

Transforming Region-3 LHEIs: Change and Innovation Theories on Work Structures

Menandro T. Manalo, Pambayang Dalubhasaan ng Marilao, Philippines
Dolores DC. Cajucom, Pambayang Dalubhasaan ng Marilao, Philippines
Joan Valerie G. Javier, Pambayang Dalubhasaan ng Marilao, Philippines

The Asian Conference on Education 2025
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

Grounded in Change Theory and Diffusion of Innovation Theory, this study examined the organizational readiness of 16 Local Higher Education Institutions in Region III to implement Flexible Work Arrangements to ensure institutional continuity during disasters and national emergencies. Using descriptive-evaluative, descriptive-comparative, and descriptive-correlational research designs, data were collected from 1,945 teaching and non-teaching personnel. Results showed that teaching personnel demonstrated high awareness of FWAs across offline, online, and blended learning modalities, while non-teaching personnel exhibited high awareness of flexiplace, compressed workweek, skeleton workforce, and work-shifting arrangements. Both groups presented high organizational readiness supported by very high capability levels in soft and hard skills among teaching staff and high capability levels among non-teaching staff. The most frequently cited challenges were inability to meet performance demands (93.6%), mental stress due to limited in-person interaction (87%), and distractions arising from personal concerns (80.10%). Significant differences in capability were found across age, sex, employment status, length of service, academic rank, and educational attainment ($p < .05$). Moreover, a strong positive correlation existed between personnel capabilities and organizational readiness ($r = 0.751$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that higher competencies are associated with greater preparedness for Flexible Work Arrangement implementation and highlighting the need for a strategic action plan focusing on governance, human resource development, digital infrastructure, and resource management.

Keywords: flexible work arrangements, local higher education institutions, organizational readiness, Diffusion of Innovation, Change Theory

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

Central Luzon, or Region 3 of the Philippines is considered as one of the most hazard prone regions of the country. According to the Pacific Disaster Center (2021), it faces high to very high exposure to natural hazards such typhoons, floods, earthquakes, and storm surges. These recurring disasters threaten infrastructure, public safety, and essential services such as education.

In April 2024, Region 3 recorded the highest number of public school closures due to extreme heat intensified by El Niño, resulting in 1,124 class suspensions (Marcelo, 2024). Similarly, the frequently flooding has disrupted academic calendars, encouraging institutions to consider flexible work and learning arrangements (Unson & Cariaso, 2024).

In response, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) released directives such as CMO No. 16, s. 2022, and No. 4, s. 2023 promoting Learning Continuity Plans (LCPs), hybrid instructions, and modular delivery. These emphasize synchronous, asynchronous, and flexible modalities to ensure educational delivery during crises. However, successful implementation depends not only on technology but also on the readiness of institutions and personnel.

While some higher education institutions (HEIs) have made progress toward digital transformation and flexible work adoption, many still face challenges such as change resistance, limited digital literacy, psychological stress, and blurred work-life boundaries (Chen, 2021). These issues raise important questions about the ability of HEIs, especially in hazard exposed regions like Central Luzon, to institutionalize Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs).

The study draws on Lewin's (1947) Change Theory and Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovation Theory to understand how the HEIs respond to organizational change. Lewin's three-stage model – unfreezing, changing, and refreezing -helps analyze institutional transformational processes. Roger's theory offers a framework to examine how innovations like FWAs are adopted, spread, and sustained within organization systems.

The research assesses the organizational readiness by evaluating the awareness and capability of both teaching and non-teaching personnel. It also explores how individual and institutional profiles affect readiness and proposes action plans to support sustainable flexible work arrangement systems.

The study relates to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 13: Climate Action, SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. The findings are important for HEIs, school leaders, policymakers, and staff. The study provides data-driven insights for institutional strategic planning, compliance with Commission on Higher Education mandates, and effective digital transformation ultimately contributing to educational resilience in disaster-prone areas. It is also supporting to student learning during crises, adapting flexible responses to climate change, and addressing safe workplace for teaching and non-teaching personnel.

Literature Review

The transformation of work structures through Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) has gained increased attention in higher education institutions (HEIs), particularly following the

COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the adoption of digitally enabled work models to sustain operations (OECD, 2021). As HEIs sought continuity amid disruptions, flexibility became both a practical necessity and a strategic response.

Lewin's Change Theory outlines organizational change through three stages: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing (Burnes, 2020). This framework provides a structured approach for HEIs adopting FWAs by assessing readiness, implementing flexible or hybrid models, and institutionalizing changes through policies and culture. In Region 3 HEIs, this model supports sustainable implementation by ensuring changes are embedded over time.

Complementing Lewin's model, Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003) explains how innovations spread within organizations through attributes such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Applying these attributes helps HEIs align FWAs with institutional culture and operational systems, facilitating smoother adoption.

Studies emphasize that digital preparedness and workforce agility are critical to successful flexible work implementation (OECD, 2021). Charalampous et al. (2019) highlight the importance of supportive structures, digital skills, and adequate ICT infrastructure. In the Philippine context, HEIs face challenges including limited infrastructure, insufficient faculty training, unequal access to technology, and unclear flexible learning policies (Lucero et al., 2022).

Javier (2020) found that organizational readiness in Philippine HEIs is influenced by staff qualifications, experience, academic rank, and institutional characteristics such as size and location. Urban institutions with advanced IT infrastructure are generally more adaptable to FWAs than smaller or rural campuses. These findings underscore the need for capacity building and strategic alignment in adopting flexible work systems.

Lewin's Change Theory and Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory emphasize the importance of organizational readiness, leadership support, and contextual alignment for successful FWA adoption in HEIs, particularly in Region 3.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two theories: the Five-Message Component Model for Managing Readiness for Change by Armenakis et al. (2000) and Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003). Together, these frameworks explain how local higher education institutions (LHEIs) in Region 3 can transition toward flexible work arrangements.

The Five-Message Component Model identifies five key elements of change readiness: discrepancy (need for change), appropriateness (fit of the solution), efficacy (confidence in implementation), principal support (leadership backing), and personal valence (perceived personal benefit). These components assess readiness at both individual and organizational levels.

Self-efficacy, rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, reflects employees' confidence in managing flexible schedules and using digital tools essential for FWAs (Cherry, 2023). Principal support reinforces readiness by fostering commitment and innovation through visible leadership backing (Armenakis et al., 2000; Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how FWAs are adopted across groups—innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards—based on perceived benefits, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. Innovators and early adopters often drive initial adoption, while others follow as positive outcomes become evident (Lamonte, 2022).

Integrating these theories provides a comprehensive framework for understanding readiness and adoption of FWAs, combining internal change preparedness with innovation diffusion processes. This integrated approach offers a structured and evidence-based guide for managing flexible work transformation in LHEIs in Region 3.

Methodology and Methods

This study employed a mixed descriptive approach incorporating evaluative, comparative, and correlational designs to assess the readiness and capabilities of personnel in 16 local higher education institutions-LHEIs in Region 3 for implementing Flexible Work Arrangements-FWAs. The descriptive-evaluative method assessed respondents' awareness and capability, while the comparative design examined differences across demographic profiles. The correlational design determined the relationships between institutional profiles and organizational readiness (Scribbr, 2021).

The locale of the study included all 16 LHEIs in Region 3 affiliated with the Association of Local Colleges and Universities-ALCU and ALCUCOA. A total of 1,945 personnel participated, achieving an 86.99% response rate from the target population of 2,236. Among the participants, 1,681 were teaching and 264 were non-teaching personnel, with a diversity of employment statuses and academic ranks.

A researcher-made questionnaire, grounded in relevant literature, was used to collect data across seven sections: institutional profile, respondent demographics, awareness of FWAs, capability (hard and soft skills), organizational readiness, and implementation challenges. A four-point Likert scale assessed all constructs.

Instrument validation was performed by three domain experts, and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha confirmed high internal consistency across all dimensions such as organizational readiness: $\alpha = 0.918$; overall reliability = 0.909).

In terms of ethical considerations, the study adhered to standards. Principles of informed consent, autonomy, justice, confidentiality, and anonymity were strictly observed, with data coded and securely stored in compliance with The Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) in the Philippines aims to protect individual personal information in information and communications systems in both the government and private sectors.

The data gathering procedure included formal coordination with institutional heads, questionnaire distribution, and retrieval with follow-up mechanisms. Data were encoded, statistically treated, and presented in tabular and graphical formats to support interpretation.

Hypotheses Development

1. ***There is a significant difference in respondents' awareness of FWAs when grouped according to profile variables such as age, sex, employment status, length of service, educational attainment, and nature of work?***

This hypothesis is grounded in Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003) and Lewin's Change Theory (1947), which emphasize the role of individual characteristics and awareness in innovation adoption.

2. ***There is a significant difference in respondents' perceived capabilities for FWAs when grouped according to profile variables?***

This is supported by Lewin's emphasis on capability development during the change phase and Rogers' view that adoption varies across individual traits.

3. ***There is a significant relationship between respondents' capabilities and organizational readiness for FWAs.?***

Both Lewin (1947) and Rogers (2003) stress that successful change depends on individual competence and institutional readiness working simultaneously.

Research Questions

1. What are the institutional and respondent profiles of LHEIs in Region 3?
2. What is the extent of FWA awareness among teaching and non-teaching personnel?
3. What are the respondents' capabilities for FWAs in terms of soft and hard skills?
4. What is the level of organizational readiness for FWAs based on change and diffusion theories?
5. What challenges are encountered in implementing FWAs?
6. What are the theoretical and practical implications of the findings?
7. What action plan can be developed to institutionalize FWAs in Region 3 LHEIs?

Statistical Treatment

The data gathered in this study were analyzed using various statistical tools. Frequency and Percentage were applied to describe the demographic profile of personnel from Local Higher Education Institutions in Region 3, covering variables such as age, sex, employment status, length of service, highest educational attainment, and nature of work. To assess the respondents' level of awareness of flexible work arrangements, their adaptability, and their perceived organizational readiness, Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation were computed. To determine significant differences in awareness and capability based on demographic variables, Independent Samples T-test and One-Way ANOVA were used. Furthermore, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r) was employed to examine the relationship between respondents' capability and their assessment of organizational readiness for FWAs. These statistical methods enabled a thorough analysis of group differences and correlations, offering insights aligned with the frameworks of change management and innovation diffusion.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Assessment of the Teaching and Non-teaching Personnel's Level of Awareness of Flexible Work Arrangements

Modality	Item Statement	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Description	Standard Deviation
Offline Learning	1. Provide printed modules	3.40	High	0.82
	2. Share recorded lectures	3.28	High	0.84
	3. Give access to online repositories	3.49	High	0.66
	4. Distribute storage devices	2.74	High	1.06
	5. Share links to open resources	3.43	High	0.71
	Average		3.27	High
Online Learning	1. Provide digital modules	3.66	Very High	0.60
	2. Use internet for classes	3.68	Very High	0.58
	3. Use learning management system	3.41	High	0.76
	4. Conduct classes via web conferencing	3.56	Very High	0.68
	5. Use laptops, phones, and similar devices	3.80	Very High	0.47
	Average		3.62	Very High
Blended Learning	1. Hold shortened in-person classes	3.10	High	0.89
	2. Conduct classes in shifts	3.17	High	0.85
	3. Focus on activities needing direct instructions	3.50	Very High	0.66
	4. Supplement with digital bite-size content	3.34	High	0.71
	5. Allow guided study time	3.49	High	0.60
	Average		3.32	High
Flexiplace	1. Covered by output-based work	3.37	High	0.67
	2. Work off-site	2.55	High	0.98
	3. Work from home	2.21	Low	1.04
	4. Work in nearby satellite office	2.24	Low	1.04
	5. Work in other productive locations	2.72	High	0.99
	Average		2.62	High

Compressed Workweek	1. Work full-time hours	3.61	Very High	0.64
	2. Given extra days off	2.33	Low	1.09
	3. Render extended hours	2.74	High	0.93
	4. Follow compressed workweek	2.33	Low	1.15
	5. Allowed fewer workdays	2.09	Low	0.99
	Average	2.62	High	0.96
Skeleton Workforce	1. Foe use when full staffing isn't available	2.92	High	0.78
	2. Requires minimum on-site staff	2.87	High	0.86
	3. Must complete 40 hours/week	3.49	High	0.69
	4. Absence counted if not on-site	3.27	High	0.86
	5. Ensures service continuity	3.43	High	0.69
	Average	3.20	High	0.78
Work Shifting	1. Meet end-user demands	3.23	High	0.71
	2. Suits 24/7 service agencies	3.06	High	0.79
	3. Supports health and safety compliance	3.27	High	0.80
	4. Fits security and safety roles	3.26	High	0.78
	5. Ensures constant personnel availability	3.35	High	0.73
	Average	3.23	High	0.76

Note. Legend: 1.00–1.49 Very Low; 1.50–2.49 Low; 2.50–3.49 High; 3.50–4.00 Very High.

The table shows the Assessment of the Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel's Level of Awareness of Flexible Work Arrangements. The Teaching and non-teaching personnel in Region-3 LHEIs demonstrated varying levels of awareness regarding flexible work modalities, reflecting their roles, institutional context, and exposure to innovation. For offline learning, teaching personnel showed high awareness ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.82$), with the highest weighted mean 3.49 verbally interpreted as highly aware to cloud repositories and the least to traditional tools like compact discs or storage devices ($M = 2.74$), suggesting a shift away from outdated methods. Meanwhile, online learning got the highest overall awareness ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.62$) verbally interpreted as highly aware, particularly in the use of laptops and mobile devices ($M = 3.80$). This finding aligns with Santiago et al. (2022), who confirmed that mobile applications and smartphones were frequently used by faculty, indicative of early adoption tendencies. Under Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory (2003), this behavior is characteristic of innovators and early adopters who are motivated to explore and integrate new tools for learning. Though the use of Learning Management Systems ($M = 3.41$) with slightly lower weighted mean, it still suggests broad digital readiness. In blended learning, awareness remained high ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.74$), particularly in the application of in-person instruction for appropriate lessons ($M = 3.50$). According to the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, alignment with existing values and practices referred to as compatibility influences the

likelihood of adoption. However, Shammass (2023) offers a nuanced view, noting that neither direct nor indirect instruction is consistently preferred by educators; instead, decisions often hinge on flexibility and the perceived care for student needs, not just the modality itself.

Among non-teaching personnel, there were low awareness of flexiplace arrangements with its weighted mean 2.62 and standard deviation of 0.94, with strong familiarity in output-based work metrics ($M = 3.37$), but significantly less for working from home ($M = 2.21$) or satellite offices ($M = 2.24$). This disparity supports Buffer's (2023) findings that while remote work is increasingly preferred globally, structured institutions often lag in consistent implementation. This pattern again supports Rogers' model, where innovations begin with early adopters before diffusing more broadly. Awareness of compressed workweek arrangements was also moderate ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.96$), with strong recognition of full-time workload completion ($M = 3.61$) but low awareness of condensed day structures ($M = 2.09$). Fallon (2024) emphasizes the dual nature of compressed work schedules, noting benefits like productivity and flexibility, but also drawbacks such as fatigue and logistical complexity. Rogers' attributes of trialability and perceived complexity may thus affect adoption rates for this modality. The skeleton workforce arrangement reflected a high level of awareness ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.78$), especially regarding standard 40-hour workweeks ($M = 3.49$). Baog et al. (2022) observed that certain districts demonstrate strong adherence to skeletal frameworks, particularly during emergencies. The Diffusion of Innovations Theory helps explain how such structured responses gain institutional acceptance in reaction to operational challenges, rather than proactive innovation. Finally, work shifting arrangements showed high awareness as well ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.76$), particularly in ensuring continuous personnel availability ($M = 3.35$). This modality is widely observed in institutions that operate in crisis or high-demand environments, consistent with Rogers' notion of observability, wherein clearly visible and effective innovations are more readily adopted. Overall, while teaching personnel demonstrate early and consistent engagement with flexible instructional modalities, non-teaching personnel show uneven levels of readiness, particularly in arrangements requiring structural or cultural shifts within institutions.

Table 2

Assessment of Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel's Capabilities for Flexible Work Arrangements

Skill Type	Indicators	Teaching Weighted Mean	Teaching Qualitative Description	Teaching SD	Non-Teaching Weighted Mean	Non-Teaching Qualitative Description	Non-Teaching SD
Soft Skills	Supportiveness	3.66	Very High	0.50	3.60	Very High	0.52
	Assertiveness	3.65	Very High	0.50	3.50	Very High	0.62
	Compliance	3.66	Very High	0.51	3.61	Very High	0.52
	Conflict Management	3.58	Very High	0.54	3.48	High	0.58
	Relationship Management	3.64	Very High	0.52	3.54	Very High	0.59

	Average	3.64	Very High	0.51	3.55	Very High	0.57
Hard Skills	Technology Utilization	3.61	Very High	0.57	3.25	High	0.74
	Technology Processes	3.54	Very High	0.61	3.25	High	0.69
	Database Management	3.40	High	0.68	3.20	High	0.70
	Online Security	3.40	High	0.67	3.19	High	0.69
	Cloud Storage Management	3.31	High	0.71	3.05	High	0.76
	Average	3.45	High	0.65	3.19	High	0.72

Note. Legend: 1.00–1.49 Very Low; 1.50–2.49 Low; 2.50–3.49 High; 3.50–4.00 Very High

Table shows the assessment of both teaching and non-teaching personnel in Region 3 LHEIs revealed very high soft skills capabilities, with teaching personnel showing particular strength in supportiveness and compliance ($M = 3.66$), and non-teaching personnel similarly excelling in compliance ($M = 3.61$). Conflict management got the lowest-rated soft skill for both groups but still received a “very high” verbal interpretation, suggesting a uniformly strong emotional and interpersonal capacity across personnel groups. This consistency, reflected in low standard deviations (0.51 for teaching, 0.57 for non-teaching), indicates minimal variability in soft skills proficiency, a promising indicator for institutional readiness for flexible work (Domingo & Manalastas, 2023; Manzon, et al., 2022).

In terms of hard skills, teaching personnel demonstrated “very high” proficiency in technology utilization ($M = 3.61$), while cloud storage management ($M = 3.31$) emerged as the lowest in this area. Non-teaching personnel, though also rated “high” in all indicators, showed slightly lower proficiency overall ($M = 3.19$), with the weakest area again being cloud storage management ($M = 3.05$). Variability was higher in hard skills, particularly among non-teaching staff ($SD = 0.72$), suggesting uneven technical readiness and underscoring the need for continued capacity-building in digital competencies (Mariñas et al., 2022; Villon et al., 2022). These findings align with the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, where early adopters lead change while laggards, such as some seasoned educators, show hesitance in embracing technological tools essential for flexible work (Rogers, 2003). Hence, strategic training and continuous development efforts are crucial to sustaining and equalizing competencies across all personnel for effective and inclusive implementation of flexible work arrangements.

Table 3

Organizational Readiness for Flexible Work Arrangements Among Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel

Dimension	Teaching Weighted Mean	Teaching Qualitative Description	Teaching SD	Non-Teaching Weighted Mean	Non-Teaching Qualitative Description	Non-Teaching SD
Discrepancy	3.17	High	0.79	3.15	High	0.69
Appropriateness	3.16	High	0.80	3.16	High	0.69
Self-efficacy	3.26	High	0.75	3.12	High	0.71
Principal Support	3.42	High	0.68	3.23	High	0.67
Personal Valence	3.39	High	0.65	3.11	High	0.72

Note. Legend: 1.00–1.49 = Very Low, 1.50–2.49 = Low, 2.50–3.49 = High, 3.50–4.00 = Very High

The table shows the assessment of both teaching and non-teaching personnel's organizational readiness for flexible work arrangements based on Amenakis et al. (2000) Five-Message Component Model, which includes discrepancy, appropriateness, self-efficacy, personal valence, and principal support. Teaching personnel demonstrated high readiness across all components, with the highest ratings in self-efficacy (M-3.26) and principal support (M-3.42), suggesting strong motivation, persistence, and leadership backing. They also showed high awareness of organizational discrepancies (M-3.17), perceived appropriateness of change (M-3.16), and recognized personal benefits from the change (M-3.39). Variability in responses on standard deviations ranging from 0.65 to 0.80 indicated a moderate divergence in individual perceptions, especially in areas concerning clarity of organizational issues and confidence in implementing change.

Non-teaching personnel similarly reflected high readiness across all dimensions, with slightly lower average ratings compared to teaching personnel's discrepancy (M-3.15), appropriateness (M-3.16), self-efficacy (M-3.12), personal valence (M-3.11), and principal support (M-3.23). While these figures suggest a shared commitment and perception of the relevance and feasibility of the proposed changes, standard deviations 0.67 to 0.72 reflected moderate variability. The findings affirm Amenakis et al.'s (2002) theory that clear understanding of organizational gaps, belief in the appropriateness of proposed interventions, confidence in change capacity, personal relevance, and leadership commitment are crucial in fostering readiness. Supporting literature (Belias & Trihas, 2022; Thomas & Danapfel, 2022; Workeneh & Abebe, 2019) further emphasizes that communication, appropriate interventions, leadership modeling, and perceived benefit are key to ensuring sustainable institutional change and successful implementation of flexible work systems.

Table 4*Challenges Encountered by Teaching and Non-teaching Personnel in the Implementation of Flexible Work Arrangements*

Challenges	Teaching		Non-Teaching		Total Percentage (%)
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
1. Work culture maintenance	1,121	66.7	176	66.7	66.7
2. Personal distractions	1,347	80.1	211	80.1	80.1
3. Weak team bonding	904	53.7	141	53.7	53.7
4. Poor real-time coordination	1,225	73.0	194	73.0	73.0
5. Performance challenges	1,573	93.6	247	93.6	93.6
6. Unstable internet	895	53.2	140	53.2	53.2
7. Mental stress from isolation	1,464	87.0	229	87.0	87.0

Note. N = 1,945

The table presents the challenges encountered by 1,945 teaching and non-teaching personnel in local higher education institutions-LHEIs in Region 3 regarding the implementation of flexible work arrangements. The most prevalent challenges were the inability to meet performance demands (93.6%) and mental stress due to the lack of in-person interaction (87.0%), indicating that flexible arrangements may compromise employee output and emotional well-being. Conversely, the least frequently reported challenges were the absence or intermittency of internet connectivity (53.2%) and difficulty in team bonding (53.7%), though still affecting more than half of the respondents. Other significant concerns included distractions from personal matters (80.1%), lack of synchronous communication and coordination (73.0%), and the difficulty of maintaining a unified work culture (66.7%). These challenges align with Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory, which emphasizes resistance to change among late adopters and laggards due to entrenched cultural norms, communication barriers, perceived complexity, and uncertainty about the relative advantage of innovations like flexible work. Empirical findings further support these observations: Darshana and Tamilmaran (2024) reported that productivity concerns, unequal access to technology, and organizational disconnects are common hurdles in flexible work contexts, while Ahmadi et al. (2024) identified connectivity issues, communication breakdowns, and professional isolation as primary challenges. Additionally, Linando et al. (2022) found that female educators experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion and that older, long-serving staff members are less adaptable to flexible setups. These findings suggest that while flexible work arrangements offer potential benefits, institutions must strategically address psychological, technological, and organizational readiness to support their successful implementation.

Table 5

Significant Differences in the Assessment of the Respondents' Level of Awareness of Flexible Work Arrangements Based on Teaching Personnel Profile

Awareness	Age	Sex	Employment Status	Length of Service	Academic Rank	Highest Educational Attainment	Nature of Work
Offline Learning Modality	0.004* 48–64 yrs	0.627 Not Sig	0.141 Not Sig	0.000* 11–10 yrs	0.007* Professor	0.000* Doctorate Degree	.a
Online Learning Modality	0.005* 42–47 yrs	0.621 Not Sig	0.015* Job Order	0.023* 6–10 yrs	0.001* Professor	0.016* Doctorate Units	.a
Blended Learning Modality	0.000* 18–25 yrs	0.223 Not Sig	0.000* Regular	0.000* < 1 yr	0.026* Professor	0.000* Bachelor's Degree	.a

Note. $p < .05$; Sig = Significant; Not Sig = Not Significant; * = Highest Grouping; .a = Single variable.

The data reveal statistically significant differences in teaching personnel's awareness of flexible work arrangements-FWAs when grouped according to their demographic and professional profiles, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents' level of awareness of flexible work arrangements when their profile is considered." Specifically, age showed a significant influence across all modalities ($p < .05$), with personnel aged 48–64 demonstrating the highest awareness in offline learning, 42–47 in online learning, and 18–25 in blended learning. These age-related patterns are consistent with Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory, which explains that different adopter categories (e.g., early adopters, late majority) vary in demographic traits and openness to innovation. Although sex did not yield statistically significant differences in any modality ($p > .05$), employment status was significant in online and blended modalities ($p < .05$), with job order employees being more aware of online learning and regular employees reporting greater awareness in blended settings. This may reflect differential exposure and adaptability required by job conditions (Darshana & Tamilmaran, 2024). Likewise, length of service was a significant factor for all modalities ($p < .05$), with high awareness shown by both mid-career professionals (6–10 and 11–10 years) and those with less than one year of service, potentially due to recent training or evolving responsibilities (Ahmadi et al., 2024). Academic rank also showed significant variation ($p < .05$), with professors demonstrating consistently high awareness levels, suggesting their active involvement in institutional planning and capacity-building programs. Furthermore, educational attainment significantly influenced awareness ($p < .05$), with doctorate degree holders excelling in offline and online modalities, and bachelor's degree holders leading in blended learning, possibly due to differences in pedagogical exposure or digital training. In sum, these significant findings justify the rejection of the null hypothesis and support the importance of crafting differentiated, profile-sensitive strategies for professional development and institutional readiness for FWAs in higher education.

Table 6

Significant Difference in the Assessment of the Respondents on Their Capabilities for Flexible Work Arrangements When Profile is Considered

Capability	Age	Sex	Employment Status	Length of Service	Academic Rank	Highest Educational Attainment	Nature of Work
Soft Skills	0.001 <i>Significant t</i> 65 Years Old and Above	0.002 <i>Significant t</i> Female	0.004 <i>Significant Regular</i>	0.000 <i>Significant t</i> 6–10 Years	0.000 <i>Significant t</i> University Professor	0.000 <i>Significant Doctorate Degree</i>	0.348 <i>Not Significant t</i>
Hard Skills	0.000 <i>Significant t</i> 18–25 Years Old	0.292 <i>Not Significant t</i>	0.000 <i>Significant Contract of Service</i>	0.000 <i>Significant t</i> Below 1 Year	0.005 <i>Significant t</i> Professor	0.000 <i>Significant Bachelor's Degree</i>	0.016 <i>Significant t</i> Teaching

Note. Significant at $p < .05$. “Significant” indicates that the p-value is below the threshold of 0.05, suggesting a meaningful difference across that profile variable. “Not Significant” means the difference is not statistically meaningful. * indicates the subgroup with the highest assessment per variable.

The findings in the table indicate statistically significant differences in the respondents’ assessment of their capabilities for implementing Flexible Work Arrangements-FWAs when grouped by their profile variables. For soft skills, the following variables showed significant differences at $p < 0.05$: age ($p = 0.001$), with the highest rating from those aged 65 years and above; sex ($p = 0.002$), with females rating themselves higher; employment status ($p = 0.004$), favoring regular employees; length of service ($p = 0.000$), with 6–10 years of service rated highest; academic rank ($p = 0.000$), with university professors reporting the highest assessment; and highest educational attainment ($p = 0.000$), with doctorate degree holders ranking themselves the most capable. However, nature of work ($p = 0.348$) did not yield a significant difference, indicating similar soft skills capability between teaching and non-teaching personnel. For hard skills, significant differences were also found for age ($p = 0.000$), with 18–25 years old scoring highest; employment status ($p = 0.000$), favoring contract of service employees; length of service ($p = 0.000$), with the highest scores from those with less than one year of service; academic rank ($p = 0.005$), where professors rated themselves highest; highest educational attainment ($p = 0.000$), with bachelor’s degree holders scoring highest; and nature of work ($p = 0.016$), with teaching personnel reporting stronger hard skills. Only sex ($p = 0.292$) showed no significant difference in hard skill capability. Since the majority of profile variables yielded p -values below 0.05 for both soft and hard skills, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the respondents’ assessment of their capabilities based on their profiles. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that “there is no significant difference in the assessment of the respondents on their capabilities when their profile is considered” is rejected. These results underscore the need for differentiated professional development strategies tailored to demographic and institutional roles to enhance the implementation of FWAs.

Table 7

Significant Relationship Between Respondents' Capability and Organizational Readiness When Institutional Profiles Are Considered

Respondents' Capability	Pearson r	Qualitative Description	p -Value	Significance
Organizational Readiness	0.751	High Relationship	0.000	Significant

Note. Interpretation based on Guilford's rule of thumb: 0 = No relationship, 0.01–0.20 = Negligible, 0.21–0.40 = Low, 0.41–0.70 = Moderate, 0.71–0.90 = High, 0.91–0.99 = Very High, 1.00 = Perfect. *Significant at $p < .05$.

The above result shows the Pearson product-moment correlation revealed a coefficient of $r = 0.751$ between the respondents' capabilities and their institutions' organizational readiness in implementing Flexible Work Arrangements-FWAs, with a p -value of 0.000. This indicates a statistically significant high positive relationship, based on Guilford's (1956) interpretative range of 0.71–0.90. The strength of this association implies that institutions where personnel demonstrate higher levels of capability such as soft and hard skills relevant to FWAs also tend to exhibit greater organizational readiness. The statistical significance at $p < .05$ confirms that the result is not due to chance. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that "there is no significant relationship between respondents' capabilities and organizational readiness" is rejected. This finding underscores the importance of aligning institutional strategies with capacity development to ensure successful implementation of FWAs. It supports the organizational change theories of Kotter (1996) and Armenakis and Harris (2009), which emphasize that both individual and structural readiness must be addressed to sustain innovation and transformation in work arrangements.

Implementation and Utilization of the Developed Action Plan based implication of Change and Diffusion and Innovation theory. The action plan serves as a structured framework for transforming traditional work structures in Local Higher Education Institutions-LHEIs across Region 3 into more flexible, resilient, and innovation-driven systems. Its effective implementation should be guided by Change Theory (Lewin, 1947) and Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003), which emphasize readiness, communication, leadership, and the gradual adoption of new practices.

1. Unfreezing Stage. Creating Readiness for Change (Change Theory). LHEIs must begin by reassessing current policies and mindsets toward work arrangements, initiating policy formulation and organizational diagnosis (as detailed in the governance KRA) to challenge the status quo, ensuring alignment with institutional mandates and government regulations, such as CHED and CSC guidelines and Promoting buy-in through orientation and consultation among academic councils and administrative leaders, building the urgency to transform.
2. Changing Stage. Implementation through Innovation Adoption (Diffusion of Innovation Theory). The core of transformation lies in the capacity building on both soft and hard skills, targeting early adopters and change agents to serve as role models for other personnel, leveraging institutional communication (feedback loops, regular meetings) to disseminate innovations, deploying digital infrastructure upgrades and LMS subscriptions, which embody the "innovation" in teaching modalities and providing supportive mechanisms, including health and wellness programs, to maintain employee engagement and reduce resistance.

Here, Rogers' five attributes of innovation must be considered: Demonstrate how flexible work is superior in productivity and well-being, align innovations with institutional values

and employees' capabilities, minimize difficulty via training and onboarding, pilot policies before full-scale implementation, and make successful outcomes visible (e.g., performance improvement, satisfaction surveys).

3. **Refreezing Stage. Institutionalizing the Change.** For sustainability the LHEIs must embed flexible arrangements in the institution's strategic and operational frameworks, strengthen governance through approved policies and performance metrics (KPIs) to monitor impact, encourage a culture of continuous improvement and responsiveness to feedback and collaborate with LGUs and the Civil Service Commission to integrate public-sector perspectives.
4. **Monitoring and Evaluation.** Each program/activity should be tracked based on its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess: Effectiveness of flexible work policies, improvement in readiness levels and employee satisfaction and institutional resilience.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

This study's findings on Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) in Region 3 LHEIs highlight key theoretical contributions through Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (2003) and Organizational Change Theory (Armenakis & Harris, 2009; Kotter, 1996). Differences in awareness and capability across age, employment status, and academic rank illustrate adopter categories and the influence of demographics on innovation adoption. The strong correlation between personnel capability and organizational readiness ($r = 0.751, p < 0.001$) validates the importance of aligning individual skills and beliefs with institutional structures. Senior academic personnel function as change agents, reinforcing Kotter's emphasis on leadership, vision, and coalition-building. Challenges like stress, technological limitations, and coordination issues reflect Rogers' attributes of complexity and trialability, emphasizing the need for context-sensitive, phased, and capacity-focused change strategies.

Practical Implications

The findings provide actionable insights for LHEIs:

1. Targeted training in digital literacy, time management, and adaptive skills enhances alignment between individual and organizational readiness.
2. Awareness and capability differences across demographics require customized messaging and training for specific groups.
3. **Policy and Coordination:** Clear guidelines, centralized platforms, and wellness support reduce complexity and improve adoption.
4. **Leadership Engagement:** Academic leaders as guiding coalitions promote vision, model behaviors, and celebrate short-term wins.
5. FWA policies should reflect institutional size, location, and resources, with decentralized decision-making where appropriate.
6. Sustained professional development, monitoring, and phased adoption foster long-term resilience and workforce satisfaction.

Conclusion

The study confirms that implementing FWAs in Region 3 LHEIs requires synchronizing individual readiness with organizational strategy. Awareness and capability levels were generally high, with differences influenced by demographic factors. Strong positive correlation between personnel capability and institutional readiness supports theories of change and innovation diffusion. Challenges such as stress, technological gaps, and coordination barriers highlight the need for comprehensive support. Effective FWA adoption depends on strategic leadership, phased implementation, and context-sensitive policies.

Recommendations

To support the effective implementation of Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) in Local Higher Education Institutions, personnel should receive demographic-specific training that develops both hard and soft skills. This ensures that each employee, regardless of age, rank, or role, has the competencies needed to adapt to new work modalities. Alongside training, institutions must maintain transparent and continuous communication, clearly conveying the benefits of FWAs and aligning these initiatives with broader organizational goals to foster understanding and buy-in.

Institutional leaders play a critical role as active change agents. By modeling desired behaviors, providing necessary resources, and reinforcing the personal benefits of participation, they can encourage staff engagement and strengthen commitment to the transformation process. At the same time, FWA policies should be contextualized to reflect each institution's unique circumstances, including infrastructure capacity, budget constraints, and local conditions, allowing for flexible but equitable implementation.

To ensure the effectiveness of these arrangements, institutions should establish feedback mechanisms and performance monitoring systems. Regular assessments enable continuous refinement and responsiveness to emerging challenges. Investments in technology, online systems, and digital literacy are essential to support hybrid and remote work environments, ensuring personnel can work effectively regardless of location. Finally, identifying and supporting innovation champions, staff who demonstrate high readiness and can mentor colleagues, can accelerate FWA adoption and foster a culture of collaboration and innovation across institutions.

Acknowledgement

The researchers are grateful to the following: the teaching and non-teaching personnel, presidents, and administrators of the member schools of the Association of Local Colleges and Universities–Region III, whose valuable responses and support were instrumental to the completion of this study

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

This work was assisted by Grammarly for language and grammar improvement, and QuillBot for paraphrasing and summarizing. All outputs were reviewed and finalized by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content.

References

- Abocejo, F. T. (2022). Flexible work strategies in Philippine education.
- Ahmadi, M., Gholipoursoleimani, A., & Shahrodi, K. (2024). Employee experiences with flexible work arrangements and their impact on productivity. *Journal of Resource Management and Decision Engineering*, 3(1), 26–32.
<https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.jrmde.3.1.5>
- Armenakis, A. A., Harris, S.G., & Field, H.S. (2000). Making change permanent: A model for institutionalizing change. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 12, 97–128. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0897-3016\(99\)12005-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0897-3016(99)12005-6)
- Armenakis, A. A., & Harris, S. G. (2009). Reflections: Our journey in organizational change research and practice. *Journal of Change Management*, 9(2), 127–142.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall. (Original work published 1986; discussion in Bandura, 2004)
- Baog, I., Radin, M., Cagape, W., Clerigo, K., & Magayo, J. (2022). Organizational work scheme protocols of public elementary school teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Research Publications*, 96(1), 97–108.
<https://doi.org/10.47119/IJRP100961320222922>
- Baral, R., & Pokharel, S. (2017). Enablers of flexible work arrangements. *Global Business Review*, 18(4), 102–118.
- Belias, D., & Trihas, N. (2022). Investigating the readiness for organizational change: A case study from a hotel industry context/Greece. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 7(2), 1047–1062.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7090337>
- Buffer. (2023). *State of remote work 2023*. Buffer. <https://buffer.com/state-of-remote-work/2023>
- Burnes, B. (2020). *The origins of Lewin's three-step model of change*. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 56(1), 32–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886319892685>
- Charalampous, M., Grant, C. A., Tramontano, C., & Michailidis, E. (2019). Systematically reviewing remote e-workers' well-being at work: A multidimensional approach. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 28(1), 51–73.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2018.1541886>
- Chen, Z. (2021). Influence of working from home during the covid-19 crisis and HR practitioner response. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12(710517), 1–8.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.710517>
- Cherry, K. (2023, February 27). Self efficacy and why believing in yourself matters. *Verywell Mind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-efficacy-2795954>

- Commission on Higher Education. (2023, April 4). *Updated guidelines on onsite learning in higher education*. <https://ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/CMO-No.-4-s.-2023.pdf>
- Darshana, A., & Tamilmaran, R. (2024). Exploring the challenges and opportunities of implementing flexible work arrangements. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, *11*. 139–144. <https://doi.org/10.34293/>
- Domingo, J., & Manalastas, R. (2023). Pedagogical soft skills of science teachers in post-pandemic science. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, *4*(11), 2130–2143. <https://ijrpr.com/uploads/V4ISSUE11/IJRPR19329.pdf>
- Fallon, N. (2024). How to implement a compressed work schedule. <https://www.business.com/articles/compressed-work-schedule/>
- Guilford, J. P. (1956). *Fundamental statistics in psychology and education* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Hao, M. J., & Yazdanifard, R. (2015). *How effective leadership can facilitate change in organizations through improvement and innovation*. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: Administration and Management*, *15*(9). Global Journals Inc. <https://www.coursehero.com/file/25272324/Hao-M-J-Yazdanifard-R-2015pdf/>
- Javier, B. S. (2020). Organizational e-learning readiness in a state university in Northern Philippines: Inputs for refining instructional quality. *Test Engineering and Management*, *82*(Jan–Feb), 5560–5569. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342957026_Organizational_E-learning_readiness_in_a_State_University_in_Northern_Philippines_Inputs_for_refining_the_instructional_quality
- Javier, J. L., Santos, M. R., & Dela Cruz, L. J. (2021). Barriers to flexible work implementation in Philippine higher education. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, *19*(2), 23–35.
- Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading Change*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Lamonte, W. (2022, November 3). Diffusion of innovation theory. Boston University. <https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph-modules/sb/behavioralchangetheories/behavioralchangetheories4.html>
- Lewin, K. (1947). *Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method and reality in social science; social equilibria and social change*. *Human Relations*, *1*(1), 5–41. <https://archive.org/details/lewin-1947-frontiers-in-group-dynamics>
- Linando, J. A., Halim, M., Rasman, R., & Arifin, A. H. (2022). Work flexibility arrangements for educators: which one is best for whom? *International Journal of Educational Management*, *36*(6), 970–983. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-01-2022-0011>

- Lucero, H. R., Victoriano, J. M., Carpio, J. T., & Fernando Jr, P. G. (2022). Assessing e-learning readiness of faculty and students in Philippine higher education institutions. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2202.06069>
- Manzon, H. J., Baylosis, J. R., Catoc, R. A., Napilitan, D., & Zalsos, J. V. K. (2022). Level of soft skills and the job performance of teaching staff in a higher education institution in Novaliches, Quezon City. *Ascendens Asia Singapore – Bestlink College of the Philippines Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(1A), <https://ojs.aaresearchindex.com/index.php/aasgbcpmra/article/view/12741>
- Marcelo, V. (2024, April 12). 5,844 schools suspend onsite classes due to extreme heat. *The Philippine Star*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/04/12/2347075/5844-schools-suspend-onsite-classes-due-extreme-heat>
- Mariñas, E., Pituc, J.M., Nova, M. J., Angeles, C., Balgos, I. P., Tolentino, I. U., Corpuz, L., Siongco, C. J., Punay, P. N., & Sambon, E. M. (2022). From subtle stability to fine-tuning: A phenomenological study of seasoned teachers' changeover to virtual instruction. *International Journal of Research Thoughts*, 10(1), 497-543. <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2201284.pdf>
- Núñez Valdés, M., Quirós y Alpera, S., & Cerdá Suárez, L. M. (2021). An institutional perspective for evaluating digital transformation in higher education: Insights from the Chilean case. *Sustainability*, 13(17), 9850. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13179850>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). *OECD digital education outlook 2021: Pushing the frontiers with artificial intelligence, blockchain and robots*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/589b283f-en>
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). *Teleworking in the COVID-19 pandemic: Trends and prospects*. <https://www.oecd.org/publications/teleworking-in-the-covid-19-pandemic-trends-and-prospects-72a416b6-en.htm>
- Pacific Disaster Center. (2021). *Philippines province risk profiles*. <https://www.pdc.org/big-data/philippines/>
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.).
- Santiago, C., Ulanday, M., Bayla, M., Callanta, J., & Centeno, Z. (2022). Flexible learning adaptabilities in the new normal: e-learning resources, digital meeting platforms, online learning systems and learning engagement. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 16(2), 38-66. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5762474>
- Scribbr. (2021, July 7). Correlational research. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/correlational-research/>
- Shammas, N. (2023). An exploration of direct instruction: Why teaching matters. In *Future Trends in Education Post COVID-19*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-1927-7_25

Thomas, K., & Dannapfel, P. (2022). Organizational readiness to implement a care model in primary care for frail older adults living at home in Sweden. *Frontiers in Health Science*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frhs.2022.958659>

Unson, J., & Cariaso, B. (2024, December 7). 20 flood, landslide-prone areas identified. *The Philippine Star*. <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2024/07/15/2370302/20-flood-landslide-prone-areas-identified>

Villon, J. T., Aranilla, A., & Balon, J. (2022). Seasoned teachers' digital skills readiness in the online learning of selected elementary schools in quezon province. *Journal of Education, Management and Development Studies*, 2(4), 53–60. <https://doi.org/10.52631/jemds.v2i4.149>

Workeneh, M., & Abebe, A. S. (2019). Employee readiness to change and its determinants in administrative staff of Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia. *Human Resource Management Research*, 9(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.5923/j.hrmr.20190901.01>

Contact emails: jeune_manalo@yahoo.com
pdmacad@gmail.com
joanjavierpdm@gmail.com