




Strengthening Teacher Competence Through Professional Learning: Behavioral Insights from Out-of-Field Teaching

Anna Wilda C. Tado¹ , Jan Daniel P. Ching^{2*} , Joanne Vivien B. Necosia² 

¹School of Education, San Isidro College, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Philippines; ²College of Arts and Sciences, Bukidnon State University, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, Philippines

*jandanielching@buksu.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

This study assessed a professional enhancement program implemented from 2021 to 2023 for out-of-field Senior High School (SHS) teachers in Bukidnon National High School, Philippines. Grounded in the theory of change framework, the program aimed to strengthen instructional competence through training modules on collaborative planning, instructional innovation, contextualized lesson development, and 21st-century pedagogies aligned with the K to 12 Curriculum and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). A qualitative evaluation design was employed, drawing on modular evaluations and document analysis. Findings revealed consistently high participant satisfaction, with mean scores ranging from 4.67 to 4.93 across sessions. Teachers found the content timely, practical, and responsive to their classroom realities. Thematic analysis showed that the training fostered pedagogical growth, strengthened lesson planning and assessment practices, and encouraged reflective and student-centered instruction. The program also contributed to professional identity formation and emotional validation, particularly for non-education graduates assigned to teach beyond their field. Despite its strengths, the program's second phase showed a modest decline in satisfaction (86.93%) due to scheduling fatigue, digital access issues, and workload constraints. Participants suggested the need for flexible, modular, and asynchronous learning options to improve accessibility. Overall, the enhancement program delivered significant instructional, professional, and relational outcomes. It not only bridged pedagogical gaps but also nurtured a reflective and resilient teaching community. The findings highlight the need for inclusive, responsive, and context-sensitive professional development programs that support out-of-field teachers in adapting to evolving educational demands.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 14 July 2025
Revised 15 September 2025
Accepted 22 September 2025

KEYWORDS

Out-of-field teaching, pedagogical growth, instructional practice, public secondary schools, theory of change, instructional competencies, training modules, collaborative planning, instructional innovation

INTRODUCTION

Out-of-field teaching, where teachers are assigned to teach subjects beyond their formal academic preparation, is a widespread issue in many education systems, including the Philippines. In public secondary schools, this practice is often used to address persistent shortages in specialized areas such as Science, Mathematics, and English. Although administratively convenient, the implications of such assignments are significant. Studies have associated out-of-field teaching with reduced instructional quality, diminished teacher confidence, lower student engagement, and misalignment with curriculum standards (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021; Refuerzo, 2021).

In the Philippine context, out-of-field teaching is common among non-education degree holders who enter the teaching profession through emergency hiring or lateral entry. These educators frequently face multiple challenges, including limited exposure to pedagogical

principles, inadequate preparation in content areas, and minimal access to structured professional support (Raymundo, 2023). As a result, they often experience stress, low self-efficacy, and professional burnout, particularly when teaching academic strands that require subject specialization.

Despite these difficulties, some out-of-field teachers develop adaptive practices. Informal peer mentoring, reflective teaching, and resource sharing have been identified as coping strategies (Caseros, 2020). However, these approaches are typically reactive and insufficient for sustained improvement. In response to this concern, Branzuela et al. (2023) proposed the COPE frameworks, which stands for Curriculum alignment, Organized mentoring, Policy support, and Enhanced instructional planning. This framework presents a holistic model for supporting out-of-field educators by emphasizing the need for systemic, school-

based interventions that promote continuous professional development through strong institutional support.

In light of these challenges, an extension project titled “Enhancing the Competencies of Non-Education Degree Holders Teaching in Public Secondary Schools in Malaybalay City” was implemented from 2021 to 2023. The project aimed to capacitate out-of-field teachers by offering training aligned with the Department of Education’s K to 12 Curriculum Framework and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). Topics included curriculum planning, instructional materials development, classroom management, and assessment—essential areas for effective teaching in 21st-century classrooms.

Although the program was positively received by participants, its effectiveness has yet to be formally evaluated. Current literature tends to focus on the challenges and coping mechanisms of out-of-field teachers, with limited empirical attention to structured training programs and their actual impact on professional practice (Ortega et al., 2022; Alalid et al., 2025). This gap restricts the development of evidence-informed policies and limits institutions’ ability to design responsive professional development programs.

This study addresses that gap by evaluating the outcomes of the said capacity enhancement program. It explores how participating teachers perceived the relevance and effectiveness of the training, how they applied the skills and knowledge in their teaching practice, and what instructional and professional outcomes emerged as a result. The COPE framework informs both the analysis and the interpretation of findings, particularly in identifying which aspects of the intervention supported sustained improvements and where further institutional support may be needed. The study will also draw on this framework to guide recommendations for future extension initiatives.

To support this objective, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do out-of-field teachers perceive the

relevance, effectiveness, and applicability of the enhancement program to their teaching practice?

2. How have out-of-field teachers applied 21st-century teaching skills aligned with the K to 12 Framework and PPST in their practice?
3. What outcomes, both instructional and professional, have resulted from the participation of out-of-field teachers in the enhancement program?

Through this evaluation, the study contributes to institutional efforts by Bukidnon State University and San Isidro College to strengthen the design and delivery of professional development initiatives. It also supports national education goals under the MATATAG agenda and the PPST by promoting inclusive and evidence-based capacity-building for all teachers, regardless of academic background.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

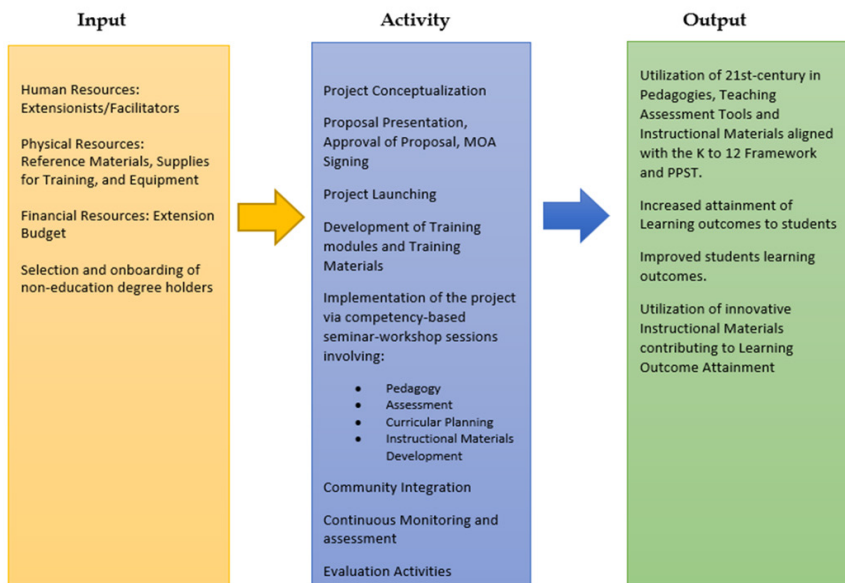
This study uses the theory of change (ToC) as its guiding framework. ToC is a tool often used to evaluate educational programs by mapping out how an intervention is expected to lead to its intended outcomes. In this study, it helps assess the effectiveness of a capacity enhancement program for out-of-field teachers in public secondary schools. The framework makes it possible to identify inputs, planned activities, and the expected results. It also helps clarify assumptions and track outcomes through measurable indicators. Figure 1 presents the adapted theory of change framework. It shows the relationship between program resources, training activities, and immediate outputs.

The input phase refers to the resources needed to implement the project. These include trained facilitators or extensionists, reference materials, training supplies, and equipment. The extension budget also plays a key role in supporting project activities. Another important input is the proper selection and onboarding of non-education degree holders who will participate in the training. The activities phase focuses on the design and implementation of the training. It begins with project conceptualization, proposal approval, and MOA signing. This is followed by the development of training modules

and materials. The core of the training includes seminar-workshop sessions on four domains: pedagogy, assessment, curriculum planning, and instructional materials development. These areas are aligned with the K to 12 Curriculum Framework and the PPST. The phase also includes community integration, monitoring, and evaluation. The outputs are the short-term results of the training. These include the use of 21st-century teaching strategies, modern assessment tools, and instructional materials that follow national standards. Teachers are expected to show better instructional delivery, improved student engagement, and more effective use of classroom resources.

specialization. The second domain is professional development and capacity building. It includes changes in pedagogical knowledge, involvement in reflective teaching practices, peer learning, and a stronger sense of being a professional educator. The third domain is institutional impact. This focuses on school-level changes such as mentoring support, expanded use of training materials, and steps toward adopting the program more permanently. The fourth domain is social and relational impact. It looks at better teacher-student engagement, collaboration with colleagues, and more recognition for the work of out-of-field teachers. The fifth and final domain

Figure 1
Theory of Change (TOC) Framework



To evaluate the broader effects of the program, this study used a set of impact domains. These domains are based on the goals of the project and institutional priorities related to teacher development and instructional quality. They guide data collection and help ensure that both visible and subtle changes are captured.

is policy and program influence. While this is not the main focus of the study, it considers how the program may affect decision-making at the school or division level. This includes whether recommendations are adopted, if there are plans to expand the program, or if the project is cited in formal plans or reports.

The first domain is instructional impact. This includes how teachers plan, deliver, and assess their lessons after the training. It also looks at their use of 21st-century methods, alignment with the K to 12 curriculum, and confidence in handling subjects outside their

Each domain is assessed through measurable indicators using qualitative interviews and document analysis. These indicators help organize and interpret the data, ensuring that changes are observed at the personal, institutional, and policy levels. The

use of the theory of change, combined with this domain-based approach, provides a complete view of how the program works, what it achieves, and how it may be improved or sustained in the future.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative evaluation research design to explore the experiences and teaching practices of out-of-field public secondary school teachers who participated in a competency enhancement program. The study focused on how these teachers developed and applied 21st-century teaching skills, as well as the perceived outcomes of their participation. A qualitative design was appropriate given the emphasis on capturing rich, contextualized narratives about instructional practices, professional growth, and changes in classroom engagement. It enabled a deep exploration of how teachers interpreted and integrated pedagogical innovations within the national education standards, particularly the K to 12 Curriculum and the PPST.

The study was summative in nature and aimed to assess the overall impact of the enhancement program on teaching practices. It specifically sought to examine the extent to which the program influenced pedagogical strategies, assessment methods, curriculum planning, and instructional materials development.

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 10 out-of-field public secondary school teachers from Malaybalay City, purposively selected based on their participation in the extension project titled “Enhancing the Competencies of Non-Education Degree Holders Teaching in Public Secondary Schools in Malaybalay City,” conducted from 2021 to 2023. The number of research participants was determined in reference to Hennink and Kaiser (2022), who found that saturation can often be achieved with 9–17 interviews or 4–8 focus groups, especially when the population is homogeneous and the

research questions are narrowly focused. As the participants were all out-of-field secondary school teachers, this sampling rationale was applied. A balance of male and female participants was observed, and subject area diversity was considered to capture a range of instructional contexts.

To be eligible, participants must have been assigned to teach at least one subject outside their field of specialization for a minimum of one academic year during the project’s implementation. They must have completed key components of the training program and indicated willingness to participate in interviews and submit instructional documents such as lesson plans or teaching materials. Teachers whose teaching assignments were fully aligned with their academic degrees were excluded from the study.

Research participants were recruited through a structured and ethically approved process designed to ensure voluntary and informed participation. The recruitment process began with the identification of eligible participants based on the study’s inclusion criteria. Potential respondents were contacted via email with a brief introduction to the study and an attached Participant Information Sheet (PIS), which explained the study’s purpose, procedures, time commitment, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Those who agreed to participate were asked to sign an informed consent form or provide documented oral consent. All recruitment and consent materials were reviewed and approved by the institutional ethics committee to ensure clarity, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness.

Data Collection Methods

Data for this study were collected through two qualitative methods: in-depth semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Individual interviews were conducted to explore participants’ reflections on the enhancement program, particularly its relevance, applicability, and impact on their teaching practices. Interview prompts were guided by the study’s objectives but allowed space for participants to describe

their personal experiences and instructional changes in their own words. These prompts were also validated by the extensionists.

In addition to interviews, participants were asked to submit relevant teaching-related documents such as lesson plans, activity sheets, assessment tools, or reflective journals. These instructional artifacts served as concrete evidence of how participants applied 21st-century teaching strategies in their classrooms, especially in relation to the K to 12 Curriculum and the PPST. Participants were identified using the official list of program beneficiaries, and written informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.

The researchers who conducted the evaluation did not serve as facilitators in the training sessions. This distinction minimized potential bias and enhanced the objectivity of the analysis. The evaluation team's role was limited to data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to interpret both the interview transcripts and submitted documents. The process began with familiarization through repeated readings of the data. This was followed by open coding to identify recurring ideas and patterns related to teacher development, instructional change, and perceived program outcomes. Codes were then grouped into broader themes that reflected both individual experiences and shared patterns among participants.

The study employed multiple sources of data to enable triangulation, which enhanced the credibility of the findings and ensured alignment between self-reported practices and documented instructional outputs. Trustworthiness was reinforced through several strategies, as recommended by Alhojailan (2012). These included members checking, in which participants reviewed preliminary interpretations to confirm alignment with their experiences; peer debriefing with fellow researchers to reduce interpretive bias; an audit trail documenting the coding and theme development process for transparency; and a code-recode technique, in

which selected transcripts were reanalyzed after a short interval to assess consistency in coding.

The thematic analysis was guided by the study's impact domains and indicators of change. Participant narratives and instructional documents were organized and interpreted based on these key domains, which served as thematic anchors for the evaluation. The visual summary of the impact domains is presented in Figure 2.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical standards in the conduct of research involving human participants. Prior to data collection, the researchers secured approval from the institutional ethics review board of all participating institutions. Participation was entirely voluntary, and prospective participants received informed consent forms explaining the study's objectives, procedures, and their rights—including the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. There were no known conflicts of interest among the researchers.

All members of the research team maintained professional independence and transparency throughout the study. None of the researchers held supervisory or evaluative authority over the participants. To protect participants' privacy, all personally identifiable information were anonymized. Data were securely stored in encrypted and access-restricted digital folders. Pseudonyms will be used in all publications and reports to preserve confidentiality. Only aggregated data and non-identifiable excerpts will be used in dissemination activities.

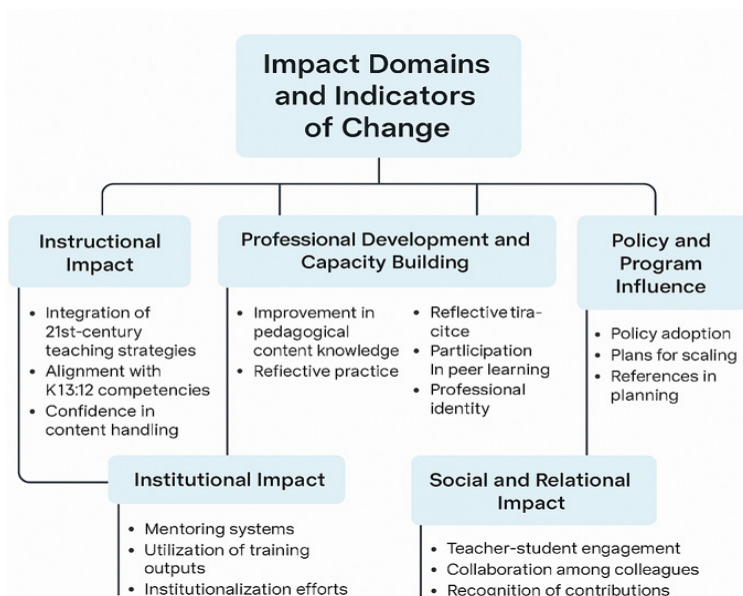
While there will be no direct monetary compensation for participants, their involvement may yield indirect benefits, including reflective insights into their teaching practice and the opportunity to contribute to policy recommendations for professional development. Their voices will also play a role in shaping interventions for similarly situated out-of-field teachers in the public school system. As a gesture of appreciation for their participation, tokens were given to the research participants.

This study is a multi-institutional collaboration between Bukidnon State University and San Isidro College. A shared Terms of Reference (ToR) governs this partnership. Both institutions agree to jointly plan, implement, and disseminate the study. Researchers from each institution are equally responsible for data collection, analysis, and reporting. Ethical responsibilities—including participant protection, data privacy, and fair authorship—are shared across institutions.

males and seven females, all affiliated with the Department of Education (DepEd). Their official email domains indicated institutional ties to DepEd, suggesting that they served in various professional capacities such as educators, school heads, or administrative personnel. While details like age, years of service, or academic specialization are not explicitly stated, their inclusion implied a meaningful connection to the study—were involving educational

Figure 2

Impact Domains as Basis for Thematic Analysis



All data will be accessible only to authorized research members and governed by agreed-upon confidentiality protocols. Authorship on all publications will reflect actual intellectual contributions, and any disputes will be resolved collaboratively through mutual consultation and institutional guidance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 below presents a summary of the participants’ profiles, including sex, institutional affiliation, and teaching background.

The research participants consisted of a gender-balanced group, comprising seven

programs, transitions, or evaluative processes. The uniformity of institutional affiliation also suggested representation across different divisions within a centralized system, potentially offering regionally diverse yet professionally aligned perspectives. Collectively, these participants were well-positioned to contribute substantive insights grounded in lived educational experience and institutional knowledge.

Key Findings and Impact Assessment of the Enhancement Program

To address the study’s research questions and evaluate the impact of the enhancement program, the researchers examined various

data sources, including facilitator-submitted terminal reports, modular evaluations, and participant interview transcripts. This allowed for a multidimensional analysis of the program’s effectiveness, drawing from both quantitative and qualitative evidence. The findings presented below focus on how participants perceived and experienced the program, particularly in terms of pedagogical relevance, instructional improvement, and professional growth.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Research Participants

Attribute	Description
Sex Distribution	7 Female, 7 Male – indicating a balanced representation
Institutional Affiliation	All participants are affiliated with the Department of Education (DepEd)
Professional Background	Subject Teachers and Advisers
Regional Representation	Centralized in Bukidnon National High School-Senior High School Program
Relevance to Study	Participants are assumed to contribute insights grounded in educational practice

Module-based Evaluation for Extension Activities

The modular evaluations revealed consistent high levels of satisfaction among participants across all sessions. As shown in Table 2 every module received top-tier ratings in terms of content relevance and delivery. While the raw scores indicate uniformly strong evaluations, it is more important to focus on what these responses signify.

Participants responded positively to modules that tackled 21st-century teaching strategies, curriculum alignment, assessment design, and instructional materials development. These themes aligned closely with the daily instructional challenges faced by out-of-field teachers, suggesting a strong match between the program’s content and the teachers’ contextual needs. The consistency of positive feedback also reflected the program’s capacity to build instructional confidence and professional identity among participants who typically lack formal

training in pedagogy.

Table 2
Quantitative Summary of Module Ratings

Module/Session	Participants	Average Mean Per Module/Session	Qualitative Description
1	33	4.81	Pinakamaayo (Best)
2	26	4.67	Pinakamaayo (Best)
3	29	4.80	Pinakamaayo (Best)
4	26	4.93	Pinakamaayo (Best)
5	39	4.71	Pinakamaayo (Best)
6	30	4.74	Pinakamaayo (Best)
7	22	4.81	Pinakamaayo (Best)
8	26	4.85	Pinakamaayo (Best)
9	22	4.92	Pinakamaayo (Best)
10	18	4.84	Pinakamaayo (Best)
11	13	4.86	Pinakamaayo (Best)
12	17	4.89	Pinakamaayo (Best)
13	12	4.90	Pinakamaayo (Best)

Notably, several sessions stood out not simply for their high ratings, but for how they were described by participants as “transformational” in connecting educational theory to classroom realities. The sessions were delivered during a period marked by curricular shifts and growing demands for learner-centered instruction, further increasing their perceived value. The strong alignment between training content and participants’ instructional gaps reinforces the practical and emotional relevance of the enhancement program, as well as its instructional and relational impact (Martinez, 2021; Ragas et al., 2024).

Training Evaluation Across Timeframes

The enhancement program was delivered in two distinct phases. While both phases received high satisfaction ratings, a noticeable difference emerged over time, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Quality and Relevance Rating

Training Phase	No. of Trainees	Quality and Relevance (%)
Nov–Dec 2022	123	99.19%
Jan–May 2023	199	86.93%

The initial phase generated particularly strong feedback, attributed largely to the novelty of the training experience, the presence of hands-on facilitators, and the fresh relevance of the topics. Participants described early sessions as energizing and affirming. In the second phase, although ratings remained favorable, there was a modest decline in satisfaction. Feedback suggests this shift stemmed not from diminished content quality but from structural factors such as scheduling fatigue, workload conflicts, and digital access limitations. Some teachers reported difficulty balancing weekend training sessions with family responsibilities, while others cited the cognitive demands of consecutive modules.

These insights underscore the importance of designing training programs that are not only pedagogically sound but also attuned to participants' lived realities. Recommendations for modular, flexible, or asynchronous formats emerged strongly from participants, signaling a preference for more responsive delivery models. Despite logistical challenges, participants remained highly engaged, indicating that with better accommodation of their schedules and contexts, future iterations of the program could further enhance learning outcomes.

Participant Feedback and Response

The qualitative data, derived from interviews and open-ended responses, yielded several recurring themes that reflect the participants' perceptions of the enhancement program. These themes illuminate how out-of-field teachers viewed the relevance, delivery, and outcomes of the intervention, offering insights into its instructional, professional, and institutional impacts.

Pedagogical Relevance

Participants consistently emphasized the alignment of the training content with their classroom realities. One teacher remarked, "This topic helped us enhance our teaching strategies to fit in the 21st century." This sentiment was echoed in multiple narratives, especially from those who lacked formal pedagogical training. Modules such as 21st Century Pedagogies, Assessment of Learning, and Curriculum Integration were

described as both "practical" and "timely." For many, the program bridged what they perceived as a gap between theoretical knowledge and everyday teaching responsibilities. This alignment reinforced the instructional relevance of the training and contributed to stronger curriculum implementation. The findings support Martinez (2021), who emphasized the importance of professional development that combines theoretical grounding with practical application. As noted by Ragas et al. (2024), sessions that linked facilitation with technological integration and real-world tasks enhanced teacher preparedness and confidence.

Effectiveness of Facilitation and Delivery

Another key theme focused on the competence and delivery style of the resource persons. Participants expressed appreciation for the facilitators, describing them as "well-equipped and insightful." The training sessions were perceived not only as informative but also as engaging and motivating. This environment of respect and encouragement played a crucial role in enhancing the teachers' sense of professional identity. As one teacher noted, "The speakers made us feel that we belong, even if we're not education graduates." Such feedback highlights the social and relational impact of the program, affirming the value of well-facilitated sessions in fostering participant engagement. These results align with the findings of Alhassan and Alghofaily (2024), who emphasize the role of facilitator empathy and clarity in sustaining active learning, particularly in hybrid or virtual contexts.

Support for Non-Education Graduates

The enhancement program's inclusive design emerged as a significant factor in its positive reception. Many out-of-field teachers expressed gratitude for a space that recognized their needs and validated their efforts. One participant shared, "Very helpful to us non-education graduates." This sense of affirmation was critical, especially among those who entered the teaching profession through alternative pathways. The training helped build pedagogical confidence and professional legitimacy. These findings support the professional development domain

of the program's framework and resonate with the observations of Roshid and Haider (2024), who argue that empowering teachers through accessible and affirming training programs is essential for effective instructional delivery.

Instructional Innovation and Creativity

Several participants described the training as a catalyst for adopting new and creative instructional approaches. They pointed to modules on performance tasks, technology integration, and student-centered strategies as particularly impactful. One teacher noted, "The sessions gave me the confidence to try project-based learning with my students." This openness to innovation, even among educators teaching outside their specialization, underscores the program's institutional and instructional impact. The results support Soderlund's (2020) argument that 21st-century teaching requires a blend of creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking—competencies that the enhancement program helped cultivate among its participants.

Operational Considerations and Recommendations

In addition to content-related feedback, participants provided insights into how the program's delivery could be improved. Their responses revealed areas for operational refinement, particularly concerning continuity, access, and scheduling. On the need for sustained learning opportunities, one teacher suggested, "There should be online follow-up presentations for those who can't attend." This comment reflects a desire for continuity and deeper engagement beyond initial sessions. Participants also reported technical challenges that affected their ability to fully participate. A teacher shared, "Face-to-face napud unta kay hinay amo signal sa house [I hope the sessions would be face-to-face again because the internet signal at home is weak]." Such difficulties highlight the need for inclusive planning that considers digital limitations, particularly in remote or underserved areas. Scheduling was another concern raised. As one participant stated, "Weekends are family days... difficult to focus." Despite high interest in the training, personal obligations often conflicted with session times, indicating the importance

of flexible and modular learning formats.

These operational concerns are consistent with Marcial and Habalo's (2017) findings on barriers to participation in online and hybrid programs, particularly in terms of access, time, and competing responsibilities. Addressing these structural issues will enhance the program's reach and impact in future iterations.

Synthesis of Themes

The qualitative findings revealed that the enhancement program addressed both instructional and professional development needs of out-of-field teachers in public secondary schools. Participants' feedback demonstrated that the program was not only well-received but also pedagogically meaningful, practically relevant, and professionally affirming. The recurring theme of pedagogical relevance highlighted how the sessions helped teachers connect 21st-century learning principles with their everyday classroom practices. This bridging of theory and application was particularly significant for non-education graduates who lacked formal training but were navigating complex teaching assignments. The role of facilitators emerged as another central theme. Participants described the speakers as engaging, knowledgeable, and respectful, which contributed to an environment of trust and intellectual stimulation. These conditions fostered professional growth and enhanced teaching confidence—especially critical for teachers who often feel isolated due to their out-of-field status.

Inclusivity was also a defining theme. The program validated the roles of non-education graduates in the teaching profession, fostering a renewed sense of legitimacy and empowerment. This professional affirmation contributed to stronger commitment and a greater willingness to innovate in their instructional strategies. Furthermore, teachers reported increased creativity and instructional flexibility, signaling that the program supported their transition from traditional, teacher-centered approaches to more student-centered and output-based learning. These instructional shifts reflect the program's success in cultivating 21st-century teaching skills. Finally, operational concerns provided

constructive recommendations for future implementation. Suggestions for continuity, improved scheduling, and more inclusive delivery formats reflect the practical realities faced by the participants. Addressing these concerns in future iterations of the program can help sustain engagement and maximize learning outcomes.

Taken together, these themes affirm the multidimensional impact of the enhancement program. The findings suggest that professional development initiatives for out-of-field teachers are most effective when they are context-sensitive, grounded in pedagogical standards, and responsive to the lived realities of educators.

CONCLUSION

The enhancement program made a significant contribution to the professional growth of out-of-field teachers by offering content that was not only relevant and timely but also grounded in their everyday classroom realities. High module evaluation ratings and rich qualitative feedback revealed that participants found the sessions effective in bridging pedagogical gaps, enhancing lesson planning, and promoting the use of innovative and learner-centered strategies aligned with 21st-century competencies. More importantly, the program fostered pedagogical fluency and instructional confidence, particularly among non-education graduates, who expressed a renewed sense of legitimacy and motivation in their teaching roles.

Beyond its immediate instructional benefits, the program also demonstrated strong implications for practice. At the curriculum level, it emphasized the value of continuous support for teachers handling subjects beyond their academic specialization. School-level policies may build on this by integrating structured mentoring, allocating time for professional learning communities, and recognizing participation in similar capacity-building programs as part of teacher development plans. These measures can help institutionalize support mechanisms that sustain the competencies built through such interventions.

The findings of this study contribute to the broader discourse on professional development by reinforcing the role of context-responsive, sustained, and inclusive training in addressing inequities among teaching personnel. It confirms that professional development, when grounded in the actual needs and lived realities of teachers, does more than deliver content—it transforms practice and reinforces professional identity. As such, the study strengthens the theoretical foundation for using empowerment-based, outcome-driven models in enhancing teacher competencies and improving education delivery in public schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing on the quantitative and qualitative findings of the evaluation, several strategic recommendations are proposed to improve the design, delivery, and long-term sustainability of professional development programs for out-of-field teachers.

Diversification and Pilot Testing of Delivery Modalities

Future training sessions should adopt hybrid or modular frameworks that are flexible and inclusive of participants' varied schedules and contexts. Based on participant feedback, it is recommended to pilot modular or blended learning formats that combine asynchronous content with synchronous discussions. Offering condensed weekday sessions or mobile-friendly modules would address common scheduling conflicts, particularly among teachers with weekend duties, caregiving responsibilities, or poor internet connectivity. These adjustments will also help reduce dropout rates and enhance learning continuity in future program iterations.

Strengthening Pedagogical Scaffolding

To support non-education graduates in particular, the program should include follow-up interventions designed to reinforce foundational teaching competencies. These should cover core areas such as curriculum planning, classroom management, student assessment, and reflective teaching. Using case-based scenarios

and authentic performance tasks can bridge theory and practice, while enhancing teachers' instructional decision-making and confidence in handling subjects outside their specialization.

Refinement and Expansion of Evaluation Instruments

Post-training evaluation tools must be designed to capture more than satisfaction levels. Future assessments should include indicators for implementation fidelity, perceived self-efficacy, and instructional application of program content. It is also advisable to incorporate a longitudinal component, such as follow-up surveys or classroom observations, to monitor sustained impact over time. These data will inform the continuous refinement of program content, facilitation approaches, and delivery formats.

Institutional Policy Support and Sustainability Measures

To promote continuity and institutional ownership of professional development efforts, educational institutions should integrate training participation into formal incentive structures. This may include awarding continuing professional development (CPD) credits, adjusting teaching loads, or recognizing participation in performance appraisals. Furthermore, establishing or strengthening Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within schools or divisions will help ensure that learning continues through peer mentorship, resource sharing, and reflective dialogue. These communities can serve as platforms for scaling program practices and embedding them into everyday instructional culture.

REFERENCES

- Alhassan, A., & Alghofaily, N. (2024). The impact of facilitators' competencies and characteristics on faculty enhancement activities in Saudi Arabia: A mixed-methods research. *Cureus*, *16*, e54650. <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.54650>.
- Alalid, R. P., Baledio, A. M., Balunan, A., Marilla, F. S. L., Pretencio, K. P. B., Valera, K. D. L., Verginesa, R. V. V., & Sumalinog, G. G. (2025). Teaching beyond degrees of non-teacher education DOST scholars: A phenomenology. *Salud, Ciencia y Tecnología - Serie de Conferencias*, *4*(1510). <https://doi.org/10.56294/sctconf20251510>
- Alhojailan, M. I. (2012). Thematic analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences*, *1*, 39–47.
- Branzuela, M. J., Ayro, E. C., & Cruz-Vidal, M. J. D. (2023). Teaching outside the box: Senior high school teaching experiences, challenges, and windows of innovations of non-social science majors. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, *4*(7), 2210–2222. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.07.06>.
- Caseros, E. P. (2020). The plight of non-education major graduate senior high school teachers [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Central Mindanao University.
- Hennink, M. M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social Science & Medicine*, *292*, 114523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>
- Hobbs, L., & Porsch, R. (2021). Teaching out-of-field: Challenges for teacher education. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *44*(5), 601–610. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0/02619768.2021.1985280>
- Martinez, C. (2021). Developing 21st century teaching skills: A case study of teaching and learning through project-based curriculum. *Cogent Education*, *9*(1), 2024936. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2021.2024936>
- Marcial, D. E., & Habalo, D. P. (2017). Success level of a hybrid training in teacher

- education: Experiences in a developing country. *Information Technologies and Learning Tools*, 62(6), 140-149.
- Ortega, R. A., Vasquez, A. G., & Gilongos, W. S. (2022). An analysis of the performance level of non-education teacher graduates in the K-12 program. *International Journal of Research in Engineering and Science*, 10(3), 86-91.
- Ragas, I. M., Pontillas, P. V., & Comon, J. D. (2024). Skills and roles of teachers in 21st century teaching: Basis for professional development plan. *European Modern Studies Journal*, 8(4), 344-370.
- Raymundo, A. D. (2023). Out-of-field teaching: The silent challenge in the Philippine basic education system. *The URSP Research Journal*, 7(1), 58-74.
- Refuerzo, C. J. A. (2021). Crossing the bridge of teaching: The plight of out-of-field senior high school teachers in career shift. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development*, 10(10), 25-33.
- Roshid, M. M., & Haider, M. Z. (2024). Teaching 21st-century skills in rural secondary schools: From theory to practice. *Heliyon*, 10(9), e30769. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e30769>
- Soderlund, A. (2020). *Implementing 21st century learning and innovation skills in classrooms* (Publication No. 262) [Master's thesis, Northwestern College]. NWCommons.