

Teachers' Adaptability to Vietnam's 2018 General Education Program

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Abstract

Adaptability is a core competency of the 21st century and one of the key determinants of career success. The comprehensive reform introduced by Vietnam's 2018 General Education Program, which shifts education from a content-based approach to a competency-based approach, has created numerous new requirements for teachers and requires them to develop strong adaptability. This study employed a cross-sectional research design, using a survey as the main research method. Data were collected from 726 teachers and educational managers to assess teachers' adaptability to the new requirements of the 2018 General Education Program, which replaced the 2006 General Education Program. The results showed that teachers demonstrated higher levels of social adaptation than work adaptation. The areas in which teachers showed relatively limited adaptability included regulating their own emotions in response to new requirements and implementing competency-based teaching. The comparison by teaching seniority revealed that teachers with 1–5 years of experience faced many difficulties in adapting, although they also had certain advantages. Teachers with 6–20 years of experience showed the highest level of work adaptation, while teachers with 21 years of experience or more demonstrated the highest level of social adaptation. These findings have practical significance, as they provide an important empirical basis for the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training to develop appropriate solutions for improving teachers' professional capacity and supporting their adaptation to educational reform.

Keywords: teacher adaptability, work adaptation, social adaptation, Vietnam's 2018 General Education Program, educational reform.

Адаптивность учителей к Программе общего образования 2018 года во Вьетнаме

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Аннотация

Адаптивность – ключевая компетенция XXI века и один из важнейших факторов успеха в карьере. Комплексная реформа, введенная во Вьетнаме в рамках Программы общего образования 2018 года, переводит образование с контентного подхода на компетентностный и предъявляет множество новых требований к учителям, требуя от них высокого уровня адаптивности. Авторами использовался поперечный исследовательский дизайн, а в качестве основного метода исследования – опрос. Данные были собраны у 726 учителей и руководителей образовательных учреждений для оценки их адаптивности к новым требованиям Программы общего образования 2018 года, заменившей Программу общего образования 2006 года. Результаты показали: учителя демонстрируют более высокий уровень социальной адаптации по сравнению с адаптацией к работе. Области, в которых учителя показали относительно ограниченную адаптивность, – это регулирование собственных эмоций в ответ на новые требования и внедрение компетентностного подхода. Сравнение по стажу работы показало, что учителя с опытом работы от 1 до 5 лет сталкивались со многими трудностями в адаптации, хотя и имели определенные преимущества. Учителя со стажем от 6 до 20 лет продемонстрировали самый высокий уровень адаптации к работе, в то время как учителя со стажем 21 год и более показали самый высокий уровень социальной адаптации. Эти результаты имеют практическое значение, поскольку могут стать основой дальнейшего совершенствования профессиональной компетентности учителей со стороны Министерства образования и профессиональной подготовки Вьетнама, поддержать адаптацию педагогов к образовательной реформе.

Ключевые слова: адаптивность учителя, адаптация к работе, социальная адаптация, Программа общего образования 2018 года во Вьетнаме, образовательная реформа.

Introduction

Globalization, internationalization, the 4.0 Industrial Revolution, are the underlying causes of adaptability becoming one of the important competencies of the 21st century. Organizations nowadays are defined by a changing, dynamic environment in which the demand for adaptive people has become increasingly vital (Edwards & Morrison, 1994; Smith et al., 1997). Many scholars in the social sciences have shown that adaptability is an essential indicator of whether an individual effectively adapts to changes in their social or professional environment (Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). It is considered an essential competency as workers face frequent transitions and harder-to-define prospects throughout their careers (Pulakos et al., 2000). At the beginning of the 21st century, career adaptability is considered a necessary resource to help an individual develop a successful career (O'Connell et al., 2008; Korthagen, 2017), respond positively to challenges at work, and is a determinant of job satisfaction and a major influence on the decision to stick with work (Chan & Mai, 2015). In training, teachers' adaptability is confirmed to be an important factor, refers to the ability of teachers to adjust themselves in response to changes (Martin et al., 2012), or their resilience in response to uncertain and unstable changes.

In Vietnam, the Ministry of Education and Training issued the 2018 General Education Program to replace the previous 2006 program, with the goal of ensuring the development of learners' qualities and capacities; focusing on practicing and applying the knowledge and skills learned to solve problems in learning and life; highly integrating in lower classes, gradually differentiating in upper classes; and promoting each student's initiative and potential through methods and forms of educational organization (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018). With those requirements, the 2018 General Education Program requires teachers to constantly adjust and adapt, while also introducing new needs and challenges for teachers because: (1) Teachers must participate in professional fostering and learning due to the emergence of numerous new educational contents and methods; (2) Teachers must conduct research, select a set of textbooks from a variety of options rather than relying solely on a national set of textbooks as in the past, modify the nature of learning activities and classroom interactions to accommodate the diversity of students, and look for a variety of materials to clarify or illustrate the subject contents; (3) Teachers must adapt to deal with unexpected situations in classroom management; (4) Teachers must engage effectively with colleagues in changing program settings, or make a shift in role; (5) Rather than having most teachers use the same curriculum and lesson plans for years, the General Education Program 2018 requires teachers to make more extensive changes and adjustments. It is necessary to reconcile the old and the new, particularly in the early phases of program implementation. Although the 2018 General Education Program has been implemented, there have been few research to develop methods to assess teachers' adaptability to the program. Although the 2018 General Education Program in Vietnam has been applied for 7 years, there has been no comprehensive and in-depth study on teachers' adaptability to the new education program. Moreover, there been no study discovering differences in teachers' adaptability based on their seniority in order to develop appropriate professional development measures.

Stemming from that, this study was conducted to assess teachers' adaptability to the 2018 General Education Program in Vietnam, and to compare the differences in adaptability according to seniority.

Questions of the study:

- 1) To what extent do teachers adapt to the 2018 General Education Program?
- 2) What is the difference in teachers' adaptability according to seniority?

Assessing teachers' adaptability to the 2018 General Education Program is of practical significance, contributing to the adjustment of the method of training and fostering

general education teachers who are engaged in the education program renovation in Vietnam.

Results

The context of general education program innovation in Vietnam and the new requirements on teachers' adaptability

In 2018, the Ministry of Education and Training promulgated the new General Education Program in Vietnam to replace the old 2016 Program, which included the General Program, 27 subject programs and educational activities. As a result, the new general education program features some legacy points and many other aspects that differ from the current education program. From the school year 2019–2020, the implementation of the curriculum and textbooks according to the General Education Program will begin with grade 1. By the school year 2023–2024, the program will be implemented in grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11. Thus, with only 1 year left, the roadmap to change textbooks in Vietnam will be completed.

Develop and promulgate the 2018 General Education Program to meet the goal of renovating general education in accordance with Resolution 29 of the Party Central Committee and Resolution 88 of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The 2018 General Education Program has 10 new points related to the views and objectives of the General Education Program; Educational content and duration; Teaching methods; Role of textbooks; Role of teachers; Requirements for students; Requirements for parents; Proactive role of educational institutions; Conditions on teaching facilities and equipment; Local responsibilities and execute the motto “learning by doing, learning by experience” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018).

Thus, it is apparent that the new general education program in Vietnam has compelled teachers to adapt a lot from actively picking appropriate textbooks, changing methods and forms of teaching methods, and organizing classroom management, changing both the relationship between teachers and students. Teachers' roles have altered dramatically from “teachers” to “organizers, examiners, and orienteers” in students' learning activities. To more effectively and thoroughly implement the requirements of the method of “learning by doing, learning by experience” in order to meet the requirements of teaching in the direction of capacity and quality development, is the core issue of program innovation. In other words, teachers must adapt to new requirements and continue their professional development.

This study is of great significance to the Vietnamese education system, providing the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam with a realistic picture of teachers' adaptability and the differences in adaptability based on their seniority. This is an important foundation for the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam to develop an annual professional development plan nationwide. Thanks to findings of this study, Departments and Divisions of Education and Training are possibly design on-site professional development strategies for teachers, aiming to accelerate the process of adapting to the new general education program.

Literature Review

Career adaptability

There are various ways to conceptualize adaptive competence and adaptability. Adaptation is the constant process by which people adjust their behavior in order to develop harmonious relationships between themselves and all other people, which is the appropriate state created by adaptation (Levin, 2015; Räsänen et al., 2020). Super and Knasel (1981) defined the term career adaptability in 1981 as adults' “willingness

to respond to changes in work and working conditions". Savickas (2005) defines career adaptability as a psychosocial construct that denotes an individual's capacity to respond to current work, develop future work, switch careers, and resolve work stalemates. Adaptability structures are used to assess an individual's strength in readiness to prepare themselves for future career changes (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). He also improves upon the theoretical structure by presenting four adaptability resources, also known as adaptability: interest, control, curiosity, and confidence. Curiosity is the exploration of self and different roles, and confidence is the belief that the individual can make choices and achieve his or her goals.

Career adaptability is a central concept in career construction theory (Savickas, 2005; 2013) and more broadly in the field of occupational psychology (Geraedts et al., 2016). Career adaptability is a good fit because it facilitates responsiveness and proactively seeking a better job. Specifically, it enables job searching and creates options to improve one's career. Based on career construction theory, career adaptability is conceptualized as a set of "attitudes, competencies, and behaviors that individuals use to adjust themselves to work that suits them" (Savickas, 2013). According to career construction theory, career adaptability responses occur along four interrelated dimensions, adaptation is a multidimensional psychosocial construct consisting of four self-regulatory strengths that allow the individual to prepare for current and expected career changes. Career concerns are related to the use of time to prepare for the future, such as building a career vision. Career control refers to a sense of ownership and responsibility that impacts one's career. Career curiosity refers to an interest in self-discovery and potential opportunities in one's surroundings. Finally, career confidence entails following one's goals and predicting achievement in the face of challenges.

Martin et al. (2012) proposed an adaptation model consisting of three factors related to the psychological attributes of adaptation: adaptive awareness, attitude and behavior. The manifestation of adaptability is expressed through behavior, the origin of behavior is always based on perceptions (depending on the intellect, beliefs, values of the individual) and attitudes (personal feelings in front of objective objects). In particular, cognitive adaptability refers to an individual's ability to adjust their thinking to cope positively with change, novelty, and uncertainty; adaptability involves changing emotions in response to environmental change, uncertainty, and novelty; behavioral adaptability refers to an individual's ability to solve problems and take action to meet new situations and new demands.

According to career construction theory career adaptability is the backbone concept in career construction theory and more broadly in the field of occupational psychology. It is defined as "a psychosocial structure that denotes an individual's ability to cope with current and future work, career changes, and work stalemates". Career adaptability creates self-regulation, transactional competence, and flexibility that allows workers to successfully address unfamiliar, complex, and unclear issues throughout their career. Career adaptability is a multidimensional *psychosocial resource*, manifested as a set of four competencies (interest, control, curiosity, and confidence) that help individuals effectively manage career-related tasks and transitions throughout their working lives, career adaptability reflects a range of attitudes, behaviors, and supportive competencies that proactively adapt to situations or changes at work (Savickas, 2005; 2013).

Career construction theory (Savickas, 2005) has shown that the Psychosocial resource of adaptation consists of 04 factors: Adaptive readiness, adaptability resources, adapting responses and adaptation results. Highlights of career adaptability in career development theory in general and Savickas's in particular include: First: willing to change, have different resources to manage change, more or less show change when change is needed

(Savickas, 2005). Second: Adaptive readiness is a “flexible, changeable personality trait”. Third: Adaptability resources, such as concern, control, curiosity, and confidence, self-regulation. Fourth: Adapting responses are actual actions/behaviors that help individuals meet changing conditions. Fifth: Adaptation results are successful outcomes of adaptation.

Career adaptability is a psychosocial structure that signifies an individual’s readiness and actions in response to current and imminent professional development tasks, it gives people the ability to self-regulate, flexibility, allowing workers to successfully solve unfamiliar, complex problems throughout their career. Career adaptation is positively correlated with goal pursuit, adjustment, and active coping. Here, positive correlates include motivation (Pouyaud et al., 2012), promotion regulatory focus (Van Vianen et al., 2012), better response to adversity (Tian & Fan, 2014), hope and optimism (Buyukgoze-Kavas, 2014), and persistent goal pursuit and flexible goal adjustment (Tolentino et al., 2013).

The new 2018 General Education Program in Vietnam takes a competency-based approach, concentrating on learners’ competencies, which differs from the prior approach to program. This has led to a lot of changes from content to teaching methods, new concepts and ways of doing things such as “experience”, “integration”, “capacity development” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2018), which requires teachers to prepare themselves with a willingness to change old habits, be open to receiving new general education programs, not hesitate to try new things, be willing to accompany and improve their expertise to successfully perform assigned tasks. Teachers’ adaptability is demonstrated not just via awareness, but also through certain attitudes and behaviors. Adaptive acts must fully exhibit the essential qualities of adaptation, such as interest, control, curiosity, and confidence. With all such characteristics, general teachers’ adaptability to the 2018 General Education Program is compatible with the adaptive conceptual content that is the theory of competency mentioned and analyzed above (Martin et al., 2012; Savickas, 2005; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). This is an appropriate basis for us to develop a tool and implementation to assess teachers’ adaptability to the General Education Program in Vietnam, after the Vietnamese Government and Ministry of Education and Training decided to apply the new general education program.

Methodology

Participants

The sample was selected using a convenient random method while still ensuring the representativeness. The teachers participating in the survey were general education teachers of schools across 3 regions: the North, the Central and the South of Vietnam. Specifically, 2 provinces in the North: Hanoi and Ninh Binh; 2 provinces in the Central: Thanh Hoa and Nghe An; 2 provinces in the South: Ho Chi Minh City and Dak Lak.

The seniority of participating teachers ranged from 1 year to their full seniority, with a total of 726 general education teachers and administrative staff. The research sample was randomly selected according to different ages from 1 to the end of seniority, including 726 general education teachers and management officers. In which, there are 607 general education teachers (83.60%), and 119 management officers (16.40%). The assessment of teachers’ adaptability was carried out on both research samples. The comparison by seniority is implemented on the teacher samples. Among 607 general education teachers, teachers with a seniority of 1 to 5 years include 195 people (32.12%); teachers with a seniority of 6 to 21 years include 287 people (47.28%); teachers with a seniority of 21 years or more include 125 people (20.60%). Teachers are those who have directly participated in teaching according to the new textbook program for at least 1 year.

Scale

The adaptability scale is developed into two main parts: job adaptation and social adaptation as proposed by Martin et al. (2012) with 23 items. In particular, the implications of pillar-based adaptation are the four psychosocial adaptation resources including: looking to the future (concerns), knowing which job to pursue (control), considering options (curiosity) and having the capacity to take on the activity needed to achieve career goals (confidence) (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). The adaptability scale is designed on a 5-level Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Data analysis

Mathematical statistical methods were used to analyze the data and validate data reliability. Data from the questionnaire survey were used as the primary data source, processed using SPSS software version 26.0. Cronbach's alpha test was used to assess the reliability of the scale and the type of variables, if the obtained values were not within the allowable limits. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.81 (i.e., within the allowable limit of >0.6 – <0.9). This reliability test allowed the authors to confirm the reliability of the scale.

The survey results were analyzed according to the descriptive statistical parameters of mean score, and standard deviation. In addition, the authors compared the adaptability of Vietnamese teachers of the three groups of teachers: those with 1 to 5 years, 6 to 20 years, and those with 21 years or more of experience. Independent samples test was used to test the three groups of teachers to learn the differences in their adaptability.

General Education Teachers' Adaptability to the Requirements of the 2018 General Education Curriculum Reform

Table 1. Evaluation Results of Teachers' Adaptability to the 2018 General Education Curriculum

No.	Job Adaptability	Teacher		Management Officer		P-value
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
1	Ready to change to adapt to new working conditions when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,72	0,71	4,05	0,59	0.00
2	Find multiple ways to understand the new requirements and workload	3,76	0,72	4,13	0,62	0.00
3	Change to adapt to the new requirements of integrated teaching activities	3,69	0,69	4,05	0,56	0.00
4	Change to adapt to all requirements and methods of organizing experiential activities	3,59	0,71	3,89	0,49	0.00
5	Change to adapt to the local education program	3,67	0,70	3,82	0,53	0.00
6	Change to adapt to new classroom management methods when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,71	0,69	4,02	0,56	0.00
7	Ready for the role of autonomy in designing subject curricula	3,75	0,70	4,03	0,60	0.00

No.	Job Adaptability	Teacher		Management Officer		P-value
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
8	Ready to support my colleagues in professional development to implement the curriculum	3,69	0,76	4,21	0,69	0.01
9	Easily carry out competency-oriented teaching	3,61	,0,74	3,90	0,51	0.00
10	Easily organize educational activities through learning by doing, learning through experience	3,52	0,72	3,69	0,53	0.00
11	Easily apply information technology in teaching	3,73	0,77	3,87	0,56	0.00
12	Easily provide counseling and support to students facing difficulties with the new curriculum	3,66	0,70	3,98	0,48	0.00
13	Quickly embrace new elements of the program without being surprised	3,68	0,69	3,90	0,48	0.00
14	Easily adjust my emotions to new requirements	3,66	0,67	3,90	0,44	0.02
15	Proactively acquire new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues	3,83	0,61	3,98	0,47	0.00
16	Strive to overcome difficulties to meet new activity requirements effectively	3,80	0,61	3,97	0,49	0.00
17	Participate in professional learning and am expected to continuously integrate new knowledge into teaching practices	3,86	0,60	4,02	0,40	0.00
18	Actively and positively overcome difficulties and obstacles	3,82	0,62	3,97	0,49	0.00
19	Always strive to find solutions to perform well and manage work-related stress	3,86	0,61	4,00	0,41	0.00
Total Job Adaptability		3,71	0,64	3,96	0,52	0.00
<i>Social Adaptability</i>						
20	Clearly perceive my position and role when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,86	0,63	4,10	0,51	0.00
21	Handle changes in relationships with students well when implementing the curriculum	3,87	0,59	4,12	0,49	0.00
22	Handle changes in relationships with colleagues well	3,93	0,62	4,18	0,50	0.00
23	Handle changes in relationships with students' parents well	3,88	0,63	4,10	0,44	0.01
Total Social Adaptability		3,89	0,61	4,1	0,44	0.00
Overall Total		3,80	0,62	4,03	0,48	0.00

Regarding Job Adaptability
– Aspects where teachers adapt well

The table results above show that general education teachers adapt best to the following factors: Participation in professional learning and being expected to continuously integrate new knowledge into teaching practices (mean: 3.86); Always striving to find solutions to perform well (mean: 3.86); Proactively and positively overcoming difficulties and obstacles (mean: 3.82); Proactively acquiring new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues (mean: 3.83); Striving to overcome difficulties to meet new activity requirements effectively (mean: 3.80). The highest adaptability score is for: Participation in professional learning and being expected to continuously integrate new knowledge into teaching practices (mean: 3.86) and always striving to find solutions to perform well (mean: 3.86).

– Aspects where teachers do not adapt well

General education teachers have lower adaptability to the following factors: Easily adjusting their emotions to new requirements (mean: 3.66); Easily teaching in a competency-oriented manner (mean: 3.61); Easily organizing experiential activities (mean: 3.52); Changing to adapt to all requirements and methods of organizing experiential activities (mean: 3.59). The lowest score is for easily organizing experiential activities (mean: 3.52).

Regarding Social Adaptability

The results above show that the social adaptability of general education teachers is better than job adaptability (mean: 3.89 compared to 3.71). The best adaptability aspect is: Handling changes in relationships with colleagues well (3.93), followed by Handling changes in relationships with students well when implementing the program (3.87).

Comparing the two samples of teachers and management staff shows a significant similarity in their evaluation opinions. The T-test results indicate a statistically significant difference with $p < 0.05$.

Comparison of teachers' adaptability to the 2018 General Education Curriculum by years of service

Table 2. Comparison of teachers' adaptability by years of service

No.	Adaptability Content	1 to 5 years		6 to 20 years		21 years or more	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Adaptability							
1	Ready to change to adapt to new working conditions when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,74	0,72	3,67	0,68	2,33	0,60
2	Find multiple ways to understand the new requirements and workload.	3,75	0,75	3,83	0,61	3.00	0,41
3	Change to adapt to the new requirements of integrated teaching activities	3,70	0,70	3,67	0,64	2,65	0,53
4	Change to adapt to all requirements and methods of organizing experiential activities	3,54	0,74	3,75	0,59	2,51	0,27

No.	Adaptability Content	1 to 5 years		6 to 20 years		21 years or more	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Adaptability							
5	Change to adapt to the local education program	3,60	0,73	3,91	0,52	3,88	0,52
6	Change to adapt to new classroom management methods when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,69	0,71	3,75	0,59	3,89	0,10
7	Ready for the role of autonomy in designing subject curricula	3,71	0,73	3,88	0,56	2,67	0,90
8	Ready to support my colleagues in professional development to implement the curriculum	3,71	0,75	3,61	0,80	2,78	0,62
9	Easily carry out competency-oriented teaching	3,57	0,76	3,72	0,62	3,24	0,48
10	Easily organize educational activities through learning by doing, learning through experience	3,45	0,74	3,71	0,60	2,58	0,31
11	Easily apply information technology in teaching	3,74	0,78	3,71	0,72	2,19	0,56
12	Easily provide counseling and support to students facing difficulties with the new curriculum	3,63	0,71	3,74	0,66	2,67	0,22
13	Quickly embrace new elements of the program without being surprised	3,64	0,72	3,80	0,54	2,99	0,65
14	Easily adjust my emotions to new requirements	3,62	0,70	3,75	0,54	2,89	0,77
15	Proactively acquire new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues	3,81	0,64	3,89	0,47	3,80	0,51
16	Strive to overcome difficulties to meet new activity requirements effectively	3,81	0,62	3,75	0,56	2,91	0,41
17	Participate in professional learning and am expected to continuously integrate new knowledge into teaching practices	4,03	0,16	3,32	1,03	2,78	0,27
18	Actively and positively overcome difficulties and obstacles	3,82	0,61	3,95	0,53	3,06	0,87
19	Always strive to find solutions to perform well and manage work-related stress	3,81	0,62	3,84	0,61	2,84	0,73
Average Job Adaptability		3,57	0,73	3,75	0,49	2,78	0,51

No.	<i>Adaptability Content</i>	<i>1 to 5 years</i>		<i>6 to 20 years</i>		<i>21 years or more</i>	
	<i>Social Adaptability</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
20	Clearly perceive my position and role when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum	3,82	0,62	3,97	0,56	3,90	0,41
21	Handle changes in relationships with students well when implementing the program	3,87	0,62	3,81	0,67	3,92	0,27
22	Handle changes in relationships with colleagues well	3,82	0,61	4,00	0,54	3,99	0,87
23	Handle changes in relationships with students' parents well	3,88	0,64	4,04	0,53	3,89	0,73
Average Social Adaptability		3,84	0,59	3,87	0,71	3,92	0,57
Overall Average		3.75	1,03	3,81	0,54	3.35	0.54

Regarding Job Adaptability

The data analysis comparing three groups of teachers with different years of service highlights the following key points:

For teachers with 1 to 5 years of service

The aspects with the highest adaptability scores, ranked from highest to lowest, include: Participation in professional learning and being expected to continuously integrate new knowledge into teaching practices (mean: 4.03); Proactively and positively overcoming difficulties and obstacles (mean: 3.82); Proactively acquiring new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues (mean: 3.81); Striving to overcome difficulties to meet new activity requirements effectively (mean: 3.82); Always striving to find solutions to perform well (mean: 3.82); Easily applying information technology in teaching (mean: 3.74). Thus, it is clear that new teachers with 1 to 5 years of service are highly proactive and positive in professional learning, learning from colleagues, and striving to overcome challenges to adapt to the 2018 General Education Curriculum. Additionally, they are good at applying information technology in teaching.

For teachers with 6 to 20 years of service

There are differences compared to those with 1 to 5 years of service. Teachers with 6 to 20 years of service are experienced and have long-term professional experience. The aspects with the highest adaptability scores, ranked from highest to lowest, include: Proactively and positively overcoming difficulties and obstacles (mean: 3.95); Adapting to the local education program (mean: 3.91); Proactively acquiring new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues (mean: 3.89); Being ready for the role of autonomy in designing subject curricula (mean: 3.88); Always striving to find solutions to perform well (mean: 3.84); Understanding the new requirements and workload (mean: 3.83); Quickly embracing new elements of the program without being surprised (mean: 3.80). This group stands out for their resilience, willingness to face challenges in the new general education program in Vietnam, efforts to overcome difficulties, eagerness to learn from colleagues, and confidence in their work.

For teachers with 21 years of service or more

The aspects with the highest adaptability scores, ranked from highest to lowest, include: Adapting to new classroom management methods when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum (mean: 3.89); Adapting to the local education program (mean: 3.88); Proactively acquiring new experiences and behavioral methods from colleagues (mean: 3.80); Easily carrying out competency-oriented teaching (mean: 3.24); Proactively and positively overcoming difficulties and obstacles (mean: 3.06); Understanding the new requirements and workload (mean: 3.00). Aspects with lower adaptability scores include: Easily applying information technology in teaching (mean: 2.19); Adapting to new working conditions when implementing the 2018 general education curriculum (mean: 2.33).

Comparing the average adaptability across these three groups shows that, regarding job adaptability, teachers with 6 to 20 years of service have the best job and social adaptability.

Regarding Social Adaptability

Results lean towards teachers with 21 years of service or more, who have the highest average social adaptability score among the three groups, with an average score of 3.92. The group with the lowest score is teachers with 1 to 5 years of service, with an average score of 3.84.

Overall, when comparing the average scores of the three groups, teachers with 6 to 20 years of service have the highest average score (3.81), followed by those with 1 to 5 years of service, while teachers with 21 or more years of experience have the lowest average score (3.75). In terms of job adaptability, teachers with 6 to 21 years of service have the highest adaptability. Regarding social adaptability alone, teachers with over 21 years of service have the highest adaptability.

Discussion

The change in the general education curriculum in Vietnam in 2018 marks a significant milestone in the development of national education history. The 2018 General Education Curriculum aims to shift from content-based knowledge delivery to developing learners' qualities and competencies through integrated and differentiated teaching, learning by doing, and experiential learning. Therefore, the challenges for teachers in implementing the new curriculum can be seen as new and difficult tasks they encounter in teaching. To overcome these challenges, teachers need significant effort and sometimes support and assistance. Such changes require teachers to continuously adapt to take on new roles and be ready to change and adapt in their careers, while also exploring tools to self-manage their work and career development (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Pulakos et al., 2000).

Since the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam issued the new General Education Program in 2018, this is the first study to comprehensively assess teachers' adaptability in Vietnam. The assessment tool for teachers' adaptability was built on the basis of inheriting and developing the theoretical model of adaptability of Martin et al. (2012), Savickas (2005), Savickas and Porfeli (2012). The key findings indicate: First, although adaptability has not reached a high level, teachers generally have a readiness to face new tasks, participate in changes in work and working conditions at various levels (Savickas, 2013), and strive to overcome difficulties and obstacles. They actively learn from colleagues to adapt to the new requirements of the 2018 General Education Curriculum. Second, the aspects where teachers adapt well include: Participation in professional learning; Constantly seeking solutions to perform well; Proactively and positively overcoming difficulties and obstacles; Proactively acquiring new experiences

and behavioral methods from colleagues; Striving to overcome difficulties to meet new activity requirements effectively. Third, the aspects where teachers do not adapt well include: Adjusting their own emotions to new requirements; Implementing competency-oriented teaching; Organizing experiential activities.

The reasons for the low adaptability of teachers stem from the new challenges posed by the general education curriculum. Firstly, the goal of the new general education curriculum is to comprehensively develop students' qualities and competencies, requiring teachers to significantly change their teaching methods. Secondly, the implementation of integrated teaching is required. The new general education curriculum implements integrated teaching in three directions: Intra-disciplinary integration: integrating different areas of knowledge within a single subject, combining knowledge acquisition with skill training. Interdisciplinary integration: integrating knowledge from related subjects and sciences. At a basic level, this means relating taught knowledge to related knowledge in teaching. At an advanced level, it involves building integrated subjects. This requires teachers to constantly learn and change, as well as continuously improve their professional skills.

Comparison by Seniority: Young teachers who have just entered the profession show good adaptability in several aspects: they exhibit significant proactivity and enthusiasm in professional learning, learning from colleagues, and striving to overcome challenges to adapt to the 2018 General Education Curriculum. Additionally, they have a strong ability to apply information technology in teaching. Besides, young teachers also have many difficulties in the adaptation process. In addition, young teachers also have many difficulties in the adaptation process, because the new General Education Program is a problem that they have not been trained in teacher training. New teachers take on all the tasks of a veteran teacher including teaching and managing all students (Worthy, 2005). This finding supports the view that young teachers need full support, only the strongest and most determined teachers will succeed (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009).

Teachers with 6 to 20 years of experience demonstrate the best social and job adaptability compared to the other two groups. Teachers with 21 or more years of experience demonstrate the highest social adaptability. Comparing the average scores of the three groups: the group of teachers with 6 to 20 years of experience has the highest average score, followed by teachers with 1 to 5 years of experience, and the lowest average score is among teachers with over 21 years of experience. This result is consistent with recommendations from researchers on career development interventions and adaptability in mature workers (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Considering job adaptability alone, teachers with 6 to 21 years of experience exhibit the highest adaptability. When considering social adaptability alone, teachers with over 21 years of experience have the highest adaptability. A commonality among all three groups of teachers is their active learning from colleagues and striving to complete their work. In the context of changes to the education curriculum in Vietnam, teachers' ability to adjust and their efforts are highly anticipated. This contributes to affirming personal responsibility in actively managing one's career and implies that adaptability is essential for success (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). One of the professional identity traits of teachers is that professional competence development is carried out in the professional community. Teachers' participation in this educational community affects the stability of teaching methods and teachers' professional development efforts, so for teachers, professional adaptation is formed in the professional community is recognized (Bagga, 2023). Besides, teachers' self-confidence also plays a mediating role in the relationship between professional adaptability and career optimism (McLennan et al., 2017; Tolentino et al., 2014). Proactive personality has also been confirmed as a path to develop teachers' professional adaptability (Wen et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The findings of the study on teachers' adaptive capacity to the 2018 general education program are important in providing a picture of the current situation. These findings indicate that alongside the development and implementation of the general education curriculum, the Ministry of Education and Training in Vietnam needs to focus on and develop long-term strategies for enhancing teachers' professional competencies in Vietnam. When facing new demands initially, the most crucial aspect is creating a readiness to adapt. However, throughout the process and to address the root of adaptability, the most important aspect is to enhance professional skills, as confidence is a key component of adaptability (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

These research results provide suggestions on the need to pay attention to young teachers when implementing the new general education program. "Novice teacher," also known as an apprentice or a beginner, refers to a licensed professional educator whose seniority does not exceed five years of teaching (Räsänen et al., 2020). They are not thoroughly proficient and need ongoing assistance. Many educational researchers have indicated that adaptability is one of the problems faced by Novice teacher.

Although the research results have certain limitations due to only considering the scope of quantitative research results, it is important in providing a practical picture of the adaptive capacity of Vietnamese teachers to the requirements of the new General Education Program. This is an important suggestion to help the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training prepare the annual teacher professional capacity development program "If we are to facilitate the professional development of teachers, we must understand the process by which teachers grow professionally and the conditions that support and promote that growth." (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002), when designing the professional development process, there is a need to focus on teachers' needs, focuses, prospects, emotions, motivations, and dreams (Korthagen, 2017). A better understanding of the core components of the process is crucial for designing an effective, efficient, inclusive, and continuous professional development process for teachers. Finally, the findings of this study are of great significance in providing practical grounds for the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam to design a long-term plan on enhancing professional competence for teachers based on their adaptability.

Conclusion of the Ethics Committee

The research program and protocol of the study entitled "Teachers' Adaptability to Vietnam's 2018 General Education Program" were reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Physics, Hanoi National University of Education. The approval was confirmed in the Research Ethics Confirmation Letter dated October 29, 2024, issued by the Faculty of Physics, Hanoi National University of Education, and signed by Prof. Dr. Do Danh Bich, Head of the Faculty of Physics. The confirmation letter states that the study poses no ethical issues. The study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles in educational research involving human participants. Throughout the research process, the privacy and confidentiality of the participants were respected and ensured. The research methodology did not violate any ethical principles and did not cause harm to the participants or the community. All participants provided their consent after being fully informed about the purpose and process of the research. The collected data were used solely for scientific research purposes. No personal identifying information of the participants was disclosed in the manuscript or in any related publications.

There is no conflict of interest.

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