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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CHALLENGES AND PERCEPTIONS OF FILIPINO MIGRANT TEACHERS IN AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the challenges and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with Filipino educators working in various schools and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that participants experienced significant challenges in adapting to the New Zealand educational system, including curriculum differences, NCEA assessment requirements, student-centered pedagogies, inclusive education practices, classroom management approaches, and the integration of Te Reo Māori and bicultural perspectives. Participants also encountered communication difficulties, employment-related concerns, and socio-cultural adjustment challenges such as homesickness, family separation, and lifestyle changes. Despite these challenges, they demonstrated resilience through adaptability, continuous learning, professional support, family relationships, community involvement, and faith-based coping mechanisms. The study concludes that while Filipino migrant teachers possess the capacity to adapt and contribute effectively to New Zealand education, their successful integration requires structured support through mentoring, professional development, bicultural competency training, and well-being

initiatives. The findings contribute to the understanding of teacher migration, professional identity, and acculturation within New Zealand's multicultural and bicultural educational context.

Keywords: *Filipino migrant teachers, acculturation, professional identity, resilience, New Zealand education, teacher migration, well-being*

INTRODUCTION

The global demand for qualified teachers has led to increased migration among educators seeking better professional opportunities and living conditions. In recent years, New Zealand has become one of the preferred destinations for Filipino teachers due to its high educational standards, teacher shortages, and welcoming migration policies. Filipino teachers are recognized for their strong work ethic, adaptability, and commitment to education, making them valuable contributors to the New Zealand education system. However, despite these positive attributes, many Filipino migrant teachers encounter challenges related to cultural adjustment, professional recognition, communication barriers, and differences in teaching practices and classroom management styles.

In Auckland, where cultural diversity is prominent, Filipino teachers often navigate a complex environment that requires balancing their Filipino identity with the expectations of New Zealand’s educational framework. Adjusting to the curriculum, assessment standards, and classroom dynamics can be demanding, especially when language nuances and pedagogical approaches differ significantly from those in the Philippines. Moreover, issues such as social integration, emotional well-being, and career progression add further dimensions to their migration experience.

Understanding the challenges and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland is essential for fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

By exploring their lived experiences, this study aims to shed light on the realities they face, the coping strategies they employ, and the perspectives they hold toward their professional and personal lives abroad. The findings may serve as a valuable reference for policymakers, school administrators, and teacher training institutions to enhance support systems and ensure a smoother transition for migrant educators in New Zealand.

The study of Hospedales and Jeyaraj (2020) revealed that the global phenomenon of teacher migration is a critical subject in international education, driven primarily by the economic "pull factors" of developed nations experiencing teacher shortages and the "push factors" of developing countries where educators seek higher salaries and better professional conditions. According to Novio (2020), the Philippines, a major global source of migrant workers, contributes significantly to this movement, with a noticeable exodus of its highly skilled teachers.

New Zealand Shores (2025) emphasized that Auckland, New Zealand, represents a key destination in this migratory landscape, actively recruiting overseas-trained teachers (OTTs) to meet its growing demand. While Uytico and Abadiano (2020), claimed the opportunity to work abroad offers substantial financial and professional growth, Filipino migrant teachers' transition into the New Zealand education system is fraught with complexity. Based on Gaviola et al. (2024), their experiences involve a crucial process of acculturation, requiring the negotiation of ethnic identity, social integration, and ecological adaptability within the host society.

Novio (2020) reported that the professional identity of these teachers, who are often non-native English speaker-teachers (NNEST), is also tested, creating a significant challenge as they navigate an environment where their professional competence may be measured against different standards. Furthermore, Frank (2020) stated that their professional socialization is compounded by the need to understand and incorporate Te Reo Māori (the Māori world) and the bicultural context of New Zealand's curriculum, an area where migrant

teachers often face clearly defined challenges and insufficient preparation. This study seeks to bridge the gap in recent literature by specifically focusing on the intersection of professional, socio-cultural, and personal adjustments faced by Filipino teachers in Auckland.

With this, the primary aim of this qualitative study is to conduct an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted professional and socio-cultural experiences of Filipino migrant teachers employed in Auckland, New Zealand. By collecting rich, descriptive data on their challenges and perceptions, this research seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of the adaptation process and resilience strategies utilized by this critical group of overseas-trained teachers. Ultimately, the study aims to inform policymakers, educational administrators, and support networks on best practices to facilitate the successful transition, professional growth, and sustained well-being of Filipino educators in the New Zealand education sector.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the Push-Pull Theory of Migration (Hospedales & Jeyaraj, 2020) and Berry's Model of Acculturation (Gaviola et al., 2024). The Push-Pull theory explains the motivation for moving, such as better salary and conditions as the pull, and low domestic salary and workload as the push, while the Acculturation model explains the post-migration process, specifically how Filipino teachers navigate the host culture, choosing to integrate and maintain their Filipino identity while adopting New Zealand culture, assimilate, separate, or marginalize, which directly influences their professional and personal perceptions.

The Push-Pull Theory of Migration serves as the initial explanatory framework for why Filipino teachers leave the Philippines. Hospedales and Jeyaraj (2020) and Novio (2020) explain that "push factors" compel movement away from the country of origin, often stemming from low salaries, heavy workload, and limited career progression in the Philippine education system. Conversely, New Zealand Shores (2025) indicates that "pull factors" attract them to New Zealand, primarily including better remuneration, a higher standard of living, and the

urgent demand for overseas-trained teachers (OTT) in Auckland schools. This theory sets the stage by affirming that the migration is largely a strategic, economically driven decision, establishing a fundamental expectation of improvement against which post-migration perceptions can be measured.

While the Push-Pull theory addresses the migration decision, Berry's Model of Acculturation becomes essential for understanding the post-arrival experience, particularly the socio-cultural challenges detailed in the research questions. Acculturation is defined as the process of cultural and psychological change that results from contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. Berry's model posits that migrants navigate this process by addressing two key questions: 1) Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with one's heritage culture? and 2) Is it considered to be of value to seek relationships with the host culture?

Gaviola et al. (2024) confirm that the intersection of the answers to these two questions yields four acculturation strategies: Integration, where the individual maintains their culture while adopting the host culture; Assimilation, where the heritage culture is given up for the host culture; Separation, where the heritage culture is maintained, and the host culture is rejected; and Marginalization, where neither the heritage nor the host culture is maintained. For Filipino teachers in Auckland, the desire for cultural maintenance, such as strong Filipino community connections alongside the necessity of cultural adoption, for example integrating Te Reo Māori into pedagogy, directly positions them within the Integration strategy.

The professional challenges such as adapting teaching styles (pedagogy) and understanding the bicultural context (curriculum) can therefore be interpreted as stressors inherent to the acculturation process, specifically the degree of professional Integration required. The teachers' overall well-being and perceptions are likely to be strongly influenced by the success of this integration. By using both the Push-Pull Theory and Berry's Model, this study gains a nuanced perspective: the motivation is economic, but the resulting challenges

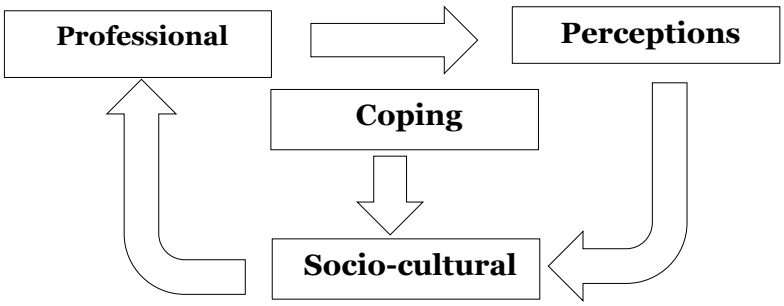
are primarily cultural and professional, ultimately dictating the quality of their new life in Auckland.

Conceptual Framework

A systemic model or conceptual framework with interconnected elements might be a better fit, as it can represent the dynamic and interdependent nature of the factors affecting Filipino migrant teachers' experiences. Filipino migrant teachers adjust to their new professional and social environments in Auckland. By focusing on how these teachers perceive and interpret their challenges and experiences, the study can deeply understand the essence of their personal and professional journeys. This allows for an in-depth exploration of how migrant teachers experience cultural adjustment, teaching in a foreign system, and their identity formation in this new context.

Figure 1

Conceptual Paradigm



The visual representation of the systemic model includes four interconnected frames, each representing a key aspect of the experiences and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand.

Professional challenges represent the various professional struggles that Filipino migrant teachers face in the context of their teaching roles in New Zealand schools. These challenges include adapting to a new curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and understanding

the expectations of the local education system. It also covers barriers such as differences in teaching practices, the need for continual professional development, and the complexity of navigating a new school environment.

Socio-cultural challenges highlight the cultural and social adjustments that Filipino migrant teachers need to make when working in New Zealand. These challenges can include language barriers, differences in cultural norms and values, and a sense of belonging in a foreign society. Filipino migrant teachers may also struggle with issues related to racism, isolation, or finding a balance between their home country culture and the new culture they are immersed in.

Coping mechanisms represent the strategies that Filipino migrant teachers employ to navigate both professional and socio-cultural challenges. These coping mechanisms may involve seeking support from peers, engaging in professional development activities, adapting teaching methods, and developing emotional resilience. Teachers may also turn to community networks or cultural associations to manage stress and overcome challenges related to their migrant status.

Perceptions of professional identity reflect the teachers' perceptions of their professional role and identity within the New Zealand education system. This includes how they view their contributions, how they adapt their teaching style to the new environment, and their sense of belonging within the local educational community. It also involves their career growth, job satisfaction, and how they perceive their place in the larger social and professional context of New Zealand schools.

The arrows connecting the boxes demonstrate how the professional challenges and socio-cultural challenges influence the coping mechanisms of the teachers, which in turn shape their perceptions of their professional identity. The model highlights the dynamic relationships between these factors, where coping mechanisms, if effective, can help improve the teachers' perceptions of their role, leading to a more fulfilling professional experience and

stronger resilience in overcoming challenges. This systemic model emphasizes the interconnected and dynamic nature of the experiences Filipino migrant teachers undergo, showing how each element influences and is influenced by the others.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The aim of this study is to conduct an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted professional and socio-cultural experiences of Filipino migrant teachers employed in Auckland, New Zealand. Specifically, it seeks to answer four central questions concerning their major professional challenges, main socio-cultural challenges, perceptions of their professional standing, and their coping mechanisms and resilience strategies. The output of this qualitative research is to provide identified challenges and coping mechanisms, thematic insights on teachers' perceptions and well-being, and recommendations for policy and practice.

The study utilizes a qualitative design to collect rich, descriptive data on the teachers' challenges and perceptions, with the goal of developing a comprehensive understanding of their adaptation process. Its scope centers on the experiences of eight (8) Filipino migrant teachers currently employed in various schools in Auckland, New Zealand. The analysis is deeply focused on the intersection of professional, socio-cultural, and personal adjustments faced by this critical group of overseas-trained teachers.

The process of the study involves data gathering through interviews, observations, and document analysis, followed by thematic coding and analysis, all conducted with established ethical procedures and data validation. The core theoretical boundaries are set by the Push-Pull Theory of Migration and Berry's Model of Acculturation, which frame both the initial motivation for migration and the subsequent adaptation process.

Limitations of this study include its reliance on a qualitative design, which inherently

prioritizes depth of insight over statistical generalizability, as it will likely use purposive sampling to select a limited number of participants. The geographical focus is strictly delimited to Auckland, New Zealand, and therefore, the findings may not fully represent the experiences of Filipino migrant teachers in other New Zealand regions, for instance, in Wellington and Christchurch. Furthermore, the study is delimited to exploring the challenges and perceptions of Filipino teachers specifically, excluding migrant teachers of other nationalities.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to benefit the following stakeholders:

Filipino Migrant Teachers. This study will provide a shared narrative of experiences and coping mechanisms, offering practical guidance and a sense of community for prospective and newly arrived Filipino educators.

New Zealand Educational Institutions. The findings will offer crucial data for creating more effective, culturally responsive induction and professional development programs that specifically prepare Filipino Overseas-Trained Teachers (OTTs) for integrating the New Zealand curriculum.

Philippine Government and Recruitment Agencies. The research will inform policymaking on teacher welfare and improve pre-departure orientation programs, better preparing emigrating teachers for the professional and personal realities of working in New Zealand.

Future Researchers: This research will contribute new thematic insights to the growing body of post-2020 literature on skilled labor migration, acculturation, and teacher mobility within the Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Definition of Terms

The definition of terms, when defined operationally, establishes precise meanings for key concepts used in the study, ensuring that each term is interpreted consistently. This approach allows for clear communication of how specific variables or phenomena are measured and observed within the context of the research.

The following terms were conceptually and operationally defined to understand the study thoroughly.

Acculturation. The cultural and psychological changes that result from contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members Berry (2024). In this study, acculturation refers to how Filipino migrant teachers adjust and integrate into New Zealand's educational and social systems while maintaining their Filipino cultural identity.

Bicultural Context. The bicultural context refers to the integration of Māori and Pākehā (non-Māori) worldviews, values, and practices within New Zealand's education system Frank (2020). In this research, the bicultural context refers to the requirement for Filipino migrant teachers to understand and incorporate Te Reo Māori principles and perspectives into their teaching practices.

Challenges. The professional, social, and cultural barriers that individuals encounter as part of their adaptation process in a new environment Gaviola et al. (2024). In this study, challenges refer to the professional, socio-cultural, and personal difficulties experienced by Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, including curriculum adaptation, classroom management, language use, and cultural integration.

Filipino Migrant Teachers. They are teachers and educators from the Philippines who have relocated abroad, particularly to countries such as New Zealand, to pursue better employment, professional development, and quality of life opportunities Novio (2020). In this study, Filipino migrant teachers refer specifically to those Filipino migrant teachers currently

employed in various schools in Auckland, New Zealand.

Integration (Cultural Integration): It occurs when individuals maintain their cultural heritage while actively participating and adapting to the host culture. Gaviola et al. (2024). In this study, integration refers to the ability of Filipino teachers to blend Filipino values and teaching styles with New Zealand's curriculum and cultural expectations, including Te Reo Māori.

Perceptions. The interpretations, attitudes, and beliefs that individuals form based on their experiences and understanding of a particular situation or environment Frank (2020). In this study, perceptions pertain to how Filipino migrant teachers view their professional identity, competence, and career growth opportunities within the New Zealand education system.

Professional Identity. It describes professional identity as the sense of self and professional worth that educators develop through their experiences, interactions, and recognition within their professional context Novio (2020). In this research, professional identity refers to how Filipino migrant teachers perceive their roles, confidence, and status as educators in the New Zealand educational environment.

Push-Pull Factors. Migration decisions are influenced by "push" factors, including poor working conditions, low salary in the home country, and "pull" factors such as better pay and demand for teachers in the host country. Hospedales and Jeyaraj (2020). In this study, push-pull factors refer to the reasons motivating Filipino teachers to leave the Philippines and seek employment in Auckland, New Zealand.

Resilience. This refers to the capacity of individuals to recover and adapt positively despite encountering challenges or adversity Uytico and Abadiano, 2020. In this study, resilience refers to the strategies and coping mechanisms Filipino migrant teachers employ to overcome professional and socio-cultural difficulties while maintaining well-being and motivation.

Well-being. It defines well-being as a state in which an individual realizes their potential,

can cope with normal stresses of life, and works productively. The World Health Organization (2025). In this study, well-being pertains to the emotional, physical, and psychological state of Filipino migrant teachers as they balance work, adaptation, and personal life in New Zealand.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional Challenges: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Bicultural Context

Teachers working in New Zealand increasingly face the responsibility of integrating Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori into their teaching practice as part of the national commitment to biculturalism. According to Taani (2023), while educators acknowledge the necessity of embedding Māori language and customs, many report greater comfort with tikanga Māori due to its clearer alignment with their personal values. This indicates a preparedness gap in the linguistic component of cultural competence. Similarly, Sexton (2024) emphasizes that all teachers must demonstrate cultural responsiveness as mandated by the Education and Training Act of 2020, requiring the incorporation of Te Reo Me Ngā Tikanga Māori and the blending of Māori and mainstream pedagogies. However, as Lourie (2020) notes, the bicultural discourse itself can be complex; its focus on cultural difference sometimes obscures broader socio-economic disparities, thereby complicating how migrant teachers understand and apply culturally responsive teaching.

In connection with this, migrant educators, particularly those from the Philippines, often encounter difficulties in adjusting to the expectations and frameworks of the New Zealand education system. Tate (2022) found that Overseas Filipino Teachers (OFTs) commonly experience challenges adapting to local practices and suffer from a lack of exposure to host country-specific systems, particularly regarding curriculum and pedagogy. Likewise, Montejo and Beduya (2025) reported that Filipino English teachers overseas face significant "cultural and language barriers," as well as "curriculum teaching adjustments" and "classroom

management challenges." The shift from a teacher-led to a student-centered pedagogy was identified as a major point of adaptation, reflecting the tension between their previous instructional training and the learner-centered approach emphasized in New Zealand schools.

Moreover, studies indicate that structural and systemic barriers further compound these professional challenges. Avila-Meléndez (2025) revealed that implementing innovative methodologies and curriculum reforms, such as promoting student autonomy and personalized learning, is often hindered by limited teacher training and excessive workloads. Such conditions are particularly demanding for overseas-trained teachers who are simultaneously adapting to a new professional environment. Bongco and Vilches (2020) similarly described the internal tensions experienced by teachers navigating curriculum reforms in the Philippines, feeling "confused yet appreciative" and "powerless yet vital." These sentiments illustrate the mindset Filipino teachers may bring with them, potentially intensifying the adjustment shock when transitioning to the more flexible and inquiry-based New Zealand curriculum.

In addition, Cabrera and Abadiano (2023) found that Filipino educators abroad encounter professional challenges in mastering unfamiliar curricula and understanding diverse student structures. These teachers often manage frustration and expectations by developing resilience and strong cultural adaptation skills. Prudente et al. (2024) further argue that the successful implementation of educational policies depends on continuous professional development aligned with global trends and 21st-century skills. This implies that the pedagogical competencies gained in the Philippines may need substantial contextualization and upskilling to meet the high technological and instructional standards of New Zealand schools. Consequently, ongoing professional learning is not merely beneficial but essential for migrant teachers seeking to thrive in such a dynamic educational landscape.

Moreover, Santos (2025) offers a deeply personal perspective through a self-study of an immigrant teacher's journey in Aotearoa New Zealand. The study emphasizes that

pedagogical strategies and an understanding of praxis the integration of theory and practice had to be reshaped to align with the cultural and systemic expectations of the host country. This transformative process underscores both the professional and personal evolution that migrant teachers undergo. Collectively, these studies reveal that while Filipino and other overseas-trained teachers bring valuable expertise and dedication, they must navigate multiple layers of adaptation cultural, pedagogical, and systemic to succeed in New Zealand's bicultural education environment.

Socio-cultural Challenges: Adjustment, Language, and Belonging

The adjustment of Filipino migrant teachers in New Zealand is characterized by a complex interplay of cultural adaptation, language negotiation, and the search for a stable sense of belonging. Studies highlight that while New Zealand is generally welcoming, the process of socio-cultural integration presents distinct and persistent challenges, particularly in Auckland's diverse environment.

Migrants' sense of belonging and social integration in their host countries is strongly influenced by cultural and linguistic factors. According to Puno et al. (2025), Filipino migrants demonstrate a strong preference for co-ethnic connections as sources of social and emotional support. They maintain their cultural identity through the continued use of their native language and active participation in Filipino community organizations abroad. However, the authors also emphasize that host society receptivity significantly affects the success of acculturation, suggesting that mutual acceptance between migrants and locals is essential. Similarly, Valdrez (2022) found that Filipino ethnic minority groups preserve their identity through mother-tongue communication and the formation of semi-private diaspora organizations, which serve as platforms for cultural expression. These findings underscore that cultural maintenance is not merely nostalgic but an active coping mechanism that sustains migrants' emotional well-being in a foreign environment.

Despite these positive connections within ethnic circles, several studies reveal that

Filipino migrants still encounter environmental and social barriers that hinder full integration. Alarcon and Puno (2025) identified environmental racialization in Auckland, where disproportionate urban conditions lead to racialized exclusion, affecting migrants' perceptions of safety and belonging. This finding aligns with Zarceno (2023), who reported that migrants unfamiliar with local customs and communication norms often experience frustration and disappointment, frequently resulting from discrimination and social exclusion. The cumulative effect of such experiences can compromise the psychological and emotional health of migrants, leading to isolation even within diverse communities. Thus, while Filipino migrants build resilient co-ethnic support networks, systemic barriers and societal attitudes continue to shape their overall adaptation.

Cultural and language barriers also play a crucial role in limiting migrants' integration, particularly among Filipino teachers overseas. Montejo and Beduya (2025) revealed that cultural differences, homesickness, and isolation are major obstacles that hinder Filipino educators from forming close social relationships in their host countries. In a similar vein, Ocampo and Lim (2024) highlighted that a limited sense of belonging among international students and migrants stems largely from linguistic and cultural barriers, emphasizing that supportive interpersonal relationships are critical for successful adaptation. Furthermore, Miglė (2024) observed that language fluency is often perceived as a marker of successful integration; when migrants struggle to achieve fluency quickly, they risk social marginalization. These studies collectively illustrate how communication difficulties can perpetuate exclusion and inhibit the development of a genuine sense of community.

Nevertheless, some educators demonstrate remarkable resilience and adaptive strategies in navigating these socio-cultural complexities. Cabrera and Abadiano (2023) found that Filipino teachers facing cultural clashes in multicultural classrooms rely on emotional resilience and empathy to foster inclusive learning spaces and build a sense of belonging. Likewise, Taani (2023) discovered that teachers find it easier to build cultural bridges when they identify resonances between their own values and tikanga Māori (Māori customs),

suggesting that cultural alignment can enhance professional belonging in New Zealand's bicultural context.

Santos (2025) further supports this perspective, noting that immigrant teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand must reshape their teaching assumptions and praxis to align with the host country's culture and educational philosophy. This ongoing transformation highlights the dynamic nature of adaptation, where professional and personal growth are deeply intertwined.

Perceptions of Professional Identity, Career Growth, and Well-being

Migrant teachers experience a significant transformation in their professional identity as they transition into new educational environments. Liyanage et al. (2025) describe this as a complex process involving tension between one's established professional history and the demands of a new cultural and institutional context. This identity shift often entails what the authors call a "forced forgetting" of previous teaching practices and a simultaneous "conscious remembering" of one's cultural heritage, allowing teachers to integrate their strengths into the new setting. However, as Salo (2024) warns, failure to successfully navigate this transformation can lead to professional vulnerability and a lasting struggle to shed the "foreign" label, even when teachers possess considerable expertise. This dynamic underscores that professional identity is not static but continuously negotiated and reconstructed in response to cultural and systemic pressures.

A crucial aspect of this negotiation centers on the development of multicultural competence. Widodo and Chotimah (2024) argue that this competence extends far beyond the acquisition of new teaching techniques; it represents a foundational shift in professional attitudes. Teachers must cultivate greater self-awareness regarding personal biases and develop the capacity to design equitable and inclusive classroom environments that celebrate diversity. In line with this, Tsarouhas and Plakitsi (2025) emphasize the importance of acquiring specific intercultural mindsets and skillsets to manage culturally diverse classrooms effectively. These competencies serve not only to enhance instructional quality but also to

reaffirm teachers' sense of legitimacy and belonging within the host education system. Consequently, professional identity formation among migrant teachers becomes inseparable from the broader goal of intercultural education.

In addition to identity negotiation, professional confidence and efficacy play central roles in shaping teachers' well-being and job satisfaction. Deliu and Bocoş (2021) found that teachers' self-efficacy, defined as confidence in their capacity to perform teaching tasks successfully, directly influences their professional fulfillment. When migrant teachers perceive their competence to be undermined or questioned, their professional identity and overall well-being are also negatively affected. Compounding these internal challenges are systemic barriers to career advancement. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (2025) outlines that overseas-trained teachers (OTT) must undergo the International Qualifications Assessment process before achieving full registration and salary classification. Similarly, the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (2025) requires extensive documentation, verified language proficiency, and navigation of discretionary registration pathways. These bureaucratic complexities delay recognition, constrain earning potential, and perpetuate feelings of professional marginalization among migrant teachers.

Even after registration, sustaining professional growth remains a challenge. According to the Teacher Task Force (2025), professional development is essential for fostering intercultural competence and pedagogical adaptation; however, teachers often face severe limitations in time, funding, and institutional support for effective implementation. These constraints hinder the practical transfer of newly acquired knowledge into classroom settings, thereby restricting career progression. Furthermore, global trends reveal a gradual erosion of teacher status and inadequate investment in professional development, both of which can diminish motivation and long-term commitment to the profession. Consequently, the interplay between limited opportunities for professional development and systemic constraints reinforces a cycle that affects not only teachers' sense of efficacy but also their ability to remain engaged and fulfilled in their careers.

Beyond professional recognition, migrant teachers also grapple with the emotional and personal dimensions of their work. Navarro and Ramos (2024) report that the well-being of migrant educators is consistently threatened by the dual pressures of professional demands and personal responsibilities. Heavy workloads, long hours, and competing family obligations in the host country are cited as major obstacles to achieving work-life balance. Pontillo et al. (2025) and Roxas (2025) further highlight that poor work-life equilibrium intensifies teacher stress, which in turn diminishes classroom performance and overall efficacy. This imbalance is not merely a personal concern but a critical professional issue that directly influences instructional quality and student outcomes. The migrant experience adds another layer of complexity, often resulting in emotional vulnerability and social isolation. To cope, teachers must develop strong emotional-relational competence, enabling them to sustain well-being and resilience amid the multifaceted pressures of teaching in a foreign context.

Coping Mechanisms and Resilience

Resilience and coping are central to the lived experiences of Filipino migrant teachers as they navigate the challenges of teaching and living abroad. Lalau (2025) emphasizes that Filipino cultural values, particularly familialism and spirituality, play a crucial role in sustaining self-care and mental well-being. These values anchor migrants amid the uncertainties of living overseas, reinforcing their emotional stability and perseverance. Community networks rooted in Filipino culture also serve as vital coping mechanisms, helping teachers overcome social isolation and institutional biases. In a similar vein, Gaviola et al. (2024) found that social capital, manifested through Filipino migrant organizations in New Zealand, strengthens resilience by providing both emotional and practical support. Such networks assist educators in managing financial uncertainties and visa-related stressors, demonstrating that collective solidarity remains a powerful buffer against the pressures of migration.

Beyond social support, overseas experiences themselves have been shown to enhance

the resilience and adaptability of Filipino teachers. Macapagong et al. (2025) revealed that exposure to foreign educational systems positively influences teachers' Adversity Quotient (AQ), making them more proactive and resourceful in responding to professional challenges. The study highlights community engagement as an essential factor in navigating cultural shock and managing emotional strain, especially in multicultural environments. Chen and Huang (2025) similarly noted that Filipino teachers display strong resilience and adaptability when confronting linguistic and pedagogical differences abroad. Their coping often involves seeking mentorship and institutional guidance while leveraging their own cultural background, particularly values of respect, perseverance, and cooperation, to navigate diverse classroom settings effectively.

In addition to social and institutional coping mechanisms, cognitive and emotional strategies play a vital role in maintaining well-being. Rilveria (2021) confirmed that resilience and approach coping, including active problem-solving and positive reinterpretation, directly contribute to better psychological outcomes. He also identified uniquely Filipino coping behaviors such as pagsusuri (cognitive reappraisal) and pagtitiis (tolerance or endurance), which help teachers endure stress without compromising their sense of purpose. Complementing this perspective, Dela Cruz (2025) found that self-care practices, problem-solving, and social support are among the strongest contributors to teacher resilience against occupational pressures. Filipino educators often demonstrate a balance of emotional strength and practical action, allowing them to sustain motivation and effectiveness in demanding work conditions.

Moreover, research shows that teachers employ multiple coping strategies to manage professional stress and promote continuous growth. Abrea et al. (2025) observed that educators use self-control, social support, and even temporary escape-avoidance mechanisms to regulate emotions and prevent burnout. Importantly, they often reframe difficulties as opportunities for learning and professional improvement. For those separated from their families, Pacala (2025) found that frequent communication with loved ones serves as a vital

emotional lifeline, reinforcing resilience through the belief that familial strength inspires perseverance. These findings underscore the relational nature of Filipino coping anchored not only in individual determination but also in deep interpersonal and family bonds that transcend distance.

Nevertheless, sustaining resilience requires achieving balance between professional responsibilities and personal well-being. Roxas (2025) identified work-life balance as a key mediating factor that links teacher stress to performance outcomes, noting that effective time and emotional management enhances both well-being and classroom efficacy. Likewise, Navarro and Ramos (2024) revealed that despite facing heavy workloads, Filipino teachers rely on personal resilience, institutional assistance, and intrinsic motivation to uphold high standards of teaching performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to explore and describe the challenges and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers working in schools in Auckland, New Zealand. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

Central Question 1: What are the major professional challenges experienced by Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand?

Corollary Question 1.1: What challenges do these teachers encounter regarding the New Zealand curriculum content and standards?

Corollary Question 1.2: What difficulties do they face in adapting their existing pedagogy and classroom management styles to the New Zealand context?

Corollary Question 1.3: What specific hurdles do they experience in the integration of the local bicultural context (Te Reo Māori) into their teaching practice?

Central Question 2: What are the main socio-cultural challenges experienced by Filipino migrant teachers in the Auckland community?

Corollary Question 2.1: What are the key difficulties they experience in cultural adjustment and adapting to the New Zealand way of life outside the school environment?

Corollary Question 2.2: What issues or anxieties do they report concerning language use, communication, and accents in professional and social settings?

Corollary Question 2.3: How do these teachers describe their feeling of sense of belonging and social integration within the wider Auckland community?

Central Question 3: What are the perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers regarding their professional standing and future in the New Zealand education system?

Corollary Question 3.1: How do these teachers perceive the changes to their professional identity such as status and competence, since migrating from the Philippines?

Corollary Question 3.2: What are their perceptions of the available career growth opportunities and pathways for overseas-trained teachers in New Zealand?

Corollary Question 3.3: How do they evaluate their overall well-being including work-life balance and stress levels, while working in the New Zealand education system?

Central Question 4: How do Filipino migrant teachers cope with and demonstrate resilience in overcoming the challenges they face in Auckland?

Corollary Question 4.1: What coping mechanisms (professional, social, and personal) do they employ to manage the identified challenges?

Corollary Question 4.2: How do they define and demonstrate resilience in the context of their migrant teaching experience?

Corollary Question 4.3: What support systems such as family, co-ethnic community, and school networks do they utilize that contribute to their ability to overcome challenges?

Central Question 5: Based on the findings of the study, what program could be proposed to address the identified challenges and improve the experiences of Filipino migrant teachers?

METHODOLOGY

This delineates the components utilized in the study, including the research design, selection of participants, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques used in this qualitative study on the challenges and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand. It further details the data-gathering procedures and the statistical treatments employed. Collectively, this chapter provides a comprehensive account of the systematic processes undertaken to accomplish the objectives of the study.

Research Design

This study will employ a qualitative descriptive research design to explore and describe the lived experiences, challenges, and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand. A qualitative descriptive design is appropriate for studies seeking to provide rich, detailed, and factual accounts of human experiences within their natural settings (Bhandari, 2020). As Creswell and Poth (2018) explain, qualitative research emphasizes understanding how individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences in relation to their environment. In this study, the qualitative descriptive design enables the researcher to capture the multifaceted experiences of Filipino educators as they navigate professional, socio-

cultural, and personal adjustments in a foreign educational context.

This design allows the researcher to describe the phenomenon as it naturally occurs, without manipulating any variables or imposing predetermined theoretical assumptions. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), descriptive qualitative research focuses on "what" and "how" questions that participants experience and how they interpret those experiences. In the context of this study, the focus will be on identifying and describing the professional challenges such as adapting to the New Zealand curriculum and pedagogy, socio-cultural barriers such as cultural adjustment and belongingness, and personal coping mechanisms employed by Filipino migrant teachers to sustain well-being and resilience.

The data will be collected primarily through semi-structured interviews with eight (8) Filipino migrant teachers currently employed in various schools in Auckland. This interview format provides flexibility, allowing the researcher to probe deeper into participants' insights while maintaining consistency across responses. Supplementary data may also be obtained through observations and document reviews, ensuring triangulation, and enhancing the credibility of the findings. The use of open-ended questions will allow participants to express their experiences freely, providing authentic narratives that reveal the depth and complexity of their adaptation journey.

The qualitative descriptive design will also follow the thematic analysis approach, where data will be systematically coded and organized into emerging themes that reflect the research questions. Braun and Clarke (2019) describe thematic analysis as a flexible method for identifying patterns within qualitative data, allowing the researcher to interpret participants' shared meanings while maintaining closeness to their actual words and perspectives. This approach aligns with the study's purpose of generating a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the realities faced by Filipino migrant teachers in New Zealand's bicultural educational system.

Overall, this research design is chosen for its strength in portraying the lived realities

of individuals through descriptive narratives rather than abstract theory. By employing a qualitative descriptive design, the study aims to provide meaningful insights into how Filipino migrant teachers experience, perceive, and cope with the professional and socio-cultural demands of teaching in Auckland. The findings are expected to inform educational policymakers, school leaders, and teacher support programs in enhancing the inclusion, professional development, and well-being of overseas-trained teachers within New Zealand's diverse and evolving education landscape.

Data Generation

The primary research instrument that will be used in this study is a researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide specifically designed for Filipino migrant teacher-participants. The interview guide will be divided into thematic sections aligned with the study's four main research objectives: (1) professional challenges, (2) socio-cultural challenges, (3) perceptions of professional identity and well-being, and (4) coping mechanisms and resilience. Each section of the interview guide will be carefully structured to elicit in-depth narratives about the participants' lived experiences as overseas-trained educators in New Zealand, allowing for flexibility and open-ended responses.

The first section of the interview guide will be focused on exploring the professional challenges faced by Filipino migrant teachers in their adaptation to the New Zealand education system. Questions in this section sought to uncover difficulties in aligning with the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), classroom management practices, assessment standards, and the integration of Te Reo Māori (the Māori worldview) into their teaching. Participants will be also asked to reflect on how their prior training and experience in the Philippines influenced their adaptation to New Zealand's learner-centered pedagogical approach.

The second section will address the socio-cultural challenges encountered by the participants outside the classroom. This included questions on cultural adjustment, communication barriers, language use, and experiences of social integration within the

Auckland community. The guide will also invite teachers to discuss how local attitudes, cultural diversity, and social norms affected their sense of belonging and identity as migrant educators. These questions will aim to provide insight into how cultural and linguistic differences impact both professional and personal aspects of their lives abroad.

The third section will explore the participants' perceptions of their professional identity, well-being, and career growth within the New Zealand education system. Questions will be designed to examine how migration influenced their sense of professional status, competence, and self-efficacy. Teachers will be encouraged to describe their access to professional development, opportunities for advancement, and work-life balance. Furthermore, the section will seek to understand how they evaluate their overall well-being in relation to their teaching responsibilities and the pressures of adjusting to a foreign educational environment.

The fourth and final section will focus on coping mechanisms and resilience among Filipino migrant teachers. It will include questions about personal and professional strategies used to manage stress, such as self-care, social support, and cultural practices that help maintain emotional balance. Teachers will be invited to share how they utilize support systems, including family, co-ethnic communities, and school networks, in overcoming challenges. This section will also provide space for participants to recommend strategies or institutional support systems that could enhance the well-being and professional integration of overseas-trained teachers in New Zealand.

Data collection will be conducted through semi-structured interviews with eight (8) selected Filipino migrant teachers currently employed in various schools in Auckland, New Zealand. Each interview will last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and will be conducted either face-to-face or via secure online platforms such as Zoom, depending on the participants' availability and preference. With consent, all interviews will be audio-recorded to ensure the accuracy of responses. The recorded interviews will then be transcribed verbatim for analysis.

The data that will be gathered from these interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis, following the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) familiarization with data, (2) generation of initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the final report. The researcher will begin by thoroughly reading the transcripts multiple times to gain a holistic understanding of the participants' experiences. Meaningful statements and recurring ideas will be coded and organized into themes reflecting the major areas of the study: professional challenges, socio-cultural adjustment, identity, well-being, and coping strategies. These themes will be interpreted in relation to existing literature and theories on teacher migration, cultural adaptation, and resilience.

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility, the researcher will employ strategies such as member checking, where participants will be invited to verify the accuracy of the transcriptions and interpretations of their responses. Detailed documentation of the coding and analysis process will be maintained to establish transparency and confirmability. Through this rigorous process of data generation and analysis, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive, evidence-based understanding of the lived experiences, challenges, and perceptions of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand.

Selection of Co-participants and Co-researchers

The population of this study will include eight Filipino migrant teachers currently employed in various schools in Auckland, New Zealand. This population is chosen because these educators possess direct, lived experiences of teaching in a foreign educational environment while adapting to the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), pedagogical standards, and cultural expectations. They can provide rich, first-hand insights into the professional, socio-cultural, and personal challenges faced by migrant teachers, as well as their perceptions of professional identity, well-being, and resilience within the context of New Zealand's bicultural and multicultural society.

The co-participants in this study will primarily be Filipino migrant teachers who have been residing and teaching in Auckland for a minimum of three years. This criterion ensures that participants have undergone sufficient exposure to the local education system and community to meaningfully reflect on their experiences of professional adjustment, socio-cultural adaptation, and coping strategies. These co-participants are in the best position to articulate the realities of curriculum adaptation, classroom management, communication barriers, and cultural integration, areas that directly align with the central and corollary research questions of the study. Their perspectives are also crucial in understanding how Filipino teachers perceive their professional standing, identity, and well-being in comparison to their prior teaching experience in the Philippines.

The selection of co-participants will be carried out using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that allows the researcher to intentionally select individuals who possess the specific knowledge, background, and experience relevant to the research objectives. According to Bisht (2024), purposive sampling enables researchers to identify and recruit participants who can offer in-depth, information-rich accounts related to the phenomenon under investigation. In this case, Filipino migrant teachers will be selected based on the following criteria: (1) they are of Filipino nationality, (2) currently employed as teachers in Auckland, (3) have at least one year of teaching experience in New Zealand, and (4) are willing to voluntarily participate in an in-depth interview. This sampling method ensures that participants have direct, relevant experience with the challenges and perceptions being explored.

Purposive sampling is the most appropriate approach for this study because it allows for the deliberate inclusion of participants who can provide comprehensive and meaningful data aligned with the study's objectives. As Stewart (2024) explains, purposive sampling is particularly effective in qualitative research where the aim is to understand a specific social process, context, or experience rather than to generalize results to a larger population. Since this study seeks to uncover the nuanced realities of Filipino migrant teachers' experiences such

as professional adaptation, cultural negotiation, and coping mechanisms, targeting individuals with direct engagement in these processes enhances the richness and trustworthiness of the data.

The selection will include approximately Filipino migrant teachers currently employed in various schools in Auckland. This range ensures variability of perspectives while maintaining a manageable number of participants for in-depth qualitative analysis. Participation will be voluntary, and informed consent will be obtained prior to data collection. By strategically selecting co-participants who can provide detailed and authentic accounts, the researcher ensures that the findings accurately reflect the complex realities of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland and contribute to a deeper understanding of their challenges, perceptions, and resilience in the host education system.

Thematic Reflections

The data that will be collected from the semi-structured interviews with Filipino migrant teacher-participants will be analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method for identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring patterns of meaning within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach will be chosen because it provides flexibility in analyzing rich, descriptive narratives while remaining grounded in participants' lived experiences. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to make sense of how Filipino migrant teachers experience, perceive, and cope with the professional and socio-cultural challenges of teaching in Auckland, New Zealand.

The analysis will begin with the transcription of all interview recordings verbatim to ensure accuracy and integrity of the data. The researcher will thoroughly review each transcript multiple times to gain familiarity with the participants' words, tone, and emotions, thereby achieving immersion in the data. During this phase, preliminary notes and reflections will be written to capture initial impressions and possible connections to the research questions. This process will help the researcher identify early patterns related to professional

adaptation, socio-cultural integration, identity formation, and coping mechanisms.

Following familiarization, the researcher will conduct initial coding by systematically highlighting significant statements, phrases, and responses that directly addressed the study's objectives. These codes will represent meaningful ideas, such as difficulties in adapting to the New Zealand curriculum, challenges in implementing Te Reo Māori principles, struggles with language and cultural adjustment, perceptions of professional identity and recognition, and strategies for maintaining well-being. The codes will be organized into potential categories based on their similarities and relationships, allowing for a clearer structure of the participants' shared experiences.

After coding, the researcher will proceed to the theme development stage, where related codes will be grouped into broader thematic clusters that will capture the essence of the participants' narratives. Four major themes will emerge, aligned with the study's research questions: (1) Professional Challenges in Curriculum and Pedagogy, (2) Socio-Cultural Adjustment and Sense of Belonging, (3) Perceptions of Professional Identity and Well-being, and (4) Coping Mechanisms and Resilience. Each theme will be reflected in the aspects of the participants' adaptation journey, revealing both their struggles and the strengths they drew upon to sustain their professional and personal lives abroad. These themes will be interpreted in light of relevant literature and theories on migration, acculturation, and teacher resilience, including Berry's (2005) Model of Acculturation Theory and Push-Pull Migration Theory, which helped explain how individuals navigate cultural transitions and maintain motivation amid challenges.

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, several validation procedures will be implemented. Member checking will be conducted by sharing synthesized summaries of findings with selected participants, allowing them to confirm the accuracy of interpretations and provide feedback on whether their experiences were authentically represented. The researcher will maintain an audit trail, documenting the coding decisions, theme

development, and reflective notes throughout the analytic process to enhance transparency and confirmability. Additionally, peer debriefing with an academic adviser will be undertaken to review emerging themes and interpretations, ensuring consistency and analytical rigor.

Through this systematic and iterative process of thematic analysis, the researcher will be able to extract meaningful patterns from the qualitative data, resulting in a nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland. The method allows the study to capture both the diversity and commonality of experiences among participants, illustrating how professional adaptation, cultural negotiation, and personal resilience intersect to shape the realities of teaching and living in a multicultural and bicultural educational environment.

Literature Comparison

The present study situates itself within a growing body of research exploring the professional, socio-cultural, and personal experiences of migrant teachers, particularly those from the Philippines, working in foreign educational systems. While numerous studies have investigated teacher migration and adaptation (Tate, 2022; Santos, 2025; Cabrera & Abadiano, 2023), the existing literature remains limited in its contextual focus on Auckland, New Zealand a uniquely bicultural environment that integrates Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori into its national curriculum. This study extends the discourse by examining how Filipino migrant teachers experience professional challenges, cultural adaptation, and identity transformation within this distinct sociocultural framework, thereby addressing a significant gap in migration and education studies.

Previous literature highlights the challenges migrant teachers face when adapting to new pedagogical systems and educational standards. Tate (2022) and Montejo and Beduya (2025) emphasized that Filipino teachers often struggle with aligning their pedagogical practices to student-centered approaches, as opposed to the more teacher-directed methods common in the Philippines. Similarly, Sexton (2024) and Taani (2023) focused on the broader

New Zealand context, noting that teachers are expected to integrate Te Reo Māori and culturally responsive pedagogies as mandated by national education policy. Compared to these studies, the current research delves deeper into how Filipino migrant teachers interpret and negotiate these bicultural expectations while maintaining their own pedagogical identity. By focusing on both adaptation and cultural integration, the study bridges the professional and cultural dimensions of teacher migration more holistically than earlier works.

In terms of socio-cultural adjustment, existing studies (Puno et al., 2025; Alarcon & Puno, 2025; Zarceno, 2023) reveal that Filipino migrants rely heavily on co-ethnic networks and community involvement to cope with acculturation stress and discrimination. Ocampo and Lim (2024) and Miglė (2024) further argued that language barriers and limited host-community receptivity hinder full social integration. While these findings underscore the social side of adaptation, the present study contributes by emphasizing the intersection of social and professional spheres how cultural barriers and language challenges not only affect social belonging but also influence classroom communication, student engagement, and teacher confidence. This perspective provides a nuanced understanding of the dual nature of adjustment: professional integration and socio-cultural accommodation occurring simultaneously.

A growing strand of research also focuses on identity formation and well-being among migrant educators. Liyanage et al. (2025) and Salo (2024) described the identity reconstruction process as one involving both the loss of familiar teaching norms and the rediscovery of cultural roots. Meanwhile, Widodo and Chotimah (2024) and Tsarouhas and Plakitsi (2025) emphasized the importance of intercultural competence and the development of inclusive attitudes as markers of successful adaptation. The present study builds on these foundations by examining how Filipino migrant teachers balance their sense of professional identity with institutional recognition and career progression in New Zealand, a context further complicated by credentialing systems (NZQA, 2025; Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, 2025) and professional development expectations (Teacher Task Force, 2025).

This approach allows the current research to link identity and institutional challenges, areas often treated separately in earlier studies.

In the domain of resilience and coping, prior literature (Lalau, 2025; Gaviola et al., 2024; Rilveria, 2021; Roxas, 2025) establishes that Filipino cultural values, particularly familialism, pakikipagkapwa (social connectedness), and pagtitiis (endurance) serve as powerful psychological resources that sustain teachers through adversity. However, while existing studies highlight the emotional and cultural dimensions of resilience, the present research expands the discourse by exploring how these coping mechanisms interact with professional structures and well-being outcomes in the New Zealand context. It considers resilience not merely as an internal trait but as a relational process supported by institutional mentorship, peer collaboration, and bicultural engagement. This integrated view aligns with contemporary approaches to teacher resilience that emphasize systemic and contextual support rather than individual endurance alone.

Overall, this study contributes to the existing body of literature by synthesizing four major themes- professional challenges, socio-cultural adaptation, identity, career perceptions, and coping and resilience into a unified understanding of the Filipino migrant teaching experience in Auckland. Unlike prior studies that tend to isolate professional or socio-cultural aspects, this research takes a comprehensive, thematic approach to demonstrate how these dimensions overlap and shape one another. By doing so, it not only fills a contextual research gap in New Zealand's bicultural education system but also provides practical insights into supporting overseas-trained teachers through policy, training, and community engagement. Hence, the study positions itself as a vital addition to international educational research, contributing both to academic understanding and to the development of inclusive, globally responsive teaching environments.

Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to the ethical standards of qualitative research to ensure the

integrity, confidentiality, and well-being of all participants throughout the research process. Ethical considerations are essential in studies involving human participants, particularly when exploring sensitive personal and professional experiences such as migration, adaptation, and workplace challenges. The researcher will strictly follow ethical guidelines set forth by the institution's research ethics committee and ensure that all procedures comply with principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as outlined by the Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979).

Prior to data collection, the researcher will secure formal ethical clearance and permission from the concerned educational institutions and local authorities in Auckland. All potential participants will receive a detailed informed consent form explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the type of data to be collected, and the intended use of findings. Participants will be assured that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or negative consequence. The consent process ensures that participants fully understand their involvement and willingly agree to take part in the research.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly maintained throughout the study. Pseudonyms or participant codes will be used in place of real names to protect the identity of respondents. Any identifiable information such as school names, locations, or personal references will be removed from the transcripts and final report. Data will be stored securely in password-protected files, accessible only to the researcher, and will be permanently deleted after the completion of the study and submission of the final report. The researcher will also ensure that interview recordings and transcripts are not shared with third parties or used for purposes beyond the approved scope of this research.

Additionally, participants will be informed that their responses will be used solely for academic and research purposes. The interviews will be conducted in a manner that promotes

psychological comfort and respect for cultural sensitivity. Since some discussions may involve personal challenges, professional frustrations, or experiences of discrimination, the researcher will adopt a compassionate and nonjudgmental approach during data collection. Participants will be reminded that they may skip any question they find uncomfortable. In cases where emotional discomfort arises, participants will be referred to appropriate support services or networks within their community or school system.

To further strengthen the ethical integrity of the study, data validation procedures such as member checking will be conducted to ensure that participants' perspectives are accurately represented. Transparency in reporting and acknowledgment of researcher bias will be maintained throughout the analysis process. The researcher will also practice reflexivity, recognizing how their own cultural background, values, and perspectives may influence data interpretation.

In summary, the study is designed to uphold the highest ethical standards by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, cultural sensitivity, and participant welfare. Through these measures, the researcher aims to build trust with participants and ensure that the research process honors their dignity and lived experiences as Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand.

FINDINGS

1.1 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers in Auckland, New Zealand experienced an adjustment process toward student-centered classroom management and inclusive teaching practices as they adapted to new expectations in teaching and learning. Participants highlighted the importance of responding to diverse learner needs, embracing inclusive education practices, and modifying classroom strategies to promote student engagement and participation. The transition also required teachers to develop new classroom management approaches and pedagogical practices aligned with the learner-

centered framework of the New Zealand education system.

1.2 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced a process of integrating Māori language and bicultural practices as they adjusted to the cultural expectations of the New Zealand education system. Participants described their efforts to learn Māori language and cultural knowledge and apply these elements in classroom practices to demonstrate respect for Māori identity and promote culturally responsive teaching. However, they also encountered challenges related to limited cultural familiarity, appropriate implementation, and the need for continuous development of bicultural competence in diverse classroom contexts.

1.3 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced challenges and opportunities in integrating Māori language and bicultural practices into their teaching experiences in Auckland, New Zealand. Participants described their efforts to develop cultural understanding by learning Māori language, adapting classroom practices, and incorporating bicultural elements to support culturally responsive teaching. However, the implementation of Māori practices remained challenging due to limited cultural knowledge, contextual differences, and the continuous need to strengthen teachers' confidence and competence in meeting bicultural expectations within the New Zealand education system.

2.1 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced socio-cultural adjustment and personal adaptation as they navigated life and professional responsibilities in a multicultural environment in Auckland, New Zealand. Participants described their experiences of negotiating cultural identity, maintaining connections with their Filipino background, and adapting to new social interactions, communication patterns, and lifestyle expectations. The transition was also influenced by personal challenges, including family separation and emotional adjustments, highlighting the importance of social support and resilience in successfully adapting to a new cultural and professional environment.

2.2 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced linguistic adaptation and communication challenges as they adjusted to working in a multicultural English-speaking environment in Auckland, New Zealand. Participants described difficulties related to differences in English language systems, accent and pronunciation variations, and the need to develop confidence in communicating effectively within diverse professional and social settings. These experiences also reflected the emotional and cultural dimensions of language adjustment, as communication competence influenced their sense of belonging, social connections, and successful integration into the New Zealand community and workplace.

2.3 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers continuously negotiated their sense of belonging and professional identity while adapting to a multicultural environment in Auckland, New Zealand. Participants identified the importance of an inclusive workplace, supportive school communities, social engagement, and connections with the Filipino community in developing a sense of acceptance and belonging. However, their experiences also showed that belonging and professional identity were influenced by factors such as cultural adjustment, interpersonal relationships, recognition of their professional contributions, and opportunities for meaningful participation within the wider school community.

3.1 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced a transformation of their professional identity through continuous adaptation, resilience, and professional development in the New Zealand education system. Participants described how they navigated the demands of professional adjustment, reconstructed their teacher identity, and developed greater confidence and competence through new experiences, support systems, and reflective practices. Their journey highlighted the importance of communication growth, validation, and resilience in preparing them for future professional opportunities and sustaining their roles as educators in a multicultural environment.

3.2 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced challenges and opportunities in navigating career growth and professional advancement within the New Zealand education system. Participants emphasized the importance of structured professional development, access to career pathways, and personal readiness in achieving professional growth and recognition. However, their experiences also highlighted challenges related to unequal opportunities, limited awareness of advancement processes, and systemic barriers that influenced their ability to progress in their teaching careers.

3.3 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers experienced a process of negotiating teacher well-being as they adjusted to workload demands, work-life balance expectations, and emotional challenges in the New Zealand education system. Participants described experiencing initial stress, increased workload, and emotional strain during their transition, but gradually developed coping strategies through improved work-life balance, supportive workplace relationships, and access to professional support systems. Over time, their experiences reflected enhanced well-being, resilience, and adaptation as they became more familiar with the educational environment and established sustainable professional and personal routines.

4.1 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers utilized various coping mechanisms and support systems to navigate professional and personal challenges while adapting to the New Zealand education system. Participants emphasized the importance of institutional support, professional networks, interpersonal relationships, and community connections in managing workplace demands and cultural adjustments. Additionally, personal resilience, psychological coping strategies, and faith-based practices served as important sources of strength, enabling teachers to overcome challenges and maintain their well-being throughout their migration and professional journey.

4.2 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers developed resilience through purpose, support systems, and adaptive mindsets as they navigated professional and personal

challenges in a foreign educational environment. Participants demonstrated resilience by developing coping strategies, maintaining a sense of purpose, embracing continuous learning, and adapting to new cultural and professional expectations. Their experiences highlighted the significant role of social relationships, workplace support, and faith-based values in strengthening their ability to overcome difficulties, sustain motivation, and successfully integrate into the New Zealand education system.

4.3 The findings revealed that Filipino migrant teachers relied on multi-layered support systems that contributed to their adaptation, well-being, and professional sustainability in the New Zealand education system. Participants identified institutional support, collegial relationships, family connections, community belonging, and personal coping networks as essential resources in managing professional responsibilities and personal adjustments. These support systems enabled teachers to strengthen their resilience, maintain emotional well-being, and sustain their professional roles while navigating the challenges of migration and integration into a multicultural educational environment.

5. The findings revealed that the identified challenges experienced by Filipino migrant teachers require a comprehensive support program that addresses their professional, cultural, linguistic, and personal adjustment needs in the New Zealand education system. Based on the participants' experiences, the Filipino Migrant Teacher Empowerment Program (FMTEP) was proposed to provide targeted support through professional adaptation training, inclusive teaching practices, cultural integration initiatives, language development, and well-being support. The program aims to strengthen Filipino migrant teachers' competencies, confidence, resilience, and sense of belonging, enabling them to effectively perform their roles and achieve sustainable professional growth within a multicultural educational environment.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that:

1.1 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers adapted to the New Zealand education system by developing student-centered classroom management practices, responding to diverse learner needs, and modifying their pedagogical approaches to support inclusive and engaging learning environments.

1.2 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers recognized the importance of integrating Māori language and cultural knowledge into their teaching practices, although continuous learning and cultural development were necessary to strengthen their bicultural responsiveness.

1.3 The study concludes that the integration of Māori language and bicultural practices remained a significant area of adjustment for Filipino migrant teachers, requiring increased cultural awareness, confidence, and institutional support to effectively implement culturally responsive teaching.

2.1 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers experienced significant socio-cultural and personal adjustments as they negotiated their cultural identity, managed emotional challenges, and developed resilience while adapting to life and work in a multicultural environment.

2.2 The study concludes that linguistic adaptation was an essential aspect of Filipino migrant teachers' professional and social integration, as differences in language use, accents, and communication practices influenced their confidence, relationships, and sense of belonging.

2.3 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers developed their sense of belonging and professional identity through supportive school environments, social relationships, and community connections, while recognition, inclusion, and meaningful participation

remained important factors in their successful integration.

3.1 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers transformed their professional identity through continuous adaptation, resilience, and professional growth as they navigated the expectations of the New Zealand education system. Their experiences demonstrate that support systems, reflective practices, and increasing confidence and competence contribute to sustaining their roles as educators in a multicultural environment.

3.2 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers experienced both opportunities and challenges in pursuing career growth and professional advancement in the New Zealand education system. While professional development and personal initiative supported career progression, limited awareness of pathways, unequal opportunities, and systemic barriers continued to influence their advancement.

3.3 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers gradually developed strategies to maintain well-being by managing workload demands, improving work-life balance, and utilizing workplace support systems. Their experiences indicate that resilience, supportive environments, and adaptation to the new educational context are essential in achieving long-term professional and personal well-being.

4.1 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers employed various coping mechanisms and support systems to manage professional and personal challenges during their transition to the New Zealand education system. Institutional support, professional networks, interpersonal relationships, community connections, personal resilience, and faith-based practices played significant roles in strengthening their ability to adapt and maintain well-being throughout their migration journey.

4.2 The study concludes that Filipino migrant teachers developed resilience through purposeful adaptation, continuous learning, supportive relationships, and adaptive mindsets while navigating a new educational and cultural environment. Their resilience was strengthened by social support, workplace experiences, and personal values that

enabled them to overcome challenges and sustain their professional commitment.

4.3 The study concludes that multi-layered support systems serve as essential foundations for Filipino migrant teachers' adaptation, well-being, and professional sustainability in the New Zealand education system. Support from institutions, colleagues, family, communities, and personal networks contributed to their successful integration and helped them manage the demands of migration and professional practice.

5. The study concludes that a comprehensive support program is necessary to address the professional, cultural, linguistic, and personal adjustment needs of Filipino migrant teachers in the New Zealand education system. The proposed Filipino Migrant Teacher Empowerment Program (FMTEP) provides a structured approach to strengthening teachers' competencies, confidence, resilience, and sense of belonging through professional adaptation, inclusive teaching practices, cultural integration, language development, and well-being initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. For Filipino Migrant Teachers: Filipino migrant teachers intending to work or currently working in New Zealand should actively participate in continuous professional learning to enhance their understanding of the New Zealand educational system, including curriculum implementation, NCEA assessment processes, inclusive education practices, restorative behavior management, and bicultural expectations. They are likewise encouraged to establish professional networks, seek mentorship opportunities, and engage with Filipino and local communities to strengthen their social support systems, resilience, and overall well-being during the adaptation process.

2. For New Zealand Educational Institutions: New Zealand educational institutions should design and implement culturally responsive induction and professional development programs specifically tailored to the needs of Filipino Overseas-Trained Teachers (OTTs). These programs should include orientation on the New Zealand Curriculum, bicultural education, Te Reo Māori and tikanga Māori, inclusive teaching practices, classroom management approaches, and communication expectations. Schools should also establish structured mentoring systems that pair newly arrived Filipino teachers with experienced educators who can support their professional and socio-cultural adjustment. In addition, educational institutions should strengthen teacher well-being initiatives by providing access to counseling services, professional learning communities, peer-support networks, and programs that promote work-life balance and professional sustainability.

3. For the Philippine Government and Recruitment Agencies: The Philippine government, through relevant agencies such as the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), and teacher recruitment agencies, should utilize the findings of this study to enhance pre-departure orientation and preparation programs for prospective migrant teachers. Pre-departure programs should incorporate comprehensive preparation on the New Zealand educational system and curriculum framework, NCEA assessment and reporting requirements, student-centered and inquiry-based pedagogical approaches, inclusive education and differentiation strategies, Te Reo Māori and bicultural practices, communication and accent adaptation, as well as socio-cultural adjustment and well-being strategies to better prepare migrant teachers for professional and cultural integration. Such preparation may help reduce transition difficulties and enable Filipino teachers to enter the New Zealand educational environment with greater confidence and readiness.

4. For Filipino Community Organizations and Support Networks: Filipino community organizations in New Zealand should continue developing programs that foster social integration, cultural connectedness, and emotional support among migrant teachers.

Community gatherings, mentoring programs, cultural activities, and professional networking opportunities may help reduce homesickness, strengthen cultural identity, and promote a greater sense of belonging among newly arrived educators. Faith-based organizations and Filipino associations may likewise serve as valuable support mechanisms in promoting psychological well-being and resilience among migrant teachers.

5. For Educational Policymakers: Educational policymakers in New Zealand may consider developing policies that further support the integration, retention, and professional advancement of migrant teachers. Particular attention should be given to strengthening bicultural competency training, improving access to professional development, expanding mentoring opportunities, and ensuring equitable pathways for career progression and leadership development among migrant educators. Such initiatives may contribute to a more inclusive educational workforce while supporting New Zealand's commitment to diversity, equity, and culturally responsive education.

6. For Future Researchers: Future researchers may build upon the findings of this study by examining the experiences of Filipino migrant teachers in other regions of New Zealand beyond Auckland. Comparative studies involving different educational sectors, such as early childhood, primary, and secondary education, may provide a broader perspective on migrant teacher experiences. Future research may explore the long-term development of professional identity among migrant teachers, the effectiveness of induction and mentoring programs, the development and classroom application of bicultural competencies, teacher well-being and retention, as well as leadership opportunities and career advancement among Filipino migrant educators. Such investigations may further contribute to the expanding body of literature on teacher migration, acculturation, professional identity formation, and educational mobility in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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