal responses during transcription and analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used for the data collected, supported by NVivo software to uphold organization and systematic coding. The analysis followed (Braun and Clarke, 2006) six steps, including familiarizing the data, generating initial codes, grouping of codes, thorough evaluation of themes, defining and naming each theme, and lastly, organizing and developing a narrative.

Thematic analysis through NVivo revealed important themes which included teachers’ adaptations to organizational practices, management principles and school policies and the identification of challenges and opportunities, the development of coping to administrative shifts and teachers’ professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching and cultural integration in educational settings. The themes of the study were combined and refined to create an understandable model which demonstrated teachers’ adaptation to administrative shifts. An audit trail was maintained throughout the research process to ensure transparency and rigor.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Several strategies were done to make sure trustworthiness of the study is shown. Credibility was carried out with careful data interpretation and member checking. Dependability was upheld by maintaining detailed documentation of the procedure and processes. Confirmability was attained through the use of audit trails and reflexive practices to break the bias and results were remained in the responses of the participants.

Research Ethics

The researcher gained ethical approval from the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC). Prior to the formal interview, participants declared and submitted consent which researcher made sure of confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Protection of participants’ identity was guaranteed through coding (e.g., P1, P2), and all the information gathered were securely stored in password-protected devices. Participants were informed to having right to withdraw participation at any stage without penalty.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Al-Hassa, Saud Arabia, with the data collection carried out remotely to ensure privacy and accessibility.

Results

The researcher highlights the findings and discussion for the research questions laid out for this paper, the study begins by presenting the table and results of each data for the first research question containing the themes, sub-themes, and verbatim responses of the participants followed by the discussion and succeeding ones.

Research Question 1: What administrative shifts have been observed in school in terms of organizational practices, management principles and school policies?

Administrative Shifts Observed in School in Terms of Organizational Practices

Table 7. 1. Administrative shifts observed in organizational practices, management principles, and school policies

Themes	Codes (Sub-theme)	Verbatim Response
Organizational Practices	Structured scheduling	“Strict scheduling system... classes, meetings, and reports follow a calendar.” – P1
		“Meetings plotted for the whole month... sudden changes require flexibility.” – P6

	Collaborative planning	“Planning is done collaboratively through weekly meetings.” – P2
		“Meetings require a translator... admin not fluent in English.” – P4
	Sudden schedule changes	“Meetings called in the middle of class... sudden programs without notice.” – P6
		“Rain or sandstorm leads to early dismissal... sudden changes common.” – P4
	Multilingual meetings	“Meetings now include Arabic teachers with translation.” – P7
		“Admin meetings require translator for English.” – P4
Management Principles	Supportive feedback	“Supervisor acknowledged strengths before suggesting improvements.” – P1
		“Feedback focused on student engagement, not overwhelming points.” – P5
	Limited feedback	“Supervisor gave little feedback... only once per semester.” – P7
	Motivational practices	“Principal motivates teachers by praising and complimenting.” – P7
School Policies	Dress code adaptation	“Wore abaya to feel confident... stricter dress code.” – P2
		“Coat and tie required... fits climate and formal expectations.” – P4
	Technology integration	“Integration of LMS improved efficiency and personalization.” – P5
		“Digital teaching using word wall, live worksheets, kahoot.” – P7

Results

The findings reveal that administrative shifts are characterized by organized calendars, group planning, rapid and structured scheduled meetings and multiple-language meetings, demonstrating the school's transition towards a highly organized calendar-oriented system where efficiency, accountability and conformity within the group are encouraged. The organized timetable offers greater transparency and structure in the form of an updated and centralized calendar, though is still a volatile one with changing schedules and added responsibilities. Collaborating planning builds cohesion, shared responsibility and unity among educators; however, requires additional support in language translation with multiple languages. Sudden schedule changes highlight the adaptability of educators in responding to unexpected changes in the agenda such as urgent meetings or adverse weather conditions. The implementation of multilingual meetings encourages inclusion and fair participation, yet requires added effort and synchronization to address translation needs.

Management principles affect teacher's experience, by applying positive feedback approaches, limited feedback approach and motivational practices. Positive feedback gives the teacher self-confidence and self-reliance, as well as enhances their professionalism, on the other hand, limited feedback empowers them with more self-reliance, yet potentially limits their improvement, while the motivational practices enhance solidarity, motivation and engagement within the teachers, particular in an environment that teachers with various cultural backgrounds can cooperate and work together more effectively.

In school's policies, dress code adaptation and technology integration will cause noticeable impact on teachers' experiences. Dress code adaptation aims to maintain teacher's professionalism, uphold school's culture and create school identity, while required teachers to abide by tighter regulations. Technology integration can be helpful to increase teacher's productivity, engagement and individual student learning, it requires teacher to develop more technical skills; overall, this can give rise to the trend that institution structure and teacher's autonomy has to reach equilibrium.

Discussion

Findings of the study suggest that the international schools provide considerable administrative support to Filipino teachers via organizational practices and management principles and school policies that lead to greater efficiency and cultural assimilation to structured environments. These support systems aim to blend local needs with global expectations (Rammata, 2017) and promote proactive approach to organizational effectiveness (Aslan et al., 2015). Organized timetables and the use of technology enable orderly and efficient procedures which are typical in this technological era (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019) while planning and leadership teams promote collaboration and shared accountability, leading to coherent curricula (Schmid, 2023; Brophy et al., 2015). Efforts at conducting meetings in multiple languages and providing translations ensure that no one is left out in the discussions and facilitate just decisions as these are often required when adjustments in policies are made (Masry-Herzallah et al., 2024). Moreover, flexibility for disruptions and compliance with local government policies reflect world observations on teacher adaptability to situations (Ho et al., 2023; Diokno et al., 2020). In addition, positive feedback, mentorship, and inspirational leadership build teacher confidence, professional growth, and well-being (Kraft et al., 2018; Collie, 2021; Zhang et al., 2024); however, insufficient feedback may constrain teachers' advancement (Cuenca, 2019). The standards for dress codes and technology rules lead to cultural immersion and use of modernized approaches to teaching.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by the teachers to administrative shifts?

Challenges and Opportunities Encountered by Teachers to Administrative Shifts

Table 7.2. Challenges and opportunities to administrative shifts

Themes	Codes (Sub-theme)	Verbatim response
Challenges & Opportunities	Language barriers	“Misunderstood announcements... needed help from experienced Filipino colleagues.” – P4
		“Math terminologies difficult... had to simplify terms.” – P6
	Curriculum changes	“Every year, curriculum changes... difficult to adjust.” – P2
		“Singapore method replaced by American standard... easier but different.” – P4

Result

The results revealed that the challenges experienced by the Filipino teachers in the international school setting generally consist of language barrier and changes of curriculum. The language barriers hinder them in both

teaching and the ways of communication to students, parents, and colleagues who do not have proficiency in English language, especially for content area like Mathematics where technical terms are very many, therefore they need to simplify lesson and ask support to their colleagues for interpretation of things. These have an effect on how they consistently teach and promote understanding to their students, parents, colleagues and support each other. In terms of curriculum changes, it required that there must be constant updates on the learning approach used since there are constant changes on the curriculum (Singaporean to American, from K-12, etc.), which affects the preparation of the lesson, match with tests and uses of available materials. Through trainings and refreshers and adapting teaching approaches the teachers show progress on being accustomed with changes over time and continued teaching standards while being updated on the changing curriculum.

Discussion

Filipino teachers faced the most common issues such as the language barrier and curriculum changes in multicultural environments of international schools but also present the teachers to experience new challenges and gain professional benefits. Language barrier restricts teachers' smooth teaching and especially in Mathematic, in communication with students, parents, or administration staff and a need for translation is often arisen that brings out a delay in communication and an extra hour in teaching time. This finding aligns to the results of research that foreign teachers find language and culture barrier (Gokce, 2020) and the professional growth at the same time (Halicoglu, 2015). In order to get over this problem, simplification methods were used and support from fellow teachers was obtained to maintain the continuity of teaching (Gilbang, et al.,2024; Loewen et al., 2020). Moreover, an extra modification in the curriculum required additional changes (Ospina et al., 2020) to lesson preparation and assessment. However, these changes are beneficial for the teacher's resiliency and professional integration (Dela Cruz, 2018; Marno, 2018) but the teachers find the extra work and pressure were stressing and the support from school administration was required (Tran et al., 2023).

Research Question 3: How do Filipino teachers cope to administrative shifts in terms of organizational practices, management principles, and school policies?

Table 7. 3 Filipino teachers Coping to Administrative Shifts in organizational practices, management principles, and school policies

Themes	Codes (Sub-theme)	Verbatim response
Coping– Organizational Practices	Time Management & Planning	“Practiced time management and advanced planning. So I made it a habit to check schedules daily and prepare my tasks ahead of time.” – P1
		“Lahat na talaga yung submission is through online. Merong website... sa pag send ng lesson planning.” – P4
	Guidance & Mentorship	“Proactively seeking guidance from my supervisor and experienced teachers. I also increased my collaboration with grade-level colleagues.” – P5
		“I just followed their way of teaching. It is organized.” – P7
Supportive Environment	“They are very welcoming. They have the teachers' trainings... these are your mentors.” – P2	
Coping– Management Principles	Feedback & Supervision	“Through the regular observations... learned to be open to feedback... learning opportunities.” – P1

		“Informal observation... verbally inform you... then formal observations.” – P2
	Documentation & Communication	“Communicating openly with my supervisors helped me understand their expectations.” – P1
		“Maintaining clear, professional documentation... keep my supervisor informed.” – P5
	Leadership Trust	“Principal... communicate well in English... management has improved.” – P6
“Principal is amazing... trusts the teachers... motivates by giving good words.” – P7		
Coping– School Policies	Policy Challenges	“Not easy... strict documentation... understood the purpose behind these policies.” – P1
		“First year was challenging... cultural differences, language barriers.” – P5
	Policy Communication	“Clear guidance and support from... colleagues... higher ups made me adjust.” – P1
		“Policies were clearly explained... everything is clear. Everything is stated.” – P2
	Cultural Adaptation	“Mindful of the schedules... dress code... cultural expectations.” – P3
		“Rules easier here... Muslim environment, adaptation becomes easier.” – P6

Result

The findings revealed that Filipino teachers manage changes in administration with effective time management, guidance and mentorship, and supportive environments. The Filipino teachers also adapt to different types of management principles and school policies in school. Filipino teachers apply daily schedule monitoring by observing their everyday routine and use advance planning, and use of technological tools to perform tasks with less stress. Guidance and mentorship are acquired from supervisors or the experienced co-teachers that help for better understanding of the system, for the betterment of coordination and to achieve adjustment however too much dependence is an inhibiting factor to be an independent decision maker. Supportive environment obtained through training and orientation, supervision and coaching are beneficial for transition and build up of self-concept as a professional. As regards to management principles, feedback, supervision, documentation, open and clear communication helps a professional to have better improvement and more responsibility, as well as to comply with the policies and rules in school while being open-minded and having trusting confidence with administration fosters positive response and autonomy. With school policies, the initially presented challenges such as red tape, cultural differences, and language barrier are slowly resolved through clear communication, advice, and attention to culture.

Discussion

Filipino teachers employed time management techniques, peer guidance, and supportive environment to help Filipino teachers respond to administrative shifts in organizational practices, management principles, and school

policies. This is an illustration of their adaptability to adapt from less stringent systems in the Philippines to stricter systems in the international scene. These practices align to the coping mechanisms as described by Skaalvik et al. (2021) and Tortola (2024) which include exerting effort, developing skills and seeking support. Efficient schedule management and collaboration facilitated work predictability and managed anticipation associated with change, which is consistent with professional learning communities (Muller et al., 2019). Mentorship and consultation with supervisors helped in understanding the procedures and reduced errors and made easy transitions (Chiu et al., 2019; Tanev et al., 2013; Zhou et al., 2019). Institutional support (orientation sessions, trainings, feedback) boosted professional growth and morale (Carless, 2015; Meyer, 2021) and social support network (working with colleagues) provided support and helped to adapt to policy changes (Wang et al., 2020). Trust to leadership supported commitment and knowledge of rules eliminated ambiguities (Alqahatani et al., 2021; Siagian, 2017). Cultural adaptation by accepting local values fostered belongingness and improved intercultural competence showing adaptation as a continuing, developing process with supportive organization and active teachers.

Research Question 4: How do Filipino teachers adapt to administrative shifts in terms of professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration?

Filipino Teachers Adapt to Administrative Shifts in terms of Professional Growth

Table 7. 4. Filipino teachers adapt to administrative shifts in professional growth, roles & responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration

Themes	Codes (Sub-theme)	Verbatim response
Adaptations – Professional Growth	Training impact	“Workshop on learner-centered teaching and digital tools.” – P1
		“Refresher training... mostly similar to Philippine experience.” – P4
Adaptations – Roles and Responsibilities	Instructional Duties	“Restructured lessons for LMS/data-driven approach post-training.” – P5
		“Simplified math terms; inductive strategies for language barriers.” – P6
	Task Management	“Classroom rules routine; get to know students for differentiation.” – P1
		“Workload up in documentation; prioritize via time management.” – P2
Adaptations – Teaching	Student-centered methods	“Practice of differentiated instruction... focus on struggling students.” – P2
		“Simplify lessons due to language barriers... inductive strategies.” – P6
Adaptations – Cultural Integration	Respect for norms	“Learned to be culturally sensitive in classroom interactions.” – P2
		“Students brave... discipline and study habits require adjustment.” – P4

Result

Filipino teachers' adaptation to administrative shifts is strongly supported by a training and workshop session such as through learning management system, differentiation, SAVVAS, international strategies and classroom management which continue to enhance professional growth, teaching methods, and cultural integration. Training on student centered teaching and using technology in teaching, the Filipino teachers are capable to provide teaching that is student-based and uses modern techniques in teaching that complies with current administrative requirements. This makes the teachers become more confident in what they do, and become competent in what they should be rated on in many aspects of teaching.

Even though a training and workshop has the potential to re-affirm current strategies in teaching that have already been used in the Philippines, as opposed to presenting new ones; this still is the continuous refinement of teaching which maintains teaching efficiency. In the managing of teaching tasks and responsibilities, tailored instruction, use of simplified instructions, and use of a language conscious approach are used to assist the learners and linguistic constraints. Data based systems, and the learning management system are also utilized to attain consistency and accountability. Established and consistent routines, systems of documenting, and the use of the classroom framework is used to ensure efficiency and transparency although additional documentation work increases the number of responsibilities to be managed, as well as teaching.

Student centered teaching methods are also applied to support the failing student, and fairness in classroom teaching; however, the teacher is faced to provide simplified instructions for the learner due to language barriers. Cultural Integration is achieved when the teacher considers certain traditions and religious holidays (like prayer times and during the Ramadan), and they are also expected to try to accommodate classroom issues of student behavior and discipline by making changes based on students' individual characteristics.

Discussion

Filipino teachers prioritized targeted induction, various teaching methods, structured policies, and cultural sensitivity in professional growth, roles and responsibilities, teaching, and cultural integration, demonstrating proactive skill improvement and adaptation to the context. Training programs that addressed student-centered approaches, utilized digital resources, incorporated an online learning system and employed tools such as SAVVAS further developed teaching skills, confidence and conformity to international standards; therefore, it was validated that teacher training increased sensitivity towards changes initiated by administration (Nguyen et al. 2020). Opportunities and trust in administration led to growth through mentorship, collaboration, and professional networking as teacher excellence is expected to be higher when there is positive leadership (Cameron & Cameron, 2021). The teachers adapted differentiation in teaching to provide students with individually focused, streamlined and culturally sensitive instruction to suit their varied backgrounds and to overcome language barriers, promoting inclusive education (Almutairi et al., 2018). Student-centered methods helped increase student engagement and retention especially with deductive and interactive methods (Hadiyanto, 2025). Understanding and respecting cultural norms such as attention towards religious beliefs and personal space allowed for ease of adaptation and effective classroom communication.

Research Question 5: What Adaptation model can be proposed for Filipino teachers working abroad?

Proposed Adaptation Model for Filipino Teachers Working Abroad

Table 7. 5. Proposed Adaptation Model for Filipino Teachers Working Abroad

Themes	Codes (Sub-theme)	Verbatim response
Proposed Adaptation Model	Orientation & mentoring	“Schools should provide orientation programs and mentoring.” – P2
	Lifelong Learning	“Teachers should learn rules, accept changes, and be flexible.” – P6

	Mindset Preparation	“Teachers need to be emotionally prepared and confident.”-P7
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Result

Filipino teachers acknowledged that the most critical elements to overcome adjustment challenges include orientation and mentoring, lifelong learning and mindset preparation. Through orientation and mentoring, teachers' expectations can be clarified and teachers' self-confidence boosted, allowing them to make easier adjustment to their new working environments. Despite this, individual motivation, mental and emotional readiness as well as adaptability are all essential attributes that allow teachers to adjust well. Lifelong Learning is also related to adaptability, since those teachers who participate actively in professional learning and adopt the changes occurred in the institution and maintain open attitudes possess higher level of self-resilience and are able to take a proactive attitude towards administrative policies and practices of education. Thus, through constant learning, teachers may understand and adjust to administrative practices better and cope with unexpected problems efficiently. Besides, Mindset preparation, namely mental and emotional readiness and self-confidence is also a major factor to assist teachers in performing duties when faced with stress. Teachers who possess strong self-resilience will adjust to stresses much better, remain in composure during situations of ambiguity, and adapt well to various cross-cultural and work demands. Overall, adaptation depends on both the institutional supports and the personal qualities of the teacher; long term achievement in an international working environment is thus highly dependent on them.

Discussion

The proposed model for overseas Filipino teachers focuses on different dimensions such as orientation, mentoring, lifelong learning and mindset preparation based on Schlossberg's Transition theory focusing on situation, self, support, and strategies for a better sustained career in various international school settings. orientation is crucial as it addresses situation providing concrete details of institutional policies and social customs to help integrate professional practice (Opfer et al., 2020). Mentoring addresses the support dimension; with the aid of experts, teacher mentors help them identify possible challenges and provides concrete advise that can lead to smooth assimilation and building a network of professional colleagues (Yan, 2021). Mindset preparation addresses self where teachers have to possess a good measure of emotional resilience and confidence to overcome personal and professional hurdles which leads to enhanced teacher and student performances (Le & Pham, 2024). Lifelong learning addresses strategies which is essentially teacher's openness for continuous learning and ability to deal with changes encountered in the changing educational context (Bautista et al., 2025).

Implication

Managing changes in administration enables Filipino teachers from varying academic histories to cope with fixed schedules, the multi-language policy and clear-cut routines, thereby improving their productivity, sense of order, accountability, and acculturation. Work environments that foster input, counseling and joint planning help promote professional advancement and transform cultural differences into opportunities for solidarity and advancement. Challenges like the difference in language and curriculum structure result in professional development when met with group learning, efficient time management, and a systematic evaluation of results that increase resilience, motivation, and creativity. Coping with cultural changes by valuing indigenous practices like prayer breaks and privacy considerations increases integration into the community and equal participation with a consideration for fair participation, and underscores the importance of an inclusive policy that adheres to local and global requirements. The results inform educational administrators and policy-makers of how to implement effective induction process and a consistent support system to assist teachers in unfamiliar environments that enhance efficiency and retain the services of foreign teachers. Moreover, the proposed holistic framework composed of orientation, mentoring, lifelong learning, and mindset preparation allows sustainable programs to improve the affective competence of foreign teachers, reduce attrition, and maintain their professionalism over a long period of time in unfamiliar school settings.

Proposed Teachers' Adaptation Framework

Based on the findings, this study proposes Filipino Teachers' Adaptation Model:

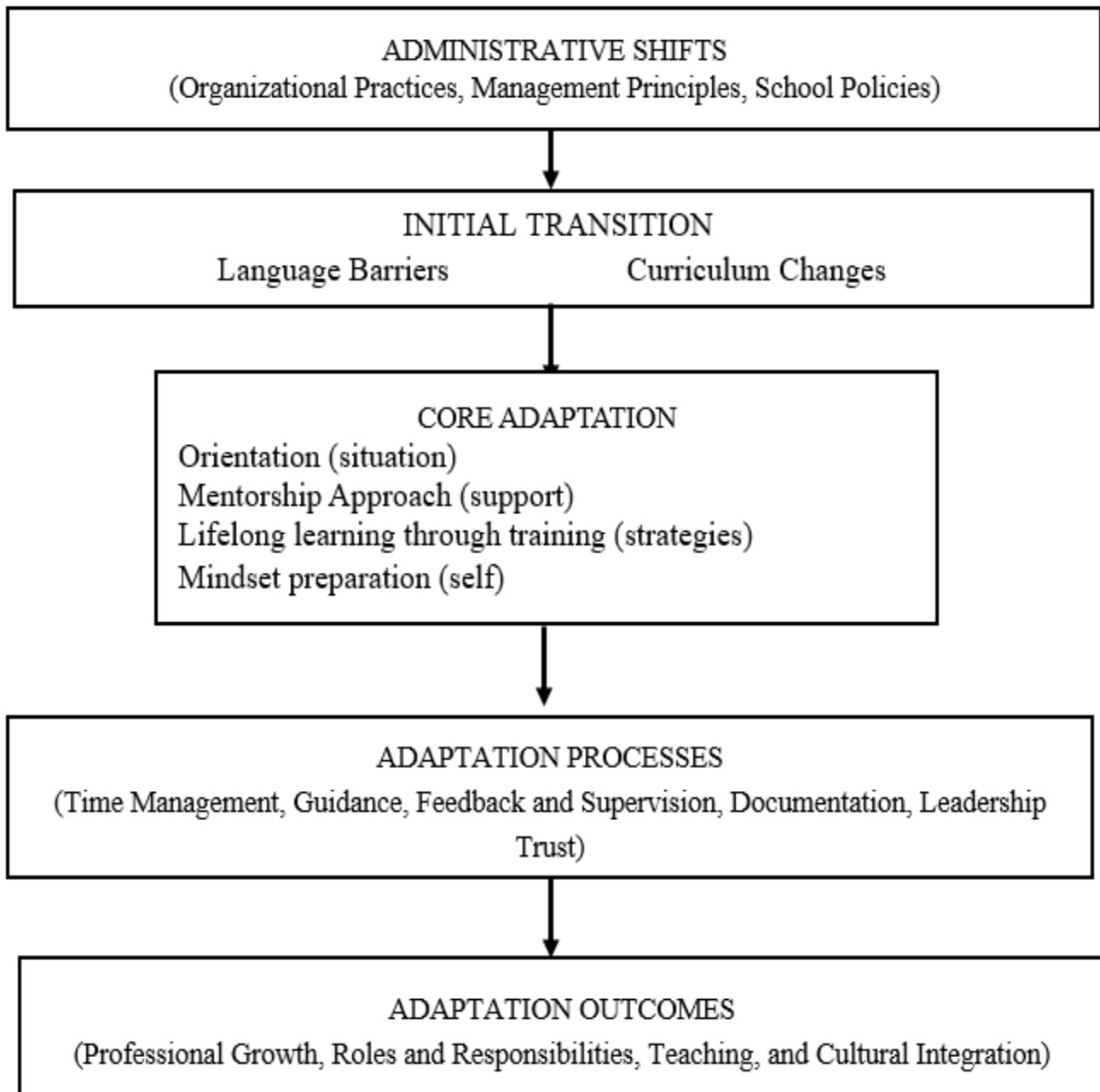


Figure 2: Teachers' Adaptation Framework

This proposed adaptation model utilizes training, mentoring, lifelong learning and mindset preparation as the major tools to assist Filipino teachers adapt in an international school. Derived from Schlossberg's Transition Theory (situation, self, support, strategies), this model conceptualizes adaptation as a progressive journey that can occur if the teaching, management, and administration of schools are always developing, by learning and understanding new management philosophies, administrative policies and school regulations, the program of orientation helps to remove doubt through increased knowledge of school policy and culture, mentorship builds support in professional and cultural aspects of the job, ongoing education helps teachers improve and adapt their teaching practices, while the use of mental readiness fosters resilience and mental ability to endure. The various stages contribute to an educator learning skills in time management, teamwork, and pedagogical competence, thus enabling him to improve professional practices, teaching methods and cultural integration. In general, the model explains that an educator who learns these essential factors is expected to become both better supported organizationally and flexible personally, converting challenges into opportunities in varied learning contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

Filipino teachers in Al-Hassa, Saudi Arabia managed administrative shifts by developing organized schedules, collaborative planning, supportive feedback, and technology integration despite experiencing challenges in language and curriculum changes. Based on Schlossberg's Transition Theory, factors such as situation, self, support, and strategies are what allow people to adapt; hence, institutional systems and the personal resilience are both important in professional growth. The findings clearly indicate the importance of specific training, mentorship, and cultural adaptation for improved effectiveness of teachers in the role, responsibilities and cultural integration in new environments. Also, the suggested practice namely; orientation, mentorship, lifelong learning, and mindset preparation provide a feasible and replicable model for increased flexibility, resilience and consistent productivity of Filipino teachers working abroad.

Recommendations for Further Studies

For future studies, the following are suggested:

1. A longitudinal study of Filipino teachers in Al-Hassa over several years can assess the effects of administrative shifts, coping mechanisms, and professional growth on retention, satisfaction, and career trajectories, utilizing Schlossberg's Transition Theory to evaluate long-term resilience factors.
2. Comparative analysis of regions including the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and North America will examine variations in administrative challenges, cultural integration strategies, and policy compliance among Filipino teachers working abroad in different educational contexts.
3. Mixed-methods research utilizing larger samples can quantitatively validate qualitative themes such as language barriers, curriculum change, and mentorship effectiveness. This approach incorporates surveys and performance data to assess their impact on teacher efficacy and student achievement.
4. Experimental or quasi-experimental designs can assess the efficacy of proposed interventions such as phased orientations, formal mentorship programs, and resilience workshops in international schools to reduce adjustment stress and enhance intercultural competence.
5. Psychological investigations into emotional dimensions such as stress, burnout, and self-efficacy among Filipino teachers abroad can utilize validated psychometric tools to examine the mediation of social support and personal resilience in teaching practices and professional role.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this manuscript:

CRE	Continuing Research Education Credit
ICF	Informed Consent Form
LMS	Learning Management System
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
UMERC	University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee

Appendix A

Table A1. Interview Guide Questions.

Research Objectives	Interview Question	Probing Question
1. What administrative shifts have been observed in school in terms of: a. Organizational Practices; b. Management Principles; and c. School Policies?	1.1 What are the routines, procedures, and working culture have you observed in your school that is quite different from your previous school?	1.4 Can you give a clear example, like changes in schedules, meetings, or duties?
	1.2 What kind of practices like supervision, teacher	1.5 Can you share an example of a recent interaction with a supervisor

	evaluation, feedback, and motivational practices have been observed in your school?	that felt different, and explain the impact it had on you?
	1.3 What are the rules or policies like work regulations, dress codes, teaching standards, and cultural expectations in school are new or different for you?	1.6 How have these rules affected your teaching or work?
2. What are the challenges and opportunities encountered by the Filipino teachers to administrative shifts?	2.1 What difficulties in adjustment to the culture and policies, language barriers, job expectations have you faced because of these changes in school administration?	2.3 Can you tell me about a specific challenge you experienced?
	2.2 What training, seminars, and other favorable situations have you gained from these shifts?	2.4 How did it help you?
3. How do Filipino teachers cope to administrative shifts in the following? a. Organizational Practices; b. Management Principles; and c. School Policies?	3.1 How do you adjust to the way the school is organized?	3.4 Can you share a specific way you adjusted to their style?
	3.2 How do you deal with the way school leaders manage you?	3.5 Can you share a specific way you adjusted to their style?
	3.3 How do you follow and adjust to the school rules?	3.6 Was it hard or easy for you? Why?
4. How do Filipino teachers adapt to administrative shifts in terms of? A. Professional Growth; B. Roles and Responsibilities; C. Teaching; and D. Cultural Integration?	4.1 How have the changes in education policies and school administration helped or challenged you to improve as a teacher?	4.5 Can you share an example of a training, workshops, you engaged in as a result of those shifts- Do you consider it significant? Why or why not? Elaborate your answer.
	4.2 How have the changes affected your tasks or duties? How did you handle it?	4.6 Can you share your experience on delivery of instruction, classroom management, compliance with school policies, and professional interactions within the institution?
	4.3 Did your way of teaching change? How?	4.7 Can you describe one specific change in your instructional strategy?
	4.4 How do you adjust to the cultural norms and practices of your school?	4.8 Can you share one situation where you had to adjust to cultural differences?

5. What adaptation model can be proposed for Filipino teachers working abroad?	5.1 What do you suggest to help Filipino teachers adjust better to school administration abroad?	5.2 Can you explain how it could support teachers in a new setting?
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