

From Online Interns to On-Site Educators: A Phenomenological Study of Filipino Teachers' Professional Identity Reconfigurations

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Date Received: 11 December 2025 Revised: 27 March 2026 Accepted: 21 April 2026

Paper Type: Original Research

Abstract

Aim/Purpose: This study explored the lived experiences of Filipino teachers who completed their pre-service teaching internships entirely through online modalities during the COVID-19 pandemic and later transitioned to on-site teaching when schools resumed face-to-face instruction. Specifically, the study sought to understand how these teachers perceived the transition from virtual practicum environments to physical classrooms, how they navigated the challenges associated with on-site teaching, and how their professional identities evolved as they adapted to these new professional realities.

Introduction/Background: The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted teacher education programs worldwide. As schools closed and learning shifted to remote environments, teacher education institutions were compelled to redesign pre-service teaching internships to be conducted online. In these virtual settings, pre-service teachers delivered lessons via video conferencing, interacted with learners remotely, and relied extensively on digital tools to facilitate instruction. Although these arrangements ensured the continuity of teacher preparation during the pandemic, they also altered the nature of the practicum experience. Opportunities to observe student behavior directly, practice classroom management in physical spaces, and engage with school communities in person became limited. Existing research has documented the experiences of preservice teachers during online internships, highlighting challenges related to technology integration, instructional delivery, and student engagement. However, relatively little attention has been given to the experiences of teachers who trained entirely in online environments and subsequently entered traditional classroom settings as professional educators. In the Philippines, the return to full face-to-face instruction during the 2022–2023 School Year created a significant transition for teachers who had completed their internships online. These teachers were suddenly required to manage physical classrooms, interact directly with students, and respond to the complex social dynamics of face-to-face teaching. Because the early stages of a teaching career play a critical role in shaping professional identity, examining how teachers experience and interpret this transition provides valuable insights for teacher education institutions seeking to prepare future educators for evolving instructional contexts.

Methodology: This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in transcendental phenomenology, guided by Moustakas's framework, to explore teachers' lived experiences of transitioning from online pre-service internships to on-site teaching. Criterion purposive sampling was used to recruit five teachers who had completed their pre-service teaching internships entirely through online modalities during the 2021–2022 academic year and subsequently began on-site teaching during the 2022–2023 academic year. The participants, aged 22 to 25 years, included three female and two male teachers working in junior high school, senior high school, and higher education institutions in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, Philippines. Data were collected through open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted via an online conferencing platform. Following Moustakas's phenomenological approach, the researchers engaged in bracketing (epoché),

repeatedly reviewed the transcripts, identified significant statements through horizontalization, clustered these into meaning units, and synthesized thematic descriptions to capture the essence of participants' shared experiences. Member checking and systematic documentation of the analytic procedures were employed to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

Findings: Analysis of participants' narratives revealed several interconnected themes that illuminate how teachers experienced the transition from online preparation to on-site teaching. Participants described the transition as anticipated but staggering, indicating that while they expected challenges, the realities of managing physical classrooms and responding to student behavior were more demanding than they had imagined. Teachers also reported redefining their professional horizons as they adjusted their expectations and gradually expanded their instructional approaches in response to the dynamics of face-to-face teaching. Another theme, putting up with the shadow of doubt, reflected participants' feelings of uncertainty and self-questioning as they navigated unfamiliar classroom situations and assessed their readiness to meet the expectations of on-site teaching. Despite these difficulties, participants described actively bridging the online and offline teaching rift by drawing from their online teaching experiences and adapting those practices to suit the needs of physical classrooms. Teachers also emphasized nurturing the potential of technology to enhance student engagement, demonstrating that digital tools remained a meaningful component of their instructional strategies even within traditional classroom environments. Put differently, teachers came to see themselves as hybrid and adaptive pedagogues who combined elements of online and traditional instruction, technology-enabled educators who intentionally integrated digital tools into classroom learning, and reflective practitioners who continuously evaluated and refined their teaching practices through experience and reflection.

Contribution/Impact on Society: These findings contribute to ongoing discussions on post-pandemic education by illustrating how teachers trained in online environments adapted to professional practice in physical classrooms. The study highlights the importance of preparing future teachers for flexible instructional contexts that integrate both digital and face-to-face modalities.

Recommendations: Teacher education institutions should strengthen pre-service preparation by incorporating authentic classroom management experiences, structured reflective practice, and blended teaching strategies that integrate digital and face-to-face instruction. Schools should provide comprehensive induction and mentoring programs to support teachers transitioning from online preparation to on-site teaching.

Research Limitations: This study involved a small number of participants from a single geographic location, which may limit the transferability of the findings to other educational contexts.

Future Research: Future studies may involve larger and more diverse samples across different regions or educational systems and may examine how teachers' professional identities continue to evolve as educators gain greater experience teaching in both online and on-site environments.

Keywords: *Online teaching internships, on-site teaching transition*

Introduction

The teaching internship, or pre-service teaching experience (PSTE), has long been recognized as the culminating phase of teacher preparation, serving as a bridge between theoretical coursework and the lived realities of classroom practice. Through supervised teaching, lesson implementation, and engagement with school communities, PSTEs help shape teaching competence, pedagogical beliefs, and early professional identities (Baylan, 2019; Hamilton & Margot, 2019; Scheeler et al., 2016). Research consistently demonstrates that practicum experiences play a defining role in how preservice teachers (PSTs) understand the teaching profession, negotiate their emerging roles, and construct teacher professional identity (TPI) (Cobb et al., 2018; Izadinia, 2015; Suarez & McGrath, 2022).

However, the COVID-19 pandemic radically disrupted traditional practicum models. School closures forced teacher education institutions worldwide to move PSTE into wholly online modalities (Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020; Tarrayo & Anudin, 2021). While online practicum enabled continuity of training, studies reveal that PSTs confronted significant challenges, including limited teaching presence, reduced opportunities for classroom management, technological barriers, and difficulties sustaining learner engagement (Back et al., 2021; González-Calvo et al., 2021; Pepito, 2022). Despite these constraints, PSTs still developed preliminary teaching identities, although these identities were shaped within the boundaries of virtual interaction, an environment fundamentally different from the multisensory, relational, and often unpredictable nature of physical classrooms.

In the Philippines, the shift was particularly consequential for cohorts who completed their entire PSTE online from 2020 to 2022. Many of these PSTs anticipated continuing in online teaching settings after graduation, assuming that pandemic-driven remote learning would persist (Anderson et al., 2022; Konig et al., 2020). This expectation abruptly shifted when the Department of Education mandated the nationwide return to full face-to-face classes beginning in the 2022–2023 School Year (Hernando-Malipot, 2022). Graduates trained exclusively in virtual environments suddenly found themselves teaching on-site, managing physical classrooms, handling behavioral concerns, and navigating school cultures that they had never previously experienced in person.

This transition foreshadowed a critical mismatch between preservice preparation and professional practice. Online practicums do not replicate the embodied demands of in-person teaching, including managing student behavior, interpreting nonverbal cues, maintaining classroom routines, and building immediate interpersonal rapport. These discrepancies raise questions about how teachers trained online interpret on-site teaching realities, and how they reconstruct their professional identities in response to unfamiliar and often overwhelming contexts. Since identity is shaped by personal, social, and contextual experiences (Eteläpelto et al., 2014; Rodgers & Scott, 2008), the abrupt shift from virtual preparation to embodied teaching practice may prompt significant reconfigurations in beginning teachers' TPIs.

Although a growing body of literature has examined PSTs' experiences during online internships (Bansawan et al., 2022; Jin, 2022; Ugalingan et al., 2021; Utami et al., 2021), little to no research has explored how teachers who trained entirely online navigated their initial year of on-site teaching. This gap is important because the first year of teaching is a crucial period of induction, characterized by rapid learning, identity negotiation, and high vulnerability to stress and self-doubt. The unique juxtaposition of online preparation and on-site practice represented an underexplored professional trajectory that may provide insights into teacher resilience, adaptation, agency, and technological integration in post-pandemic education.

Given the absence of empirical studies focusing on this transition, a phenomenological approach was warranted to illuminate how teachers interpret, make sense of, and give meaning to this experience. Guided by the tenets of Teacher Professional Identity, which suggest that identities develop as teachers negotiate new contexts, roles, and expectations, the present study investigated the lived experiences of Filipino teachers who completed fully online internships and are now teaching on-site. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What perceptions do teachers have of transitioning from online pre-service teachers to on-site in-service teachers?
2. How do these teachers navigate the realities of on-site teaching, given that their practicum training occurred entirely online?
3. What configurations of professional identity have emerged as they negotiated this transition?

Literature Review

Preservice Internships and Early Professional Identity Formation

Preservice teaching is widely regarded as the most significant component of teacher preparation because it exposes prospective teachers to authentic classroom experiences, pedagogical decision-making, and interactions with school communities (Hamilton & Margot, 2019; Scheeler et al., 2016).

During practicum, PSTs learn to implement lessons, collaborate with mentor teachers, and refine instructional skills or processes that strongly contribute to the formation of teacher professional identity (TPI) (Cobb et al., 2018; Izadinia, 2015). The practicum also bridges theoretical knowledge and real pedagogical work, influencing beliefs, teaching philosophies, and the development of professional agency (Mante-Estacio & Ugalingan, 2018; Noguera & McCluskey, 2016). Thus, PSTE plays a central role in shaping how future teachers perceive themselves within the teaching profession.

Experiences of Virtual Teaching Internships During COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic forced teacher education institutions to transition PSTE into fully online environments, fundamentally altering the nature of preservice training (Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020). Research has shown that PSTs encounter substantial challenges, including unstable Internet connectivity, limited ability to manage learner behavior, reduced opportunities for spontaneous interaction, and difficulties maintaining student engagement (Back et al., 2021; González-Calvo et al., 2021; Pepito, 2022). Many PSTs have also reported inadequate preparation for online pedagogy, reliance on technology without corresponding training, and emotional stress associated with remote teaching (Kidd & Murray, 2020; Yildirim, 2021). Despite these difficulties, online practicums provided opportunities for PSTs to experiment with digital tools, build technological confidence, and develop early forms of teaching identity in virtual contexts (Jin, 2022; Ugalingan et al., 2021). However, these identities were constructed within controlled, technology-mediated conditions that differ significantly from the embodied, relational demands of face-to-face teaching.

Reversion to On-site Teaching and Emerging Challenges

In the Philippine context, PSTs who completed online internships entered the teaching profession during the nationwide return to face-to-face classes in 2022–2023 (Hernando-Malipot, 2022). This sudden shift created a misalignment between training and practice. Unlike online classrooms, where interactions are filtered through screens, physical classrooms require immediate behavioral management, spatial awareness, and constant interpersonal engagement. Studies suggest that such transitions can provoke uncertainty, stress, and feelings of inadequacy, especially among early-career teachers navigating unfamiliar teaching environments (Choi et al., 2021; Stamatis, 2021). This mismatch highlights the need to understand how online-prepared teachers make sense of on-site teaching and negotiate gaps between the competencies gained virtually and the realities encountered in physical classrooms.

Teacher Professional Identity: A Dynamic and Contextually Shaped Construct

Teacher professional identity (TPI) is shaped through the interplay of personal beliefs, social interactions, institutional expectations, and contextual experiences (Eteläpelto et al., 2014; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). It evolves as teachers interpret their roles, develop agency, and respond to the demands of their teaching environments. During transitions, such as shifting from online to on-site teaching, identity becomes particularly fluid and vulnerable to renegotiation (Nazari & Seyri, 2021; Richardson & Alsup, 2015). Studies in online teaching contexts suggest that instructors reformulate their professional identities as they adapt to new pedagogical tools and digital interactions (Fallah et al., 2022; Jonker et al., 2018). However, existing research focuses primarily on PSTs' identity formation during online internships, not on how identity transforms when these teachers subsequently enter physical classrooms. This presents an important gap: How do teachers trained exclusively online reconstruct their professional identities when transitioning into on-site teaching?

Methodology

In this study, a qualitative research design grounded in transcendental phenomenology, following Moustakas (1994), was employed to explore how teachers made sense of transitioning from online pre-service internships to on-site in-service teaching. Transcendental phenomenology seeks to understand the essence of individuals lived experiences of a shared phenomenon. In this study, the

phenomenon of interest was the transition from online pre-service teaching to on-site professional teaching.

The research was conducted in the Philippines and utilized criterion-based sampling to ensure alignment with the study's aims. Participants were required to meet two conditions: a) they must have been teaching on-site during the 2022–2023 school year, and b) they must have completed their teaching internship fully online in 2021–2022. Recruitment was carried out through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Within two weeks, five eligible participants volunteered and were included in the study. These individuals, aged 22 to 25, taught at different educational levels, including junior high school, senior high school, and college. Three were female, and two were male, and all were based in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat. Ethical considerations were carefully observed: informed consent was obtained, confidentiality was maintained using participant codes (T1–T5), and participants retained the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Data collection proceeded in two stages. First, an open-ended questionnaire was emailed to each participant to gather demographic information and initial reflections on their online internship and on-site teaching experiences. This questionnaire served primarily as a screening tool and helped shape the follow-up interview questions. The second stage involved in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted via Zoom, each lasting 45 to 60 minutes. These interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission; this allowed the researchers to explore participant perceptions of the transition, strategies for navigating on-site teaching, and how their professional identities evolved.

Data were analyzed following phenomenological procedures consistent with Moustakas' (1994) approach. Analysis began with repeated reading of interview transcripts to achieve immersion in the data while engaging in bracketing (*epoché*) to set aside preconceived assumptions. Significant statements describing participants' experiences were identified through horizontalization, after which related statements were clustered into meaning units. These meaning units were then organized into thematic descriptions that captured participant shared experiences. Finally, the themes were synthesized to articulate the essence of teacher lived experiences during the transition from online pre-service training to on-site teaching. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of findings, member checking was conducted by sharing emerging interpretations with participants for confirmation, and careful documentation of analytic procedures was maintained throughout the research process (Creswell, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sung, 2016).

Findings

Participant narratives provided rich insights into how teachers experienced the shift from online pre-service internships to on-site teaching. Data analysis revealed several themes that described teachers' perceptions of the transition, the strategies they used to navigate the challenges of face-to-face instruction, and the ways that their professional identities evolved during this process. To present the findings clearly, the results are organized according to the study's research questions.

Research Question 1

What perceptions do teachers have of transitioning from online pre-service teachers to on-site in-service teachers?

To address this research question, three themes emerged from participant narratives describing their perceptions of the transition from online pre-service training to on-site teaching. These themes include "Anticipated but Staggering," "Redefining Horizons," and "Putting Up with the Shadow of Doubt." Together, these themes reflect teachers' emotional, professional, and pedagogical responses as they adjusted to the realities of face-to-face classroom instruction.

Anticipated but Staggering

Participants described the transition to on-site teaching as both expected and overwhelming. While they anticipated challenges, the realities of managing physical classrooms, responding to student behavior, and adjusting to the dynamics of face-to-face interaction were more demanding

than they had imagined. Participants explained that although their online internship provided them with initial exposure to teaching, the complexities of in-person teaching required them to quickly adjust to new classroom conditions.

This theme encapsulates the discrepancies between expectations and the stark realities teachers encounter when transitioning from online internships to on-site teaching. Participants shared that while they foresaw challenges in their teaching journey, especially based on their experiences during online internships, the actual adjustments, challenges, and trials they faced in the physical classroom setting surpassed their expectations, leaving them genuinely shocked. This is evident in the following statement:

I was pretty sure that since my internship was online, and considering the ongoing pandemic, the next year would also stick to online teaching. I figured my start as a professional teacher would be online, too. But our situation turned out to be quite unique. We went through online teaching internships and then suddenly found ourselves teaching on-site. (T1)

An example of a challenge shared by the participants was student resistance to change, which made it difficult for participants to manage problematic behaviors and attitudes effectively.

Managing their behaviors and attitudes was a real struggle. It was a crucial aspect that we weren't fully prepared for during our training. It required a lot of patience and approaches. (T2)

I often observe that my students push back against new rules or modifications in teaching styles...it was hard to engage students or address behavioral issues. (T4)

Classroom management in on-site teaching was hard as an adviser because interacting in person presents different dynamics than online teaching. I find it challenging to read and manage non-verbal cues and control the physical space effectively. (T5)

Smooth classroom dynamics were not always guaranteed; despite the implementation of classroom rules during orientation or before the class, students did not consistently adhere to them.

To maintain classroom management, I always remind my students of the dos and don'ts of the school, also about their attendance, tardiness, and cutting classes; rules are imposed, but are not obeyed really. I didn't really expect this to be this challenging. (T1)

Redefining Horizons

In facing transition challenges that had been anticipated yet still surprised them, participants expressed that they had to redefine and broaden their professional outlooks and expectations. Interview statements elucidated a noticeable gap between the theoretical knowledge gained in their online training and the practical demands of teaching in physical classrooms. In the words of T2:

Online training was insightful, but the moment I entered the classroom, I realized I was facing a whole new spectrum of challenges....so, I had to adapt and expand my professional outlook to navigate this new reality. (T2)

When asked to elaborate, participants explained that redefining their methodologies was grounded on the belief that they had a heightened sense of responsibility to engage in on-site teaching, recognizing their direct impact on their students' lives and learning experiences.

I need to adjust... as in the physical classroom, I could feel the impact of my presence on my students. It's more than just imparting knowledge; it's about guiding and inspiring. That awareness ignited a deeper sense of responsibility within me. (T3)

The data showed that teachers, upon experiencing the actual challenges and dynamics of face-to-face teaching, recognized discrepancies between their initial expectations and classroom realities. They felt propelled to expand their horizons, recalibrate their perspectives, and reassess their teaching

approaches to better align with the demands of physical classroom environments. Moreover, rather than being deterred by these challenges, they shared that they embraced them as avenues for learning and improvement.

This is easier said than done, but, I know, when faced with difficulties, I see it as a chance to refine my teaching strategies. It's through overcoming these challenges that I've seen the most significant growth in my professional journey. (T1)

Putting Up with the Shadow of Doubt

The data also highlighted that teachers face doubts about their abilities and qualifications despite evidence of their competence. Amid the challenges of the transition and despite seeing opportunities to grow and learn, they at times struggle internally in new teaching environments, grappling with persistent self-doubt.

I find myself questioning whether I truly deserve to be here. The fear of not living up to expectations lingers, making each day a battle to prove my capabilities to myself. (T3)

Participants shared that upon entering a different teaching environment, an unexpected obstacle surfaced: the persistent presence of imposter syndrome. For them, it was not a lack of confidence in their expertise, but an ongoing interrogation of their ability to effectively adapt to this change.

Research Question 2

How do these teachers navigate the realities of on-site teaching, given that their practicum training occurred entirely online?

Participants' narratives revealed two themes that illustrated how teachers navigated the realities of on-site teaching after completing their practicum training in an online environment. These themes, "Bridging the Online-Offline Teaching Rift" and "Nurturing Technology's Potential to Enhance Student Engagement," highlighted the ways teachers adapted their instructional practices and integrated technology to support learning in face-to-face classroom settings.

Bridging the Online-Offline Teaching Rift

To bridge the online-offline teaching rift, the teachers had to embrace an evolution of their pedagogy. This evolution necessitated a shift in mindset, encouraging flexibility, experimentation, and continual learning to cater effectively to the diverse needs and learning styles of their students in the offline setting. As elucidated by one participant:

When I transitioned from online training to teaching in the classroom, it was more than just applying what I learned virtually. It was this intentional blending of theory with the actual classroom demands. I found myself constantly adapting what I absorbed online to suit the real-life dynamics of teaching. It required a conscious effort to merge those theoretical insights into my teaching style. (T2)

Participants emphasized that this transition extended beyond merely applying newfound knowledge; it involved integrating this knowledge into their in-person teaching methods. They highlighted the need for a deliberate evolution in their approach. For them, the insights gained online did not remain isolated concepts, but became integral, practical tools woven into their daily interactions with students within classroom settings:

I still use Google Classroom, Canva, MS PowerPoint, and others because these help me in my teaching and instructional resources; the (use of) blended learning – the combination of traditional face-to-face learning and technology. (This is) the method that I still use today. (T3)

In relation to this, participants related that to address challenges in on-site classrooms, they had to fuse technology and traditional teaching methodologies, drawing on their experiences and expertise gained through online pre-service training.

The use of educational apps and collaborative platforms significantly boosted student engagement. It's this harmonious blend of technology and traditional teaching that reshaped my classroom, fostering an atmosphere where learning became more dynamic and enriching. (T3)

Nurturing Technology's Potential, Augmenting Student Engagement

Teachers shared that they had to nurture technology's potential to augment student engagement, foster interactive learning experiences, and optimize teaching methodologies. They emphasized the creation of a harmonious balance between technological advancements and foundational teaching practices to create a dynamic and enriched learning atmosphere.

Embracing this reflective practice allowed me to evolve my teaching methods, ensuring they resonated with the dynamic demands of my students. It's this continuous journey of learning and adaptation that defines my pedagogical approach, ensuring that I'm constantly improving as an educator. (T1)

Teachers reported engaging in reflective practice, mirroring their online insights and experiences and adapting and evolving them to suit the diverse and dynamic demands of on-site teaching. To them, it was a journey of professional development where they drew from their experiences, embraced challenges as opportunities for growth, and constantly refined their approaches to meet the evolving needs of students.

Research Question 3

What configurations of professional identity have emerged as they negotiated this transition?

Analysis of participant experiences identified three configurations of professional identity that developed as teachers negotiated the transition from online pre-service training to on-site teaching. These configurations include Hybrid and Adaptive Pedagogues, Technology-Enabled Educators, and Reflective Practitioners, which reflected how teachers reconstructed their professional identities by integrating insights from both online and face-to-face teaching experiences.

Hybrid and Adaptive Pedagogues

Through the transition from online to on-site teaching, educators intentionally crafted an identity focused on adaptability. They synthesized their experiences in both environments, consciously molding a teaching persona that merged online and on-site methodologies. This deliberate construction allowed them to flexibly pivot between various teaching modalities, drawing upon the strengths of each setting to create an inclusive and versatile approach that catered to diverse learning needs.

The transition has been a transformative journey where I've consciously merged the digital and physical setups of education. I've strategically woven them together, drawing from the flexibility and innovation of online teaching, while embracing the personal touch and immediate interaction of on-site classrooms. (T1)

Technology-Enabled Educators

For participants, their identity as technology-enabled educators was a deliberate construct shaped by their transition experiences. Teachers strategically embraced this identity by actively incorporating digital tools and platforms into their instructional practices.

The transition from online to on-site teaching has been a testament to the invaluable skills honed during the digital phase of my training. The online internship not only equipped me with a set of digital tools and innovative teaching strategies, but also instilled confidence in navigating technological aspects of teaching. (T3)

For these teachers, their technological readiness played a crucial role, not just in improving classroom engagement, but also in maximizing their students' learning experiences. They emphasized

its significance in their teaching journeys, allowing them to adeptly navigate the intricacies of contemporary education.

Reflective Practitioners

Their identity as reflective practitioners was methodically cultivated based on experiences during the transition. Participants expressed that they had intentionally embraced this persona by actively engaging in self-reflection and introspection. Their deliberate practice of analyzing teaching methods, evaluating learning outcomes, and seeking feedback enabled them to continuously adapt and refine their approaches, emphasizing the importance of ongoing professional development and growth. This is deduced from the following excerpts:

This experience is an opportunity for deep, serious reflections that significantly enrich my teaching journey. These two distinct contexts allowed me to critically reflect on the nuances of teaching methodologies, student engagement, and pedagogical strategies ... this duality facilitated a deeper understanding of diverse learning environments and prompted a continual cycle of self-assessment and adaptation. (T3)

I would like to emphasize the importance of ongoing self-reflection, adapting to the ever-evolving educational landscape, and refining my practice to better cater to the dynamic needs of students. It guided me on a path of continual improvement and excellence in teaching. (T1)

The statements demonstrate how participants embraced reflective practice, honed through transitioning between teaching modes. They emphasized how these reflections enriched their teaching journey, showcasing the invaluable lessons learned from online experiences, and the importance of ongoing self-reflection in guiding continual improvement in their teaching practices to meet the evolving needs of students in diverse learning environments.

Discussion

The findings from this study shed light on teachers' perceptions of their transitions from online to on-site teaching environments. Three significant themes emerged, revealing the nuanced and varied perceptions among teachers during this shift. "Anticipated but Staggering" captured the stark disparity between what teachers expected and the unexpected challenges they encountered in on-site teaching. The study reveals a substantial gap between educators' expectations shaped during online internships and the complex realities that they encountered in face-to-face teaching. This discrepancy highlights the intricate nature of in-service teaching, diverging significantly from anticipated perceptions. Additionally, the research underlines educators' surprise at the noticeable behavioral shifts observed in students when transitioning from virtual to physical classrooms.

Previous research has purported that students undergo a recalibration of social dynamics, affecting their engagement and interaction styles in face-to-face settings. This disruption of familiar learning environments prompts varied behavioral responses as students adjust to traditional classrooms. Moreover, the shift from flexible online schedules to structured in-person learning impacts students' behavior and attentiveness. Furthermore, the influence of technology on student engagement with conventional teaching methods contributed to behavioral changes. Psychological effects from the pandemic and the transition were also manifested in students' in-class behavior.

"Redefining Horizons" focused on the transformative nature of challenges encountered during this shift. This finding underscored a fundamental shift in their perspectives, emphasizing a heightened sense of responsibility and dedication to cultivating positive learning environments despite the challenges inherent in the new teaching landscape. This result corroborated existing research that emphasizes the transformative impact of challenges on educators' professional development. Studies by Bansawan et al. (2022) and Ugalingan et al. (2021) obtained similar findings, highlighting how challenges serve as catalysts for educators' growth and evolution in response to new teaching environments. Similarly, research by Utami et al. (2021) and Jin (2022) underscored the adaptive

nature of educators, suggesting that they recalibrate their teaching approaches to meet the evolving needs of their students.

"Putting Up with the Shadow of Doubt" delved into the internal struggles and persistent self-doubt experienced by educators despite their demonstrated competence. The finding implied that the shift to a new teaching landscape exacerbates feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy among educators, despite their evident competence. It highlighted the emotional toll experienced by these professionals and underscores the necessity for robust support systems within educational institutions to address these challenges effectively. This implication supports existing research that addresses the psychological aspects of educators transitioning to new teaching environments. Studies by Park et al. (2020) and McMahon et al. (2022) were aligned with this finding, emphasizing how imposter syndrome affects educators' mental well-being and professional confidence in unfamiliar settings. Additionally, research by Chen et al. (2019) and Harvey et al. (2021) underscored the impact of imposter syndrome on educators' perceptions of their qualifications and their sense of belonging in new teaching contexts.

The current study also delved into how participants bridged online and offline teaching methodologies. Two significant findings emerged from this investigation, shedding light on how teachers navigated the convergence of online insights with the practical demands of physical classrooms. "Bridging the Online-Offline Teaching Rift" accentuated the transformative shift in pedagogy as educators strove to amalgamate theoretical insights acquired from online training with the real-world dynamics of in-person teaching. Teachers consciously adapted online-acquired knowledge, integrating technology into traditional teaching practices to create more engaging and interactive classroom environments. This finding underscored educators' recognition of technology's value gleaned from online training, enhancing traditional teaching methods in physical classrooms. It aligned with existing research by Cheng et al. (2020) and Kebritchi et al. (2017), emphasizing the advantages of infusing technology into conventional teaching approaches for enriched learning experiences.

"Nurturing Technology's Potential, Augmenting Student Engagement" highlighted educators' deliberate efforts to leverage reflective practices, mirroring online insights into their on-site teaching roles. This reflective approach became integral to their professional development, ensuring that their teaching strategies catered to the diverse needs of students and were adapted to ever-changing classroom landscapes. Educators' commitment to adaptability and continuous learning echoed the value of a reflective practice in integrating technology insights into on-site teaching. This finding resonated with research by Brown (2020) and König et al. (2020), emphasizing reflective practices as pivotal in enhancing student engagement through technological integration.

Lastly, the study delved into how educators developed and adapted their professional identities amidst the transition between online and on-site teaching. "Hybrid and Adaptive Pedagogues" illuminated educators' intentional efforts to craft adaptable teaching identities by synthesizing experiences from both online and on-site teaching environments. Teachers strategically merged the strengths of digital and physical learning spaces, constructing a versatile approach that catered to diverse learning needs. This proactive blending created inclusive and dynamic educational experiences, capitalizing on the advantages of each environment. Related studies, such as those by Gómez-Carrasco et al. (2021) and Tondeur et al. (2021), have emphasized the significance of adaptable teaching approaches that seamlessly integrate online and offline methodologies. These findings resonated with Means et al. (2014) and Picciano (2017), highlighting the benefits of hybrid pedagogy for versatile learning experiences.

"Technology-Enabled Educators" focuses on educators embracing a technology-enabled identity, forged through their experiences transitioning between online and on-site teaching. It underscores their deliberate incorporation of digital tools and platforms to optimize student engagement, foster digital literacy, and navigate the evolving educational landscape. Educators recognize the importance of technological readiness and seamlessly integrate digital resources, enhancing the educational journey for both educators and students. Aligned studies by Mishra and Koehler (2006) and Ertmer et

al. (2012) emphasized the significance of technological integration in education and teaching practices. Research by Tondeur et al. (2016) and Voogt et al. (2011) has also highlighted educators' technological readiness and its impact on enriching student learning experiences.

"Reflective Practitioners" spotlights educators' intentional embrace of the reflective practitioner identity shaped by their transition experiences. They engage in continual self-reflection, critically evaluating teaching methods, learning outcomes, and feedback-seeking practices. This reflective practice becomes instrumental in adapting and refining teaching approaches, fostering ongoing professional development and growth. Studies like Schön (1987) have highlighted the transformative power of reflective practice in teaching, emphasizing its role in professional development. Similarly, Hatton and Smith (1995) and Zeichner and Liston (2014) underscored the importance of reflective practice in educators' growth and its impact on enhancing teaching quality. These findings underscore educators' intentional efforts to adapt, evolve, and refine their teaching approaches in response to the dynamic demands of modern education. They highlight educators' adaptability, technological readiness, and commitment to continual self-reflection, shaping a more effective and inclusive educational landscape for the benefit of their students.

Conclusion

This study offers a unique perspective by examining the perceptions and experiences of educators transitioning from online pre-service teaching to in-service roles within physical classroom settings. Exploring this uncharted territory sheds light on the unexpected challenges and the nuanced disparities between theoretical online training and practical application in face-to-face teaching. By delving into educators' perceptions, the study uncovered how this underexplored phenomenon shaped their professional identities, teaching methodologies, and integration of digital tools into traditional classroom settings.

The study's findings illuminate several critical conclusions in response to the research questions. Teachers transitioning from online pre-service teaching to on-site in-service roles encountered unexpected challenges, underscoring the need for more comprehensive teacher training programs that replicate real classroom scenarios. Their experiences emphasized the pivotal role of merging theoretical insights from online training with practical teaching demands, reshaping pedagogy to create more engaging and dynamic learning environments. Moreover, their active engagement in reflective practices fostered continual improvement, aligning teaching methods with the evolving needs of students. Participants also consciously crafted adaptable teaching identities, integrating strengths from both online and on-site teaching modalities to cater to diverse learning needs. The study highlighted how this transition enhanced teachers' technological readiness, enabling the integration of digital tools into teaching practices, thereby enriching the educational experience for both educators and students.

While the study's qualitative methodology offers insightful perspectives on educators' transitions from online to on-site teaching, several limitations warrant consideration. The small sample size and geographic bias, recruiting participants primarily through social media, and the homogeneity of participant backgrounds could restrict the study's generalizability and depth of insights. Moreover, the subjective nature of interpretative analysis might introduce researcher bias. To address these limitations, future research should focus on diversifying participant selection across demographics and locations, employ mixed methods approaches to obtain more comprehensive data, consider longitudinal studies to deepen understanding of educators' transitions, and conduct comparative analyses of different training methods.

Author Contributions

Henry E. Lemana II: Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, project administration, supervision, writing—original draft, writing—review & editing; **Krisna Rika O. Barron:** Conceptualization, investigation, formal analysis, data curation, writing—original draft, writing—review & editing; **Crizjale V. Ahmad:** Formal analysis, writing—original draft, writing—review & editing.

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