

Lived Experiences of Filipino Music Teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam

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Abstract

Educators frequently travel internationally for many motivations, chiefly propelled by the pursuit of enhanced financial and professional prospects, alongside personal development and exploration. The goal of this research is to explore the experiences encountered by Filipino music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam. The study anchors its perspective on Albert Bandura's Reciprocal Determinism in 1977 and Nick Page's Multiculturalism in 2001 through the perspective of the Sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky in 1978. Using a narrative inquiry under qualitative research design, the researchers identify the advantages and challenges of teaching music in Hanoi, Vietnam. The teachers' experiences were both remarkable and arduous. In addition to the prejudice and cultural disparities that astonished them, they encountered issues connected to communication and professional affairs.

Conversely, educators might enhance their expertise in music instruction by participating in various seminars and workshops specifically focused on music education. They were able to assist their family by securing a wage that exceeded their earnings in the Philippines. On the other side, the experiences of instructors in Hanoi, Vietnam, are positively influenced. Despite the challenges, they were able to acclimate to the evolving environment. Consequently, the result demonstrated the principles of Multiculturalism, indicating that the cultures of many civilizations influence teachers on personal, behavioral, developmental, and professional levels. The researchers recommend reflecting on the importance of the music subject in the curriculum of the Philippines, as it holds significance in various countries around the world.

Keywords: *Music Education, Multiculturalism, Filipino Teachers, Reciprocal Determinism*

INTRODUCTION

Only some people live a particularly fairy-tale life where they can control everything, which, for the most part, is quite significant. All particularly positive dreams involve risks and challenges that must be overcome before they can become a reality (Bautista & Tamayo, 2020), which is fundamentally significant. People worked diligently to earn a better income to support their families and loved ones. Aside from higher salaries, sending children to school, small real estate and investments, and working in greener pastures are mainly the most common and easiest reasons to work abroad, contrary to popular belief. As a result, many

have big houses, generally large farms, cars, and the latest gadgets, which is quite significant. Children attended expensive private schools and naturally lived in many kinds of luxury.

Nevertheless, the money they invested took some hard work, perseverance, and trouble before they could achieve those dreams. Beyond these positive dreams, this study explored the experiences of Filipino music teachers working abroad, focusing on their roles as music educators, family members, and ordinary citizens striving for a good and fulfilling life. Based on the researcher's experience as a music teacher, he identified three factors that he typically encountered while working abroad. These kinds include particularly cross-cultural issues described as language barriers and cultural differences, professional issues found in the curriculum, school environment, administrative support, family separation, and financial and cultural adjustment, which is a personal matter in a significant way. Teaching and living in a foreign country with a vastly different culture presents a real challenge in gaining courage and determination. The study explores the experiences of Filipino music teachers living in Hanoi, Vietnam. The study aims to raise awareness of Filipino teachers working abroad and to understand their expectations by examining how Filipino music teachers have significantly navigated cultural differences while teaching in foreign countries. Their students specifically come from different countries with different cultural backgrounds. The study identified the tremendous adaptations made by teachers in music education, highlighting the differences and similarities between their teaching experiences in the Philippines and Hanoi, Vietnam. This inquiry also assesses whether music teachers face the commonly referred to "language barrier," which significantly impacts both teachers and students with varying expressions. The testimonies based on the respondents' stories are more relevant to the purpose of the study. The research used Albert Bandura's reciprocal determinism in his social learning theory, which is quite significant. Reciprocal determinants consist of three factors that influence an individual's actions: personal, behavioral, and environmental, which are all quite significant. By this, the study narrated what made music teachers stay and continue teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. Adapting to new environments is often challenging in these educators' personal and professional lives.

The objective of this study was to explore the different experiences of three Filipino music teachers currently teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. The study's results offered commentary on the experiences of Filipino teachers teaching abroad, which offered perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of teaching, especially for those who intend to teach overseas. This study allowed future scholars to explore the same area of research further using the experiences of music teachers teaching in other parts of the world.

The study anchors its perspective on Albert Bandura's Reciprocal Determinism in 1977 and Nick Page's Multiculturalism in 2001 through the perspective of the Sociocultural theory of Lev Vygotsky 1978. In his work, Reciprocal Determinism, Albert Bandura developed his social learning theory. Personal, behavioral, and environmental factors are the three factors in reciprocal determinism that influence people's behaviors. The personal aspect relates to the individual's ideas, beliefs, qualities, and expectations. Behavioral aspects refer to how people's ideas and actions react to environmental influences. Environmental factors are external forces that influence an individual's ideas and actions. The triadic reciprocity model illustrates the relationship between behavioral, personal, and environmental elements.

This study reflects on how people's aspects of behavior relate to how people's thoughts and behaviors respond to the effects of their surroundings. This is associated with how Filipino music teachers learn and gather experiences in a foreign land.

This framework showed the interconnection of personal factors, behavior, and environmental factors that affect the determinism of a person. His affiliations are influenced by his beliefs, values, goals, self-efficacy, expectations, and attributions. These personal factors are connected and reciprocated to the behavior in reflection with his actions, choices, statements, learning, and achievements. This study focuses on why Filipino teachers plan to go overseas to pursue their teaching careers, their professional growth, and the cultural upbringing they possess in affecting their students and co-teachers.

The behavior aspect of this reciprocal model means that a person is also relevant to the environmental factors such as reinforcements he gets from the setting where he is located, the instruction he takes from his workplace, the feedback that comes from a constructive center, and other behavioral conditions that set his

personal needs. These requirements meant that the study had to examine how the society he was currently part of affects his behavior. The goal was foreign culture's effect on Filipino music teachers' basic ideas.

Lastly, the environmental factors create the person or teacher regarding the reinforcements, instructions, and pedagogies learned; feedback taken from these learned pedagogies and techniques; other behavioral conditions; and environmental connections. The primary focus of this research study is to examine how working in a new cultural environment affects Filipino music teachers who are teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. There could be many aspects, such as the students, co-teachers, friends outside the academic endeavor, and the administration.

Nick Page (2001), in terms of multiculturalism in the perspective of Sociocultural theory, mentioned that embracing diversity needs to be suitable musically and culturally and that having a restricted view of cultural viewpoints challenges other people's cultural beliefs, artistic performances, and cultural values. This framework' was parallel to the notions pointed out by Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory. Vygotsky (1978) discusses the concept of cooperative communication, in which the kid strives to grasp the teacher's activities or directions. This assumption is also true for other cognitive processes, such as constructing conceptions connected to higher functions generated from actual interpersonal connections and the deliberate attention and recollection of logical information. This observation helps to explain why the most fundamental tenet of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is mediated by the building of sociocultural learning processes that resonate with the cultural context of the instructor. Students come from various cultural and musical backgrounds, so they learn more about each other's music and traditions.

This study investigated the factors that influence music teachers' experience while immersed in their jobs in Hanoi, Vietnam. Moreover, Multiculturalism manifests an understanding of Filipino music teachers' and Vietnamese students' differences that might shed light on the experiences and factors to be considered in terms of cultural variables. Hence, the subject is always driven by the cultural background he had learned from home or his surroundings. However, immersion in a community with diverse multicultural values establishes this cultural knowledge. This is why conversation or dialogue is very important in sharing and pointing out differences and similarities of the cultural background they have to achieve learning among the members of the community. Thus, determinism comes into play. When one is caught in a society with different cultural backgrounds, his cultural upbringing is affected by a reciprocation of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors that create what he believes, what he thinks, and what he is acting upon.

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences encountered by Filipino music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam. Specifically, it answered the following questions.

1. What are the experiences of Filipino music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam?
2. What are the factors that greatly influence music teachers' experiences based on reciprocal determinism?
3. How do these experiences affect their professional growth?

METHODS

Research Design

The study utilized Qualitative research specifically. The design of this qualitative research is a narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry research design is a person's or small group's experiences, showing the individual's lived experience or unique perspective that entails collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to comprehend thoughts, views, or experiences. In this context, the research examined the experiences of Filipino music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam. This experience entails pinpointing the benefits and obstacles of teaching music in Hanoi, Vietnam, and identifying various strategies to surmount these challenges. The researcher employed the interview method for data collection, utilizing semi-structured questions that focus on the experiences of Filipino music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Research Locale/Participants

The study was conducted in Hanoi, Vietnam. Vietnam is a country that accepts foreign teachers to teach core subjects to their students, one of which is Music. Thus, teachers' employment rate is decently higher than in past years.

This has been the focus of the research because it represents the practical setting in which the researcher is currently located. The researcher looked at this opportunity to use Hanoi, Vietnam, as the setting for the study and the school he is currently teaching.

Research Instrument

This study's primary data-gathering instrument was a self-made, semi-structured interview questionnaire. The research instrument consists of four key parts designed to address the problem: the respondents' background, probing questions, follow-up questions, and exit questions.

The respondents were chosen purposely. Since they are Filipinos teaching Music Education in Hanoi, Vietnam, they have the experiences fit for the Narrative Inquiry of this research study. Aside from that, accessibility-wise, they are connected and associated with the researcher, which makes the interview more experiential, which would target the research goal. This makes them credible and accurate in terms of sharing their narrative experiences in the matter of the research study.

The "Background of the Respondents" section examines the personal profiles of the participants, including their choices, cultural backgrounds, and motivations for working abroad. Probing questions introduce participants to the discussion topic and encourage them to share their thoughts and experiences in teaching in Vietnam.

Follow-up questions look further into the conversation topic and the participants' viewpoints regarding the different factors influencing music teachers' experiences in their teaching and professional lives in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The questions entail the connection between professional growth and the participants' experiences. This is important in noting the different changes that have massively affected the development of the professional life of teachers. It mirrors the opportunities and the comparison to working abroad and staying in the country to pursue teaching.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher crafted sets of questions relative to the problems stated in the study. Consultation with the research adviser and panel members to validate the interview protocol was done to see if the content answered the posted problem—a Letter of permission for the respondents' research. After this, the researcher continued to the data-gathering procedures. The researcher conducted an oral interview with the respondents to fully narrate the experience for a more in-depth exchange of conversation and insights. After receiving the responses, the researcher interpreted and analyzed them to form the findings and draw conclusions and recommendations.

Each participant was given thirty minutes for the interview session. Since there were four participants, the interview lasted for almost two hours. It happened in the room of the school where they were teaching. With the use of a phone recorder, the interviews were transcribed, recorded, and analyzed.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The research used Narrative Inquiry to analyze the data. The themes that were created highlight the similarities identified in the interviews regarding the respondents' experiences of teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. In doing so, the researcher used an application. The software tool used for coding is the Delve tool. It is a well-known cloud-based CAQDAS application for qualitative research coding. This software application was created in March 2015 by Laiyee Ho and Alex Limpacher in New York City (Ho, 2018). Delve is used to

manage texts and information from other interviews and to discover and organize the information required to set themes by the author to develop codes and themes.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher prioritized asking permission and processing consent as a necessary step to establish the integrity of the study. The researcher approached the respondents formally in a virtual context and presented a letter of approval before conducting the data-gathering procedure.

Each step of the data collection is supported with full consent from all the respondents. The researcher provided a letter of agreement discussing confidentiality and honesty. The study's respondents were free to withdraw from the interview protocol if unwilling to participate. However, the participants who wish to participate must sign the agreement letter before the research instrument. Each respondent had to undergo the same process to validate the results and avoid complications.

The names of the respondents, the name of the school principal, and the inclusion of the school per se are under the data privacy act of 2012 in the Philippines. Although the study was conducted in Vietnam, the rules of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 were followed since the respondent was connected to the university in the Philippines.

RESULTS

The narratives given by the teachers molded the experiences they gained through the years as they continued their work in Hanoi, Vietnam. It is vital to consider the comparisons and contrasts between these experiences to achieve the research goal.

Before deciding to teach in Hanoi, Vietnam, all of the respondents had taught in public or private schools in the Philippines. The information indicates that the respondents' teaching experiences are complete since they continue to work and teach abroad. Therefore, they comprehensively understand how to instruct in an academic setting. They are also familiar with their job description. They also gained knowledge from their previous teaching experiences. Upon their arrival in Hanoi, Vietnam, they may adapt to the situation as deemed necessary. They have been teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam, for over three years, so they know its education system. Teachers could expand their professional expertise by connecting with groups outside their school. As part of their teaching duties, the school has acknowledged that its employees have ties to other groups. Based on the narrative, they were all teaching comparably at the primary level in their respective institutions.

The responses were categorized into three groups based on personal and professional factors: gaining knowledge of new pedagogies, cost-effectiveness, and increased earnings. Teacher D's main focus in choosing to work in Hanoi, Vietnam, was learning new pedagogies. It was all observed that all teacher-respondents were looking after the cost-effectiveness Vietnam has to offer its citizens. They all agreed that with cost-effectiveness came increased earnings that they could use to provide a better life for their family in the Philippines.

The teachers chose to continue teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam, for two behavioral reasons: to better understand the differences between Vietnam and the Philippines and to explore the rich cultural diversity present in Vietnam, which features various merging cultural influences. For the first reason, Teachers D, A, and B were curious about what makes Vietnam different from the Philippines in many aspects. Teachers B and C had their eyes on cultural diversity.

One of the primary motivations for the respondents to move or find work in a new country is the search for a new home and a fresh start. People flocked to where they would be happiest working and living because it offered the prospect of a fresh start and a better future. The climate and the environmental vitality people experience are also significant factors. These were observed in the narratives given by the respondents in terms of noting environmental reasons why they chose to work in Vietnam.

The remarkable experiences they had in Vietnam opened up opportunities for them. Comparably, all had achieved financial stability over their years of working. Teachers D and C learned to adapt music education to a global context. Since they are no longer in their home country, they needed to expand and refine their knowledge of music education to meet their foreign pupils' demands. They were able to address current challenges in terms of pedagogies and teaching methods since they were driven to study more by the institution to which they belonged.

On the other hand, Teachers A and B realized the importance of cultural sensitivity and tolerance from their experiences dealing with other people in a foreign land. They picked up on the linguistic cues that increased cultural sensitivity and acceptance. These resulted in cultural understanding and appreciation.

However, positive changes came from difficult moments as they established their teaching careers in Vietnam. All of them comparably stated that they had experienced difficulties in terms of cultural adaptation, discrimination, and language barrier problems. Moving to a new nation or being immersed in a culture or environment that is strange to you can cause feelings of apprehension, confusion, and even fear. The word "language barrier" is often used metaphorically to allude to difficulties speaking the same language. These linguistic and cultural barriers arise when two or more groups want to communicate but use different languages or even dialects. Teachers from the Philippines have spoken out against racial microaggressions and educational bias. For example, people often assume that they teach a topic that matches a stereotype when they first arrive.

Fortunately, they overcame these challenges by reverting to the fundamentals of adjusting to unfamiliar cultures, cuisines, and languages. There was even a time when they needed to develop acceptance of others' perceptions, especially in a foreign land. They were also able to obey the laws bound to a specific territory. They needed to grasp the numbering system, the primary forms of communication, and even the nonverbal cues that are so common in Vietnam. The Filipino music instructors' tactic for dealing with discrimination was to be open to new ideas and perspectives. Knowing the local customs and laws is essential when visiting a different country. Knowing the customs and laws of one's host nation is crucial, as flouting such regulations might have dire consequences. As foreign nationals working inside Vietnam's borders, Filipinos would familiarize themselves with the country's norms and policies so they may better understand their place in the workplace and further their careers.

In a multi-diverse community, various factors influenced the experiences and outlook on life of its residents. In terms of personal and developmental factors, one key contributor to character growth is the introduction of positive changes. They have the flexibility to deal with the rapid tempo of change brought on by curricular shifts. Comparably, all of them believed that a person's unique qualities might be shaped partly by the environment. One way to foster an environment conducive to learning is to help them pursue advanced education. Lastly, residents of Hanoi, Vietnam, seeking personal growth may find teaching at international schools overseas to be a formative experience.

In terms of behavioral factors, Teachers D and C believed that various situations called for different responses from me, so I had to be tolerant, socially and culturally adaptable, open to learning from various perspectives, conscious of where I came from, and able to adjust my behavior accordingly. Both Teachers A and B pointed out that applying findings from research to improve problem-solving and interpersonal relationships can be effective when changing a career environment or country. As they teach in Hanoi, Vietnam, they consider environmental factors to provide their students with the necessary resources to make music. This matter was affirmed by Teachers D, A, and B from their experiences.

All these factors affected their experiences teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. Respondents' professional development was primarily focused on how they communicate with their students as a result of their time in Hanoi, Vietnam. It is also how they apply their teaching styles in their methods of instruction and the way they create their interactions with other educators, administrators, parents, and community members.

Ultimately, they all agreed that definite lines separate Vietnam's music education system from the Philippines. Teachers D, A, and B unanimously agreed that the respect for the educational system in Vietnam differs significantly from that in the Philippines. The focus of the subject is therefore not part or a component

of any other subject matter; in translation in the Philippines, Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH). Additionally, the method of implementing experiential learning for students is being discussed.

The teacher-respondents were all staying in Vietnam for more than three years. They taught in the Philippines before continuing teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. The respondents were also connected to several international, national, and local affiliations and were continuing their master's degrees. All of the respondents were teaching primary level in their respective schools.

Regarding personal and professional reasons, the respondents' answers to the questions were categorized into three codes: Learning New Pedagogies, Affordability, and Higher Income.

Regarding behavioral reasons, many respondents considered the following reasons. These reasons were encapsulated in two codes: (1) Know the Different Scenarios of Vietnam and its Difference to the Philippines and (2) Cultural Diversity.

Regarding environmental considerations, the respondents agreed that they have chosen to go to Vietnam for the following reasons: Better Place to Live and Better People and Climate.

In the remarkable experiences, the respondents identified this based on how it personally changed their life, what improved their behavior as a teacher, and how they dealt with the people around them. Respondents stated that their most memorable personal experiences were related to financial stability and cultural understanding. They have also gained experience in developing and internationalizing pedagogy and teaching strategies in music, as well as fostering cultural sensitivity, tolerance, and patience.

The respondents have also shared the challenges they face on a personal, professional, behavioral, and environmental level. The respondents narrated this part through five codes taken from the teacher respondents' characteristics: acclimatization difficulty and community acceptance, language barriers, challenges of living alone, discrimination, and complaining parents. Fortunately, the respondents devised numerous strategies to overcome the challenges. They were constituted with a lot of help from different people as well. Mainly, the codes to answer this subcomponent were: Learning the Basics, Acceptance of One's Perception, and Following the Country's Rules and Regulations.

Improvement of Lifestyle and Adjustment to Change, Developing Graduate Studies, and Entitlement to Teaching in a Foreign International School was the personal and developmental factors experienced by the Music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam. Regarding behavioral factors experienced primarily in their teaching career in Hanoi, Vietnam, the answers were coded into two: Development of New Traits by the need of the situation and utilization of research. Lastly, for environmental factors, the answers were: (1) The development of new traits was driven by situational needs and the education; and (2) Contribute to the Moral and Professional teachers as they continued teaching in Hanoi, Vietnam. It was assured that the answers were grouped into two: (1) Shift in Personal Outlook; and (2) Confidence Boosting Experience. For the effects of their experiences on their teaching styles, they shared their answers through the codes: (1) Improvement of Knowledge and Etiquette in Teaching Music; and (2) Expands Personal Creativity and Talents through Opportunities. Lastly, a unified answer on the environmental factors were answered through the codes: "Broader Knowledge and Awareness of Multicultural Differences to Understand Others." It came from its characteristic, "Increase understanding of multicultural differences to establish harmonious communication with co-workers."

Finally, the differences between the two countries in teaching music education were coded and analyzed through characteristics from the respondents' answers. The codes were: (1) Value of Music Education; (2) Full Support System on the Needed Materials for Music; and (3) Implementation of Outbound Learning Activity.

DISCUSSION

The experiences of the teachers were both remarkable and challenging. Aside from the discrimination and cultural differences that shocked them, there were problems dealing with communications and work-related matters. On a lighter note, the teachers could enhance their understanding of Music education by

participating in various seminars and training specifically designed for teaching this subject. They could help their families because they earned more than in the Philippines.

Parallel to Reciprocal Determinism, the factors significantly influence music teachers' experiences. The personal and professional characteristics that contributed to the growth and development of music teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam, included the enhancement of one's lifestyle and the ability to adapt to change, the advancement of graduate studies, and the entitlement to teach in a foreign international school. The responses were coded according to two categories regarding the behavioral factors experienced most frequently during their teaching career in Hanoi, Vietnam. These categories are as follows: Utilization of Research and Development of New Traits by the Need of the Situation. And lastly, the responses for environmental issues were as follows: (1) Contributing to the Provision of Resources for the Development of Music Education and (2) Contributing to the Moral and Professional Upbringing of Future Musicians. This means that Reciprocal Determinism manifests genuinely in a person whenever they work in a different environment - in this context, Hanoi, Vietnam.

There is a positive effect on teachers' experiences in Hanoi, Vietnam. Regardless of the difficulties, they could adapt to the changing environment. Henceforth, the effect manifested the tenets of Multiculturalism which pointed out that the culture of different societies affects the teachers personally, behaviorally, developmentally, and professionally.

Moreover, the respondents' statements solidified the pragmatic significance of music education in Vietnam. Their environment gained largely from the teachers. From the formation and establishment of the music education curriculum to the use of tangible teaching styles in music education, the institution was greatly affected positively. In return, the teachers were well-compensated and immersed in the academic and professional improvement for the developmental and behavioral growth they have deserved.

As this study moved forward, the implications were drawn as follows: (1) Despite the focus on music teachers, non-music teachers can still find opportunities abroad. This study implies the importance of opportunities for professional and behavioral growth, not just the economic side. (2) It is also implied that music education gained so much appreciation in the foreign Asian lands like Vietnam. Having to stand as one unit, this can also be part of the consideration of the new system of education in the Philippines. With significant value placed on appreciating arts in the form of music, it can be implied that Vietnam allocates more budget not only to the core subjects but also to the minor and technical subjects for the students' holistic formation.

Recommendations

The study's findings lead to the following recommendations:

Since Filipino teachers and MAPEH Curriculum innovators are given insights into the experiences of Filipino Music Teachers in Hanoi, Vietnam, they must weigh in on the country's curriculum. They have to give more emphasis to the different components.

The institutions recommend that music teachers receive more relevant training. Please make the necessary musical materials available so they can teach. Give music-related disciplines a higher priority. There should be a broader acknowledgment that the study of Music may be of tremendous assistance in the growth and development of a youngster's intellect. It's not only about actively engaging in musical activities like playing an instrument or singing, but also about nurturing one's social, cognitive, and emotional aspects.

The separation of the two skills-based teaching specializations for instructors is recommended for Curriculum Innovators. Music and Art, Music and Health, Physical Education and Art, or Physical Education and Health are required for Filipino Music or physical education instructors to be effective. They can use outbound learning through an experiential approach to teach music or any component of MAPEH.

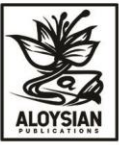
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