THE PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE OF FILIPINO TEACHERS UNDER TEACHER EXCHANGE PROGRAM OF UNITED STATES DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2022- 2023

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ABSTRACT: *A significant increase was reported in the number of Filipino teachers who participate in the Teacher Exchange Program of the United States of America. This opportunity for teachers served also as a temporary solution to the teacher shortage faced by the US Department of Education. This quantitative research with correlation research design aimed to identify the professional performance of international teachers in three domains (instructional practice, deliberate practice, and student performance) and in general. Through purposive sampling, 18 Filipino teachers who were assigned to different grade levels in different schools of the county were asked to answer the online survey. The descriptive analysis revealed that teachers were evaluated as highly effective in three dimensions and in general. Despite of established teaching experience of the exchange teachers, this study rejects its significant advantage on teachers' overall performance in a new school system and working environment. The performance of teachers with more than 10 years of experience has no significant difference from the performance of teachers with less than 10 years in the profession. The same pattern of results was found even though they have different grade-level assignments. Though teaching experience does not correlate with performance, it is still a requirement for aspiring teachers, especially in a culturally diverse classroom and environment. Hence, further studies are needed related to the adversity and resiliency of international teachers.*

Keywords: *professional performance, Filipino teachers, international, J1 Visa*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Teacher Exchange Program is one of the opportunities offered by the US Department of State for eligible Filipino teachers who are interested in working under a J1 Visa. Based on statistics, Philippines is the leading country in sending teachers to the different states of United States of America. Last 2021, 1521 teachers were eligible and sent to teach students under K to 12 curriculum. This number was increased to 2166 exchange visitors from the Philippines [1]. One of the major reasons why Filipinos work abroad is the country's economy. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority [2], the annual Filipino family income is PHP 307,019.00 or roughly $5524.00 on average while PHP 228, 080.00 or $4,103.63 is the average annual family expenditure. In addition, 18.1% of Filipinos were poor in 2021 and each family with five (5) members needs PHP 12, 030 or $244 each month on average to meet their daily needs. During this year, regular teacher with salary grades 12 to 13 has an average salary of PHP 26, 000 or nearly $528 [3]. Furthermore, the Philippine inflation rate consistently from 3.9 by year 2021, to 5.8 by 2022, and 6.0 last 2023 [2]. These challenges might escalate as they have a fair level of financial literacy and indebtedness which could lead teachers to find high-income jobs. Despite of having higher level job satisfaction among teachers in terms of community linkages, they are not fully satisfied in the aspects of job responsibilities, security, and working environment [4]. With these, Filipinos make difficult decisions to look for greener pastures and resist all the hardships before and after the application process to provide for the needs of their family [5. 6].

On the other hand, the United States of America faced teacher vacancies. Based on the October 2022 survey, 4% of teaching positions are vacant in all public schools, and there two (2) teaching vacancies in each public school. Moreover, 18% of them had one teaching vacancy while 26% of the public schools had multiple vacant teaching positions. Furthermore, teaching positions in Special Education (6%), English as a Second Language (6%), and Computer Science (5%) have the highest percentage of vacancies in public schools [6]. Given these conditions, the J1 program can be one of the answers to address the shortage temporarily since the eligible teachers under this program were only allowed to stay and work for a maximum of five years. These participants are expected to return to their homeland to comply with 212e rule or residency requirement for two (2) years to share the knowledge and experience acquired in the United States.

There is study which compared job satisfaction levels of Filipino teachers in the Philippines and the US, finding that US teachers had higher satisfaction with co-workers, while Filipino teachers had higher satisfaction with student discipline and parental involvement [8]. Another related study revealed that Filipino teachers perceived themselves as knowledgeable in content matter and pedagogy. They felt confident in delivering the subject matter and have effective classroom management. However, they find themselves as proficient but not experts in terms of technology integration [9]. Furthermore, they are fairly confident in terms of Technological Knowledge and not confident when it comes of Technological-Pedagogical Knowledge [10]. Additionally, there is a theory proposed based on the in-depth exploration of millennial Filipino teachers who are working abroad. Uytico [11] come up with a model entitled Goal- Attitude-Adaptation which are believed as the key to survival among teachers abroad. The theory emphasizes that working in a foreign land, an individual must be goal-oriented, have the right set of attributes, and be open to adapting for survival. The proponent suggested to explore more on the experiences of international teachers. On the other hand, Macapagong et al [12] used thematic analysis to explore the experiences, prospects, and challenges of international teachers assigned in Arizona, USA. The researchers come up with the following themes on how teachers struggled (from their personal concerns and living conditions), adapted (from cultural shock, teaching

assignment and classroom management), learned (through teacher support, rewards and relationships, and personal downtime), and planned for their future (business plans, cultural exchange, pursuing further studies, and career options).

Even though related studies explored the perceptions, experiences, and challenges of Filipino teachers living and working in the United States, they did not point out how teachers perform professionally and how they are being evaluated. To provide information about the competence or performance of Filipino teachers abroad, this study aimed to explore the professional performance of Filipino teachers in Florida under the J1 Visa or Cultural Exchange Program of the United States. Specifically:

1. How was the performance of exchange teachers in terms of
   a. instructional practice,
   b. deliberate practice; and
   c. student performance.
2. What is the overall performance of Filipino teachers in their first year of teaching?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' performance in instructional practice and student performance?
4. Is there a significant relationship between a teacher's length of teaching experience and overall professional performance?
5. Is there a significant difference in the professional performance of Filipino teachers under faculty exchange program when grouped according to:
   a. teaching experience, and
   b. grade level assignment?

Research Hypotheses. Based on the following research questions, the researcher came up with the following hypothesis and will be tested using computed test:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between teachers' performance on instructional practice and student performance.

H_0: There is no significant relationship between teacher's length of teaching experience and overall professional performance.

H_0: There is no significant difference teachers' professional performance when grouped according to teaching experience and grade level assignment.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This quantitative study aimed to identify the professional performance of Filipino teachers in terms of instructional practice, deliberate practice, and student performance. Aside from these, this study determined the overall performance and attendance.

Participants. The targeted participants of this study are the Filipino teachers who are teaching since August 2022 to present. They already have one year teaching experience in Broward County, Florida, USA. Purposive sampling was used since the location of other teachers during these can't be ascertained. Some of them were transferred to other states because of personal reasons and non-reappointment status. These participants are professional teachers with standard license in the Philippine with at least two (2) teaching experience which are recognized by US Department of Education. These teachers are currently participating to the Cultural Exchange Program under J1 Visa of US sponsored by different agency like J1 Visa Exchanges and Alliance Abroad Group.

Measures. Broward County Public Schools utilized Broward Instructional Development and Growth Evaluation System (BrIDGES) in evaluating its employees. This evaluating system is composed three components which include instructional practice, student performance, and deliberate practice. The standards, expectations, and data marks or scores after evaluation from each component can be accessed through an online platform called iObservation.

Instructional Practice (IP). The score from this component was based on the data marks derived from feedback, meetings, observations conducted throughout the school year. This was weighted as 50% of the overall score. During classroom observations either walkthroughs, informal, or formal, they utilize Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model. This model provides teachers and observers with an efficient, student-based, evidence-based method that guarantees standards alignment and aids in the development of every teacher and student. This tool consists of different components which include standard-based planning, which is linked to standard-based instruction, and conditions for learning. It also covers the professional responsibilities of the teacher [13]. Each data mark had a point value as presented below:

Table 1: **Data Mark and Point Value Based on Broward Instructional Development and Growth Evaluation System (BrIDGES)**

Needed	Emergent	Proficient	Accomplished	Exemplary
1.25	2.0	2.75	3.25	4.0

The average of the data marks is the IP score which was then interpreted using the scale below (BCPS, 2022).

Table 2. **Ranges and Labels for the Interpretation of Instructional Practice Score**

Label	Range
Highly Effective	3.450 to 4.000
Effective	2.500 to 3.449
Needs Improvement	2.000 to 2.499
Unsatisfactory	1.000 to 1.999

Deliberate Practice (DP). This component allows teacher to assess themselves using an assessment then they will make their own growth plan based on the criteria that they need to focus on. The DP score was based on timelines or dates of completion. As shown in Table 3, if the teacher completed and finished the self-assessment before the scheduled date, then they will be given a perfect score which is 4.0 or highly effective, 3 for effective if it is done on time or after the scheduled date, 2 or needs improvement if it is started or done in five months after the deadline, and 0 for unsatisfactory if not started or done after five months. This component was weighted as 15% of the overall score [13].

Table 3. Ranges and Labels for the Interpretation of Deliberate Practice Score

Label	Range
Highly Effective	4.0
Effective	3.0
Needs Improvement	2.0
Unsatisfactory	1.0

Student Performance. This score was derived from the achievement or growth data of teachers' students as per Florida Statute 1012.34. The achievement data of the students were based on the performance of students from the pretest which is compared to their post-test [13].

Data Collection Technique. This research used an online survey through Google Forms since the participants were assigned to different schools in the district. 13 questions were asked about their background information, teaching assignments, and scores from the evaluation system of the district through their *observation* accounts.

Data Analysis. Some background information of the participants was analyzed and presented using Frequency and Percentage Distribution Tables and mean and standard deviations were also calculated and then interpreted using the district's evaluation system. To identify the relationship between teachers' instructional practice and students' performance as well as teachers' length of teaching experience and overall professional performance, correlational analyses were done using Pearson Correlation (2-tailed). Lastly, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to compare the professional performance of teachers when grouped based on teaching experience and grade level assignments through the use of codes as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Coding System for Grouping Participants

Teaching Experience	Code	Grade Level Assignments	Code
1 to 5	1	ESE	1
6 to 10	2	K to 5 (elementary)	2
11 to 15	3	6 to 8 (middle school)	3
16 and above	4	9 to 12 (high school)	4

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Participants. The participants' age ranges from 26 to 48 years. There are nine (9) male participants, eight (8) of them are female, and one preferred not to say. In terms of their status, there 61.1%, or 11 of them are single, and the rest are married (38.9%). In terms of teaching experience, the participants have been in the profession for 5 to 20 years. Table 5 shows that there are four or 22.22% of the participants have 5 to 7 years of teaching experience, 50.00% or eight (9) teachers have 8 to 10 years, 5.56% or one teacher belongs 11 to 13 years range, 11.11% or two (2) teachers with 14 to 16 years, one (1) teacher or 5.56% fall within the ranges of 17 to 19 years and 20 and above in the profession.

Table 5. Number of Years of Participants' Teaching Experience

Range of teaching experience (in years)	N	Percentage (%)
5- 7	4	22.22
8- 10	9	50.00
11- 13	1	5.56
14- 16	2	11.11
17- 19	1	5.56
20 and above	1	5.56
Total	18	100.0

These participants are specialized in the fields of Exceptional Students Education (ESE), General Education (elementary), Science, Mathematics, and English. Based on Table 6, 22.22% or four (4) teachers are experts in Special Education and General Education.

Table 6. Number of Participants Based on Grade Level Assignment

US School Grade Levels	N	Percentage (%)
Exceptional Students Education	1	5.56
Elementary	7	38.89
Middle School	3	16.67
High School	7	38.89
Total	18	100.0

In addition, there are five (5) participants or 27.78% are Science majors, two or 27.78% Math teachers, and three (3) English teachers (16.67%) as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Number of Participants based on their Field of Specialization

Field of Specialization	N	Percentage (%)
Special Education	4	22.22
General Education	4	22.22
Science	5	27.78
Mathematics	2	11.11
English	3	16.67
Total	18	100.0

Professional Performance of Teachers. The performance of teachers in terms of instructional practice, deliberate practice, and student performance are presented in Table 8 and discussed below.

Table 8. Summary of Teachers' Professional Performance

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Instructional Practice	3.52	0.295	Highly Effective
Deliberate Practice	4.00	0.000	Highly Effective
Student Performance	3.74	0.424	Highly Effective
Overall	3.68	0.237	Highly Effective

Instructional Practice. Instructional Practice has a greater weight among the three components in the evaluation of a teacher's performance. As shown in Table 4 presents the performance of the participants in terms of instructional practice. It was indicated that they were highly effective concerning their practice of classroom instructions with a mean score of 3.524 and 0.295 as the standard deviation. In addition, the majority of the participants were evaluated in this dimension with highly effective instructional practice. As shown in Table 9, 61.11% of participants (11) were highly effective while 38.89% of teachers (7) were effective. No teacher is unsatisfactory or needs improvement along this dimension of evaluation. These findings support the conclusion of Asis et al [14] that Filipino teachers are highly competent in instructional delivery, classroom management, assessment, and personality. Similarly, Lu & Caballes [15] stated that teachers' instructional competence is very satisfactory, especially in implementing procedures, teaching styles, use of materials, implementation of assessments, facilitation of student learning, and collaboration among peers. Specifically, Science teachers are also excellently competent in terms of level of knowledge, effectiveness, and professional responsibility [16].

Table 9. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Performance in terms of Instructional Practice

Instructional Practice Scale		F	%
Range	Label		
3.450 to 4.000	Highly Effective	11	61.11
2.500 to 3.449	Effective	7	38.89
2.000 to 2.499	Needs Improvement	0	0.00
1.000 to 1.999	Unsatisfactory	0	0.00

Deliberate Practice. Deliberate Practice has a 15% weight on the overall performance of the teachers in the school district. Even if it has a lesser weight in contrast, it provides an avenue for teachers to assess themselves and to create individual growth plans to improve teaching and learning processes. Based on Table 10, the participants are highly effective in this component with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.00. In this regard, 100% of the teachers were able to complete and accomplish the self-assessment and growth plan before November 18, 2022, as supported by the result from Table 8. Ratings from this component were based on meeting the deadline date. The result from this component reflects how teachers comply with requirements and how they behave especially in terms of professional growth. As proof, teachers were more engaged from several trainings and seminars during the pandemic. Furthermore, informal PDs like peer tutoring and coaching, school-based pieces of training, and face-to-face seminar workshops were the most attended opportunities for professional development by the teachers. Teachers were also found to be exposed to formal professional developments such as school and classroom observations and enrolling to graduate degrees [17, 18]. With these, Filipino teachers are prepared and engaged in any growth opportunities such as self-assessment, creating a growth plan, and collaborating with peers through a professional learning community.

Table 10. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Performance in terms of Deliberate Practice

Deliberate Practice Scale		F	%
Range	Label		
4.0 - 4.0	Highly Effective	18	100
3.0 - 3.0	Effective	0	0
2.0 - 2.0	Needs Improvement	0	0
1.0 - 1.0	Unsatisfactory	0	0

Student Performance. This component is worth 35% of the overall score. As indicated in Table 8, 3.74 is the mean score with a standard deviation of 0.424 which is interpreted as highly effective. This result was backed up by the number of teachers who got highly effective ratings as 77.78% of the participants (14) received scores within the range of 3.45 to 4.0 as shown in Table 11. However, one (1) of the participants (5.56%) needs improvement and three (3) participants were effective from this component.

Table 11. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Performance in terms of Deliberate Practice

Student Performance Scale		F	%
Range	Label		
3.45 - 4.0	Highly Effective	14	77.78
2.5 - 3.449	Effective	3	16.67
2.0 - 2.499	Needs Improvement	1	5.56
1.0 - 1.999	Unsatisfactory	0	0

Relationship between teachers' performance on instructional practice and student performance. The relationship between these two components of the evaluation of a teacher's performance is presented below.

Table 12. Correlational Analysis Between Instructional Practice and Student Performance

Variables	Pearson r	Sig. value	Interpretation	Decision to Ho
Instructional Practice*Student Performance	0.422	0.081	Not Significant	Accept

α = 0.05 Level of Significance

Table 12 shows the correlation test results between teachers' instructional practice and students' performance. As gleaned from the table, there is no significant relationship between these variables based on r = 0.422; p=0.0821>0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This finding disagrees with the related studies that teachers' instructional practice has significant effects on students' performance [19-21].

Relationship between teacher's length of teaching experience and overall professional performance. Table 13 shows the correlation test results between teachers' years of teaching experience and their overall professional performance.

Table 13. Correlational Analysis Between Participants' Teaching Experience and Overall Professional Performance

Variables	Pearson r	Sig. value	Interpretation	Decision to Ho
Years of Teaching Experience*Overall Professional Performance	0.254	0.308	Not Significant	Accept

α = 0.05 Level of Significance

As gathered from the table, there is no significant relationship between these variables based on r = 0.254; p=0.308>0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. In connection with this, Graham et al [22] found out that teachers' experiences do not make a difference in the quality of teaching as it was supported also by the decline in teachers' quality with 4 to 5 teaching experience. These results contradict the direct and linear relationship between teaching experience and teacher effectiveness as confirmed by Irvine [23]. As student achievement gains were one of the components of teacher evaluation, Kini & Podolsky [24] found that teaching experience has a positive association with this component in the aspects of assessments, attendance, and in the school in general.

Is there a significant difference in the professional performance of Filipino teachers under faculty exchange programs when grouped according to teaching experience? As shown in Table 14, the mean rank comparison of the teacher respondents is based on the years of teaching experience and their corresponding professional performance. There is no significant difference in the professional performance of the teachers when grouped according to years of teaching reflective of the H value of 5.407 with the corresponding p=0.144>0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 14. Analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis H Test Results of Participants' Overall Professional Performance According to Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	Mean Rank	H value	Sig. value	Interpretation	Decision to Ho
1-5 years	12.00	5.407	0.144	Not Significant	Accept
6-10 years	8.38				
11-15 years	6.00				
16 years and above	15.50				

α = 0.05 Level of Significance

This further implies that regardless of the number of years of teaching, the professional performance is the same. In addition, these participants are newly introduced to the US school system which signifies this claim. Similarly, Graham, et al [22] stated that there is no significant difference found in the level of competence between the Beginning group (0–3 years experience) and Transitioning group (4–5 years experience) of Australian teachers. However, this study was limited to teachers with 0 to 5 years of teaching experience. These findings contradict Dada [25] who stated that teachers with 6 to 15 years of experience performed better than 1 to 5 years of experienced teachers in terms of students' performance, but these teachers are contained in their school system in Nigeria.

Is there a significant difference in the professional performance of Filipino teachers under the faculty exchange program when grouped according to grade level assignment?

The table below shows the mean rank comparison of the teacher respondents based on the grade level assignment and their corresponding professional performance. There is no significant difference in the professional performance of the teachers when grouped according to grade level assignment reflective of the H value of 6.410 with the corresponding p=0.093>0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 15. Analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis H Test Results of Participants' Overall Professional Performance According to Teaching Experience

Grade Level Assignment	Mean Rank	H value	Sig. value	Interpretation	Decision to Ho
ESE Elementary	13.50 4.80	6.410	0.093	Not Significant	Accept
Middle School	9.50				
High School	10.57				

α = 0.05 Level of Significance

This further implies that regardless of the grade level assignment, the professional performance is the same. Contrary to Özgenel & Mert [26] primary and secondary teachers performed better than teachers in high school grade levels. As the school level progresses, teachers' performance decreases. This supports Bol et al [27] those elementary teachers used varied assessment strategies more frequently than high school teachers which is an indicator of teacher competence.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Filipino Exchange Teachers are individually different in terms of age, gender, teaching experience, grade level assignment, and field of specialization. However, they collectively performed as highly effective teachers in terms of their instructional practice, deliberate practice, and student performance. Overall, Filipino teachers were rated as highly effective according to the evaluation system of the school district during their first school year in the US. This study found that teachers' instructional practice has no significant relationship with students' performance. Considering their teaching experience, it does not correlate with their overall professional performance. Though they have established experience with appropriate skills in their homeland, there is no significant effect on their performance in a new school system and working environment. Similarly, correlational analyses revealed that teachers when grouped according to their teaching experience and grade level assignment have no differences associated with their overall professional performance. Generally, Filipino teachers performed excellently even when they were far away and away from home. Based on the results above, this study implies infusing international standards and integrating other school systems into the curriculum of teacher education in the Philippines. For future research, this study provides background information about the professional performance of Filipino teachers abroad. However, further research must be done by considering their cultural adversity, classroom management, job satisfaction, adaptations, and professional growth. Lastly, broadening the research scope is recommended.

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