

Stakeholders' Perceptions on Migrant SPED Teachers in the United States of America

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Abstract - *This study ascertained the perception toward migrant SPED teachers in selected states in the United States of America, it sought to answer these objectives: (1) determine the respondents' demographic profiles, (2) extrapolate the public perception of international SPED teachers in the US in terms of professional competence, professional engagement, and community engagement, (3) identify the perceived socio-cultural, political, economic dimensions of the migrant SPED teachers in the US workforce, (4) analyze the significant relationship of the respondents' demographic profiles and their perceptions toward special education teachers in the US. A descriptive design with snow-ball sampling was utilized. An online Sample Size Calculator by Creative Research System, was calculated with a confidence level of 95 percent and a confidence interval of five (5) requiring at least 384 respondents using a modified questionnaire. The respondents' socio-demographic profile exhibited no significant relationship between the perceptions toward migrant SPED teachers. But, the experience of having a foreigner friend, working with a colleague with a different culture and the experience of travelling abroad affect their perception significantly. Migrant SPED teachers in the US were positively recognized and accepted by their stakeholders like the parents of the students, colleagues and school administrators. They are perceived to be efficient and effective in the aspects of professional competence, professional and community engagement. Their acceptance, recognition, and how they were perceived by stakeholders became the cornerstones in the achievement of their 'American dream'.*

Keywords: *community engagement, migrant SPED teachers, professional competence, professional engagement*

INTRODUCTION

Language, color, beliefs, abilities and needs distinguish a person from one another. Human diversity is a reality that exists at home and in most complex social institutions known to everyone. It is an indispensable truth that human beings have to recognize their every day's existence, in a perplexed multicultural world. To US peace advocate's Martin Luther King, Jr., "We may have all come on different ships, but we are in the same boat now." This quote relates to workers' racial and cultural diversity, in most schools in the United States of America, as one of the most dynamic environments, where diversity is

mostly overlooked by busy and mundane routines. Nonetheless, it is diversity that impacts an individual to any social organization, in achieving unity and better quality of life. The current trends of globalization bring an active exchange, not of ideas and goods; but of human resource as well. Migration has added its complexities in a diverse community in many parts of the United States of America-reaching the so called "American dream". People adjust to new: faces, culture, paradigm, and language. In this new demographic reality, the observation, perception and insights of an individual and the society drive the

policies and norms to realign the principles of tolerance, as decorum of respect, in a diverse society. The importance of a positive perception to diversity is vital, more especially to the public and to the new migrants as well.

As regards to education, it needs to be transformative to consider community engagement in the light of Habermas' critical pedagogy. Community Engagement (CE) is the immersion of special education teachers in international schools, in foreign countries like the United States of America, which perceive assimilation, acculturation and participation, as guiding principles to coexist, in a new adapted local community. While migrant teachers are expected to be tolerant, they have to struggle to maintain or give up their native national and cultural identities, in order to immerse teaching in a foreign land. This necessitates the adaptation of a professional competence; a notion of sustaining their local identities that may not affect the American dominant school culture. In essence, this is called tolerance. Professional Competence (PC) means the process on how migrant Special Education (SPED) teachers are perceived, based on their content and pedagogical knowledge, social skills, communication, and assessment, which they normally engage professionally among the school community's stakeholders. Professional Engagement (PE) refers on how international special education teachers are perceived based on their interaction with their colleagues, students, parents, administrators, local officials, and other curriculum stakeholders.

The SPED profession, in particular, has come to a crossroad of training, hiring, and retaining of teachers in other countries of the world, aside from the Philippines. Despite diversity, the global community aspires to formulate oneness in policies and rules to rein in consequences of globalization. Education, as a vibrant institution, becomes the spotlight for reforms. There is that need of internationalization, in order to make SPED accessible to Differently Abled Learners (ABL). Thus, this raises varied perceptions by the public, on teachers' position to teach SPED in the US public schools. This stirs strong sentiments among international SPED teachers, in responding to the challenges of diversity. Internationally trained SPED teachers, including those from the Philippines, are becoming expatriates to teach in other countries like the US, for better income—an attraction that no government policies in the Philippines can prevent. These teachers are the present example of a dynamic

impact of global education that affects the landscape of Philippine education, and contributes the atmosphere of American education. Their influx to American communities creates complexities and consequences, even the unintended ones, in social adjustments.

The respondents' demographics such as age, sex, marital status may result to certain variability of perceptions regarding migrant SPED teachers. Young respondents may have shown a degree of excitement than the old ones who might think that they do not need migrant teachers. Women may have exhibited a strong preference to migrant teachers than men. Married respondents may have a greater response to migrant teachers because they might think they field the need for public school teacher than single respondents who have no children to be placed in school. Though, these contexts may result to varying contradictions, thus this study is intended. On this study, socio-cultural, political, and economic variables are considered. In socio-cultural dimension, this includes the perception of the respondents in terms of the migrant SPED teachers' background such as: personal and professional competence, and community engagements, in order to survive in the world of work in the United States of America, whether or not they are flexible or inflexible in terms of social engagements or disengagements. The political dimension is associated with respect of power to US policies whether or not migrant SPED teachers promote harmony, peace, and solidarity or a promoter of violence in the classroom. The economic dimension includes the stability of work whether or not they are justly compensated, which affects their survival and their responsibilities to pay the right taxes to the federal government.

In reality, Filipino SPED teachers are affected by how they see themselves and how others see them. It helps to know what others think of another person, as what McClement laments, *"Getting to the bottom of how we come across to people is a key to being assertive, influential and confident at work. Once we know this, we can start thinking about adapting our behavior so that other peoples' perception about us is what we want it to be"* [1]. Vis-à-vis, the American general public has mixed reactions and expatriates may have also raised the same issues. Migrant teachers generally tend to adapt, if they want to succeed in their new work environment. Studies have been conducted on issues ranging on barriers and

issues concerning diversity in workplace to acculturation and its coping skills. Thus, this study examines the prevailing sentiments and perceptions of the American public, regarding the inclusion of internationally trained SPED teachers in American society. The internationally trained SPED teachers believe that it is necessary to have the knowledge on the perception of the public as a coping mechanism, apropos; it also helps the public to be aware of their current perceptions to them.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To Otara, “perception is our tangible experience of our surroundings and involves both the recognition of environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli Perception does not only create our experience of the world around us; it allows us to act within our environment” [2]. The perceptions we pick about the environment provide information i.e. basic to our survival. Turner and Tajfel’s Social Identity Theory proposes that people who perceive themselves as individuals belonging to a certain community of people makes self “categorization” and improvement in ways that are greatly detrimental to those who are perceived as outcast to the community [3-6]. Burk’s argument suggests that prejudice can be explained by human tendency to a group of people. Turner and Tajfel show that a simple demonstration of people classifying themselves to a group sufficiently leads to show bias to those belonging to other group [4-6].

To Turner, “social identity is a part of our self-concept based on knowledge of our membership of one or more social groups..., which is based on a number of inter-related concepts: social categorization, social identity, social comparison and positive distinctiveness” [6]. Quillian states that the perception by members of the majority group in an outside group threatens their group’s prerogative, which is positively associated with prejudice against the out group [7]. Quillian posits that “prejudice and inter-group hostility are largely reactions to perceived threats by subordinate groups” [7]. The more noteworthy the feeling of danger to the prevailing group’s rights, the more probable are individuals from the predominant group to express preference or bias against the threat of those outcasts. These two theories have great implications to the understanding of how the general public in the US perceives internationally trained SPED teachers.

Public perception can be seen as the contrast between a flat out truth in light of truths and a virtual truth, i.e. formed by famous supposition, media scope and/or notoriety. Open observation is not so much mistaken or in view of an option that is other than reality. People everywhere can regularly get enough true data, keeping in mind the end goal, to structure a general assessment around an open figure, a superstar or an industry without depending on insinuation or unwarranted bits of gossip. There can be cases, when the impression of a circumstance is influenced by different issues, “such as cultural bias or prejudice” [8]. In simplest term diversity, for an ordinary person could be the variety of unique individuals. Diversity is the “state of having people of different races or who have different cultures in a group or organization” [9]. As regards to this study, Workforce Diversity (WD) is the existence of multicultural internationally trained SPED teachers, as workforce, in the US convergent setting. Internationally-trained SPED Teachers are professionally licensed special education teachers in the US, who have graduated, trained, and received education in any manner from the Philippines or other countries other than the US.

For many years, people grapple to coexist with others. Some of them who become leaders allow coexisting in the midst of differences; while the extreme few are excluded from their known society, committing genocide in the process or annihilate the social process. Different cultures tend to have different perceptions to address the social dynamics of diversity, which can be classified as permissible and impermissible. The permissible societies allow diversity to freely permeate in all levels of society. The impermissible societies adhere to intolerable social norms. It should be noted however, that people evolve to progress; the concept of diversity starts to make waves to equality and equity. While some continue to argue that diversity is impossible; the rest accept it as real. The dichotomy to accept or reject diversity may result to far ranging conflicts of interest, which necessitates a primary attention to promote harmony and peace. Maj. Shane Pair states that, “*In today's culture we hear a lot about diversity, yet a lot of us really don't know what that word means. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences*” [10].

In a larger scale, the impact and influence of diversity in a more complex human organization cannot be understated. Llopis writes that, “organizations seek global market relevancy must embrace diversity—in how they think, act and innovate” [11]. Diversity is no longer counting about the numbers; but rather how organizations promote their members of its plan of action to be sustainable. Suttle asserts that the working environment in the US is getting to be more different in view of the few key advantages that a “diverse” work environment brings to these organizations [12]. It includes “availing of endowed talents, operating more effectively, increased adaptability, and broader range of services.” Diversity in general can be perceived differently by individuals. The general public has a spectrum of beliefs, perceptions, and values to diversity even to where they become once a part of these.

On the other hand, the world of education needs highly skilled, culturally, and linguistically diverse teachers, who are the best indispensable resource for students’ learning. According to Ross there is a “challenge of developing the best American teachers in a culturally diverse world” [13]. Presently, like never before, the US educational system must set up the majority of our youngsters to produce societies in a universally organized and related world. In numerous parts of the nation, the students themselves originate from a wide range of societies; and in all schools where children are conditioned to advance in aggressive and diverse worldwide economies. In another perspective from the West Coast of the USA, ASUO Multicultural Advocate of the University of Oregon manifests that the concept of “diversity encompasses acceptance and respect [14]. It means understanding that each individual is unique in recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences that a safe, positive, and nurturing environment can be promoted. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity that gushes out within each individual”.

The shortage in professional teachers in the United States is already alarming. A number of schools in the US are left without teachers and because of this predicament, even the “US

Immigration and Naturalization Service gives its blessing to increasing the number of migrant teachers. The National Education Association reports that 10,000 international teachers are working in public school systems on nonimmigrant or cultural exchange visas [15]. The rising number of migrant teachers in the United States not only fills in the great shortages in classroom teachers; but also exposes students and other school staff to cross cultural experiences that are very beneficial as the world becomes globalized. In addition to the availability of candidates abroad, school officials pursuing overseas recruitment cite the contribution to diversity that foreign teachers bring to US classrooms. One official from the State Board for Educator Certification in Texas points to the “great diversity” among student populations in areas such as Houston, El Paso and Laredo, and adds that a diverse student body can benefit from a diverse teaching staff [16].

In contrast, the increasing number of internationally trained SPED teachers could also become potentially counterproductive. They could pose a threat to their current local teaching membership and to the host community as a whole. Semyonov, Raijman, et al. posit, “perceived size is associated with perceived threat, and perceived threat somehow becomes the basis for exclusionary practices against foreigners—the higher the perceived size, the more pronounced are both the threat and anti-foreigner attitudes” [17]. In the teaching profession, diversity pervades from the moment teachers are trained until the time they retire from the profession. Diversity by nature has always been a precursor to conflict. Biases, differing beliefs and value systems are probable reasons for conflicts including professional ones. Most prevalent these days is the conflict arising between the roles of General Education (GE) teachers versus the SPED teachers. There is also the surge of internationally trained teachers visible across the US who brings their own culture with pedagogical beliefs, professional tradition, and training to teach multicultural classrooms.

Foreign teachers continue to contribute positively in the *world of education*. Bascia, James, in Reid, suggest that “immigrant teachers demonstrated an awareness of the social and economic forces at work and in the lives of other teachers and students” and “desired to make a difference in their lives” [18]. Highly skilled foreigners are becoming more

acceptable to the mainstream society especially in highly developed countries. Migrant SPED teachers are considered highly-skilled professionals because most of them have post baccalaureate degrees from their countries of origin and aptly equivalent to US requirements. The impact of migrant SPED teachers in their host communities cannot be seen unnoticed. Some have assimilated perfectly well and some have sad stories to tell. The families they bring become a part of the society as well. They now become consumers, service providers, community resources and tax payers, as neighbors, commuters, friends and competitors. As Reid points out, “the integration of immigrant teachers into the social fabric of 'mongrel' cities goes beyond work to society and the theoretical framework needs to include how we imagine life at the level of the street, the neighborhood, the school and the classroom” [18]. Internationally trained teachers, including SPED teachers come to their host countries with their repertoire of teaching skills. In applying these set of skills in the practice of their profession they also require other equally important set of skills—coping, adaptation and new learning skills. Sharplin asserts that *cultural adaptation of overseas-qualified and imported teachers have already developed a degree of teaching competence. Confronted with new cultural, social and organizational contexts, they need to modify their expectations* [19]. This clearly supports the relationship between how internationally trained SPED teachers are perceived to teach competently in the US.

Foreign teachers need support and training to be able to get through the pressure and stresses of working in a foreign land. Living and working as a teacher in a new country doubles the stress. The teaching profession is a demanding stressful job, what more if the teacher has to face a second stressor—working in a new country where he/she faces to acclimate with a new culture in a new teaching environment. Support systems are needed for foreign teachers to be successful in pursuing a teaching career in a foreign land. This is supported by Reid's assertion that *“Policy aimed at continued networking opportunities for immigrant teachers and mentoring from those who 'have been through it' are also important. In this way, immigrant teachers are able to isolate the discourses shaping their professional experiences and thus reduce professional isolation. In addition, professional development for receiving*

schools must go alongside any support for immigrant teachers otherwise 'the immigrant' will continue to be constructed as a problem” [18].

This study seeks to find the relationship between prevailing influences and the public perception toward migrant special education teachers. It is believed that economics, politics and cultures play a lot either a positive or a negative perception to SPED teachers. To O'Rourke and Sinnott, there are ranges of other economic and cultural factors that influence attitudes toward immigration [20]. Considering all factors influencing personal attitude toward immigrant, The United States of America has since gone a long way in her tolerance toward foreign individuals entering for better opportunities. Gang et al. posit that more than 80% of negative sentiments toward foreigners are “related to behavioral changes among the population” [21]. Immigrants get favorable support from young people, the higher educated and those who are more skilled. In contrast, Hainmueller and Hiscox retort that cultural threat and identity produce negative sentiments [22]. In addition, Constant, Kahanec and Zimmerman assert that “natives are more concerned about losing jobs to immigrants in countries with more economic immigrants” [23]. However, Bauer et al. conclude that when immigrants fill the need of the community and become a necessity of the host country, then they are considered favored immigrants [24].

Education is perhaps one of the important determinants used in most studies. Previous studies suggest a correlation and a linear relationship between being educated and the attitude or perception towards immigrants. Chandler and Tsia reveal that college education and perceived cultural threats, especially to the English language, have the most impact on immigration views [25]. With this in mind, Hain Mueller and Hiscox find that people with higher levels of education and occupational skills are more likely favor immigration regardless of the immigrants' skill attributes in question [22]. Mayda, Scheve and Slaughter establish that positive attitude towards immigration can be attributed to the increasing level of education [26].

Perhaps the most important trend worth mentioning is what Kohut, Suro, et.al have found out that “The percentage of Americans who say they have a friend or a relative who is a recent immigrant has also increased dramatically” [27]. It is therefore intriguing enough that this study ascertains if

relationship with foreign individuals—as colleagues or friends and travel abroad have some influence on the public perception toward internationally trained SPED teachers. The perception on how competent a teacher matters greatly in a multicultural setting. However, this same perception can be overshadowed by personal biases or preferences being a part of the original community as against to the new entrants. McCoubrey posits that “the common theme among parents, teachers, administrators and government officials is the importance of having qualified, engaged teaching professionals in front of the classroom” [16].

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study ascertained the perceptions toward migrant SPED teachers in selected states in the United States of America, it sought to answer these objectives: (1) determine the respondents' demographic profiles, (2) extrapolate the public perception of international SPED teachers in the US in terms of professional competence, professional engagement, and community engagement, (3) identify the perceived socio-cultural, political, economic dimensions of the migrant SPED teachers in the US workforce, (4) analyze the significant relationship of the respondents' demographic profiles and their perceptions toward special education teachers in the US.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Research Design

This study used a descriptive design with survey on selected respondents, who are stakeholders of the migrant SPED teachers in California, New Mexico, Florida, and Maryland in the United States of America. These four states were chosen because of great concentration of migrant SPED teachers who worked in the public school system. A snow-ball sampling of mix respondents who were Native Americans, White and Black Americans, and Asian migrants who were: parents, school and district supervisors, school teachers and school staff, where their contacts, casual acquaintances, friendships were established by their relatives and friends, before they were made to answer the modified survey questionnaire. Using an online Sample Size Calculator by Creative Research System, the sample was calculated with a confidence level of 95 percent

(95%) and a confidence interval of five (5) requiring at least 384 respondents.

Research Instrument

Modified questionnaires were used to generate valuable data. The first part featured ten questions on demographic profile of the respondents. The second part was based on the Teacher New Values, Skills and Knowledge (V3SK) Model by the National Institute of Education, Singapore and New Mexico Teacher Competencies for Licensure which assessed knowledge and perception towards effectiveness of migrant SPED teachers [28]. The third part was modeled on Scale Items Measuring Social Workers' Attitudes towards Immigrants and Immigration as used by Park, Bhuyan, et al. [29] and the Attitudes towards Immigration Scale (ATIS) developed by Kain, Rojas, Hovey [30] as used by Hovey, Joseph, Rojas, Rebecca, et al [30] to measure the perceived effectiveness of international SPED teachers. These questionnaires were distributed either personally by means of leisure travel to the aforementioned states to group of friends or by mail within the period of six months. Data obtained through the questionnaire were scored and described using 5-point Likert Scale. To Zikmund, the purpose of scaling is to represent quantitatively items, persons or events place in the spectrum [31]. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to aid in the analysis and interpretation of the data, using MS Excel 2007 and SPSS Version 19. The gathered data were tabulated for more than six months, while waiting for the required turn-out of data retrieval in some other states.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Migrant SPED Teachers' Profile

As to gender, Table 1 shows that 51% are males, while 49% are females. As hypothesized by Brenner and Fertig where most remarkable variation on attitude was on gender [32]. It shows that there is no significant relationship between gender and perception toward migrant SPED teachers. This means that teaching in the US observes no discrimination in terms of gender. As to the respondents' age profile ranges: 33% between 36-45 ages, 27% between 26-35 ages, 22% between 46-55 ages, 13% between 56-65 ages, and 6% between 18-25 ages. The distributions of ages represent young and vibrant teachers.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Bracket		
56-65	49	12.70
46-55	83	21.50
36-45	126	32.60
26-35	106	27.40
18-25	23	5.90
Total	387	100.00
Gender		
Male	196	50.70
Female	191	49.40
Total	387	100.00
Marital Status		
1. Single	77	19.90
2. Married	216	55.80
3. Separated	20	5.20
4. Divorced	62	16.00
5. Living-in with partner	9	2.30
6. Widow/widower	3	0.80
Total	387	100.00
Educational Attainment		
1. 12th grade or less	2	0.50
2. Graduated high school or equivalent	54	14.00
3. Some college, no degree	52	13.40
4. Associate degree	83	21.50
5. Bachelor's degree	135	34.90
6. Post-graduate degree	61	15.80
Total	387	100.00
Work Experience		
1. 0 or less than 1 year	1	0.30
2. 1 year to 3 years	23	5.90
3. 4 years to 10 years	78	20.20
4. more than 10 years	285	73.60
Total	387	100.00
Number of Travel Abroad		
1. more than 3 times	112	28.90
2. at least 1 time	174	45.00
3. Never	101	26.10
Total	387	100.00
Do you have a foreign co-workers/colleagues?		
Yes	357	92.30
Non	30	7.8
Total	387	100.00
Do you have foreign friends?		
Yes	274	70.80
No	113	29.20
Total	387	100.00
Where do you live?		
1. Maryland	97	25.10
2. Florida	97	25.10
3. New Mexico	96	24.80
4. California	97	25.10
Total	387	100.00
Which one is applicable to you?		
1. supervisor/administrator	34	8.80
2. Teacher	85	22.00
3. school staff	97	25.10
4. Parent	171	44.20
Total	387	100.00

Their stakeholders' perception on them is supported by O'Rourke and Sinnott who conclude an anti-immigrant sentiment i.e. positively or negatively correlated with age [20]. Chandler and Tsia posit that "earlier studies have produced mixed results with respect to age and immigration attitudes" [25]. This implies that the respondents share their honest perceptions pertaining to certain issues in the community that affect them. They are mature enough and not too young to be influenced by older folks or by the norms of society. As to marital status, 56% are married, 20% percent are single, 16% are divorced, 5% are separated, 2% are living-in with partner and 0.80% represents the widowed. This represents a highly diverse respondents' social marital status. Inferring the relationship between marital status and the perception toward migrant SPED teaching shows no significant relationship. The result resonates what Gorodzeisky believes that marital status does not exert significant effect on exclusionism [33]. This implies that marital status is not a determinant factor in assessing perception of migrant SPED teachers. As to educational attainment 35% finish a bachelor's degree, 22% have associate degree, 16% finish a post-graduate degree, 14% are graduates of high school equivalent and the remaining 0.50% is 12th grade or lower. To Hovey, et al., "participants who are less educated are inclined to hold negative perception toward immigration" [30]. But, this may not represent the entire picture of respondents' diverse background; their level of education is not a strong determining factor in measuring perception toward migrant SPED teachers. O'Connell posits the so called "safeguards insulating high-skilled nationals from direct labor competition with high-skilled immigrants", which obviously shows no significant relation [34].

As to work experience, 74% of the respondents have been working for than 10 years. This means that they have longer period of interaction and working contact with Filipino migrant SPED teachers. The result shows that there is no significant relationship between work experience and perception toward migrant SPED teachers. As to Travel Abroad, 45% of teacher-respondents experience travelling abroad at least once before they are accepted into the teaching job. Travelling would mean experiencing a new culture and interact with diverse personalities. By experiencing the unique culture of the place being visited, respondents acquire better understanding of a migrant teacher. According to Rourke and Sinnott,

those who are willing to move abroad, those who have already lived abroad, and those either born abroad or with foreign-born parents tend to view diversity as a benefit rather than a cost [20].

The result shows that traveling abroad does have a significant relationship with perception to migrant SPED teachers. In addition, Rourke and Sinnott conclude that “internationally mobile respondents might be less affected by immigration” [20]. This is in line with prediction that having had some form of contact, especially positive ones, with foreigner could affect one’s perception toward migrant workers in their home country. As to foreign colleague, 92.3% of the respondents confirm that they have worked with a foreign employee. Having foreign colleagues sways perception of native respondents positively toward migrant SPED teachers. Having extended contact with a migrant worker helps diminish the negative stereotype and anxiety. Having migrant colleagues have exhibited a positive perception. As supported by Park, et al., a conclusion is made that having more community and professional contact with immigrants translate to more favorable attitude [29]. Aberson and Haag confirm that “contact is the only significant predictor of implicit attitude” [35].

The 70.8% of the respondents’ connection with foreign friends means that they are used to associate with people of diverse culture. Having accepted a foreign national into their most intimate circle of social relations clearly inclines them to have a positive perception to migrant SPED teachers. This is supported by the findings of Stephan, Renfro, et al. indicate that the “negative stereotypes leads to significantly more negative attitudes toward the immigrant group” [36]. Having befriended to foreigners decreases if not eliminates those negative stereotypes. Aberson et al. assert that contact among diverse ethnicities is important in improving intergroup attitude [37]. It is implied that having some contacts, possibly a positive one abroad, in the work place and within the community, affects perception towards migrant teachers. The 44.2% constitutes as parent respondents followed by 25.1 % school staff and 22.0% as teachers. Result indicated that there is no significant relationship, which implies that the public in the four identified states have increasing contact with migrant teachers, but their place of residence does not really impact a general perception.

Public Perception to Migrant SPED Teacher in the US

Professional Competence

Table 2 Public Perception towards Migrant SPED Teachers in terms of Professional Competence

Indicators	WM	I
1. Migrant SPED Teacher’s Training Program	4.1	Much Effective
2. Teaching Strategies	4.1	Much Effective
3. Assessment and Progress Monitoring Practices of International Special Education Teachers	4.0	Much Effective
4. Inclusive Classroom Practices of Migrant SPED Teachers	4.0	Much Effective
5. Classroom Management Practices of Migrant SPED Teachers	4.1	Much Effective
Grand Mean	4.06	Much Effective

Parameter:

- 4.20-5.00 *Very Much Effective*
- 3.40-4.19 *Much Effective*
- 2.60-3.39 *Moderately Effective*
- 1.80-2.59 *Ineffective*
- 1.00-1.79 *Very Ineffective*

As shown in Table 2, respondents believe that migrant SPED teachers, who are more efficient and competent in delivering quality instruction to their students exhibit an average weighted mean of 4.06 is interpreted as Much Effective. They perceive that they possess adequate competence in terms of teaching strategies, classroom management, assessment, and inclusive classroom practices. They are also perceived to have received adequate training program in relation to their functions. This indicates that most of them see the existence of migrant SPED teachers as valuable support and brings positive input to their professional learning environment. Suttle asserts that the workplace in America is becoming more diverse because of the several key benefits that a diverse workplace brings to these companies including: best available talent operating more effectively, increased adaptability, and a broader range of service [12].

Professional Engagement

As gleaned on Table 3, respondents perceive an utmost efficiency and effectiveness migrant SPED teachers possess in terms of professional engagement, with an average rating of 4.24 is interpreted as Very Much Effective.

Table 3. Public Perception towards International SPED Teachers in terms of Professional Engagement

Indicators	WM	I
1. Migrant SPED Teachers' engagement in Professional Development Programs (updating with current teaching trends and technologies)	3.9	Much Effective
2. Ability to build rapport with their students	4.4	Much Effective
3. Ability to build rapport with colleagues – co teachers, therapists, counselors, etc.	4.3	Much Effective
4. Ability to build rapport with administrators – principals, supervisors, etc	4.3	Much Effective
5. Ability to conduct themselves professionally in school meetings and conferences	4.3	Much Effective
Grand Mean	4.24	Much Effective

Highest is (4.4) rating on their ability to build rapport with their students, interpreted as much effective. This is followed by their competent ability to build rapport with their colleagues with (4.3) rating, (4.3) rating for teachers, students and their ability to conduct themselves professionally in school meetings and conferences. This implies that they have good interpersonal ability and can work well with others. They also exhibit a good relationship with their students. Emotional intelligence is important in this endeavor because it is not easy to be a teacher in a multicultural setting. The respondents' perception of much effective rating toward them ensures that they are dedicated and committed significant learning facilitators in the class. They are perceived as satisfying and competent in professional engagement in most of the occasion.

Community Engagement

As depicted in Table 4, the respondents are satisfied with the performance of the migrant SPED teachers with Much Effective rating of (4.08) as average weighted mean. It implies that their preparation is adequate. It also shows that they have a high level of adaptability in community engagement. The said responses serve as feedback to which the system would base in deciding whether to increase or decrease its efforts to cope with varying stimuli. The respondents' positive responses exhibit that migrant SPED teachers produce adaptive responses, and found very much effective in terms of community engagement.

Table 4. Public Perception towards Migrant SPED Teachers in terms of Community Engagement

Indicators	WM	I
1. ability to adapt and cope with diversity in the community	4.3	Much Effective
2. communication skills	3.9	Much Effective
3. engagement in community activities	3.9	Much Effective
4. respecting the local traditions and culture	4.2	Much Effective
5. ability to build awareness and tolerance towards different cultures	4.1	Much Effective
Grand Mean	4.08	Much Effective

Migrant SPED Teachers' Socio-Cultural, Political and Economic Dimensions in the US Workforce

As shown in Table 5, an average mean of 3.99 is interpreted with High Impact connotes that the presence of the migrant SPED teachers provide a positive impact to the community. Impact in this case would mean the level of agreement inclined to a positive or negative attitude toward migrant SPED teachers in the US. In fact, seven (7) out of the 20 items of the presented concepts and ideas achieved the rating of very high impact which means that the respondents are very agreeable to have migrant trained SPED teachers in the US classrooms. This implies that the migrant SPED teachers are accepted by the community and they have adapted the public schools' diverse culture and social, political and economic lifestyles.

They are trained teachers and adequately contributed much to the community in terms of socio-cultural, political, and economic dimension. In terms of socio-cultural dimension, migrant SPED teachers collaborate with the respondents, as parents to monitor their wards' learning. They harmonize with them and acclimatize the American way of life such as access to social services and promoting their American customs and way of life. In terms of economic dimension, the respondents perceive that migrant SPED teachers are well compensated and pay taxes to the federal government, which contributes to the economy of the state. They also perceived that these teachers are not draining the resources of the federal government. As regards to the political dimension, respondents perceive migrant SPED teachers to promote peace and harmony in the United States of America and strengthen its centuries of solidarity.

Table 5 Perceived Socio-Cultural-Political-Economic Impact of Migrant SPED Teachers to in selected state in the US

Socio-Cultural-Political-Economic Impact	AWS	DR
1. I have felt good/will feel good visiting/working in a school with a migrant SPED teacher (sci)	4.1	High Impact
2. My ability to work/do business in school has improved/will improve greatly while working with a migrant SPED teacher (sci)	3.7	High Impact
3. I share the views expressed by the media about how migrant SPED teachers help the educational system here in the USA (sci)	4.1	High Impact
4. My family, friends, and co-workers really like migrant SPED teachers, so do I (sci)	4.3	High Impact
5. International Special Education Teachers share the same beliefs and values of my community (sci)	3.4	Moderate Impact
6. I encourage my friends and family to allow migrant SPED teachers to join us in social gatherings (sci)	3.9	High Impact
7. Migrant SPED teachers are well behaved, just like any other international (migrant) worker (sci)	3.9	High Impact
8. I feel that the different approaches and ideas used by Migrant SPED teachers help their students (pi)	4.3	High Impact
9. I feel very positive about Migrant SPED teachers, despite what the media say about them (sci)	3.9	High Impact
10. I will share to others my positive views toward Migrant SPED teachers (sci)	3.9	High Impact
11. America should take care of Americans and Migrant SPED teachers equally (sci)	4.2	High Impact
12. Migrant SPED Teachers contributed greatly to the United States (ei)	4.2	High Impact
13. The United States is strengthened by its diversity (pi)	4.4	High Impact
14. Migrant SPED Teachers pay taxes and therefore are not likely to drain the United States of its valuable resources (ei)	3.7	High Impact
15. Migrant SPED teachers could become good citizens of the United States of America (pi)	3.9	High Impact
16. Migrant SPED teachers are law abiding and therefore are not likely to commit crime (pi)	3.8	High Impact
17. Migrant SPED teachers are peace loving and therefore are not likely to increase the dangers of terrorism (pi)	3.8	High Impact
18. Migrant SPED teachers fill the high-need jobs and therefore are not likely to take jobs from those who need them (ei)	3.7	High Impact
19. Migrant SPED teachers enrich American customs and way of life (sci)	4.3	High Impact
20. Migrant SPED teachers should have as much access to social services as U.S. citizens (sci)	4.3	High Impact
Grand mean	3.99	High Impact

To Suttle, American workplace is becoming more diverse because of the several key benefits that a diverse workplace brings to companies [12]. The lowest rating is in the item on sharing the same personal beliefs and values to the community, which is rated moderately high (3.4). This is understandable since they have different cultural background. The findings are related to the perspective from the University of Oregon's ASUO Multicultural Advocate which manifests diversity that encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing the individual differences is of paramount interest. In general, the results from the questionnaires imply that the respondents feel that the migrant SPED teachers

are much effective in professional competence and professional engagement; but very much effective in their professional engagement. The Socio-Cultural-Political-Economic Impact of the migrant SPED teachers is given with an average of high rating.

Relationship between Profile and Perception towards International SPED Teachers

Findings show that at 0.05 margin of error, age ($x^2 = 15.42$), gender ($x^2 = 3.85$), marital status ($x^2 = 19.67$), education ($x^2 = 16.80$), work experience ($x^2 = 12.51$), their state of origin ($x^2 = 11.43$), and personnel applicability ($x^2 = 13.27$), has no significant relationship with the respondents perception towards migrant SPED Teachers. This means that the

variables do not influence their perception. Age, gender, status, years of experience, place of origin, among others do not affect their perceptions and beliefs on having foreign teachers in the community. The number of times they travelled abroad ($x^2 = 18.49$), having worked with a foreigner colleague ($x^2 = 24.31$) and having a foreigner friend ($x^2 = 31.25$) have significant relationship to their perception toward migrant SPED teachers. This means that the said variables affect how they see migrant trained SPED teachers blending the American culture. The experience of having a foreigner friend or working with a colleague with a different culture and even the experience of travelling to a new place with a different culture has bearing on their beliefs and understanding about these teachers. The result shows that traveling abroad does have a significant relationship with perception toward migrant SPED teachers. As Lee and Cox [38] conclude, a more “acculturated public significantly differ in their travel lifestyle” as well as Hayes and Dowds expressing that “social exposure” especially “previously established friendship network of immigrants” is the most vital and constant determinant of attitudes; thus, improving, establishing, creating, developing and strengthening positive contact between diverse people could foster a healthier and more productive positive relationship [39].

CONCLUSION

The respondents' socio-demographic profile exhibited no significant relationship between the perceptions toward migrant SPED teachers. But, the experience of having a foreigner friend, working with a colleague with a different culture and the experience of travelling abroad affect their perception significantly. Migrant SPED teachers in the US were positively recognized and accepted by their stakeholders like the parents of the students, colleagues and school administrators. They were perceived to be efficient and effective in the aspects of professional competence, professional and community engagement. Their acceptance, recognition, and how they were perceived by stakeholders became the cornerstones in the achievement of their ‘American dream’. Likewise, the training in special education in the Philippines such as the balance between acquisition of theories and principles in the classroom and incessant practice teaching in SPED schools in the Philippine public schools indicated a substantial

contribution to the success of Filipino migrant teachers in the US, vis-à-vis, contributed to the way of life of their American stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are limited only Special Education training and prospects both in the Philippines and foreign employment, such as: (1) provide a pre-deployment seminar to prospective special education teachers traveling to other countries; (2) strengthen faculty development programs for migrant SPED teachers; (3) maximize training on transnational teaching for foreign teachers; (4) future researchers delve into other research topics related to the flight of migrant teachers in some other countries aside from the Philippines. Special education enthusiasts may have an eye on the status of Special Education in the Philippines and its impact when these expert SPED teachers leave the country for their employment abroad.

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