

Implementing Inclusive Teaching Practices Among J1 Teachers: Challenges, Adaptive Strategies, and Implications for a Training Program

Marichow E. Camay

Philippine Christian University Taft Avenue, Manila, Philippines

Abstract

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of J-1 teachers in implementing inclusive teaching practices after participating in inclusive teaching training programs in Hertford County Public Schools, North Carolina, USA. Specifically, it examined the teachers' experiences, the challenges they encountered, the adaptive strategies they employed, and the implications of these experiences for the development of a responsive training program. Twelve (12) J-1 teachers were purposively selected as participants and were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that participants experienced both rewarding and challenging transitions as they adapted to inclusive classrooms. They developed greater competence in differentiated instruction, accommodation, cultural responsiveness, and individualized support while recognizing the value of collaboration with mentors and special education teams. The major challenges included managing diverse learner needs, addressing behavioral crises, complying with U.S. special education requirements, and adjusting to a new educational and cultural environment. To address these challenges, participants employed differentiated instruction, structured classroom routines, positive behavior supports, reflective practice, and collaborative professional learning. Based on these findings, the study recommends the development of a comprehensive training program emphasizing U.S. special education policies, practical classroom simulations, behavior management, culturally responsive pedagogy, and sustained mentoring and professional support. The study concludes that continuous, practice-based professional development and collaborative support systems are essential in strengthening J-1 teachers' competence and confidence in implementing inclusive teaching practices effectively.

Keywords: Inclusive teaching practices, J-1 teachers, inclusive education, professional development, phenomenological study

