

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Dafe E. Olenski, Ed.D

Independent Researcher, Tampa, Florida, United States

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3287-8953>

ABSTRACT: This qualitative systematic review synthesized findings from 18 studies examining how internationally recruited teachers experience professional transition and adaptation across diverse international school contexts. Guided by the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM), the review examined five core domains: transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints. Findings demonstrated that all five domains appeared consistently across studies, supporting the applicability of CIAM as a framework for understanding teacher adaptation in international educational settings. Transition challenges and relational and emotional coping emerged as the most consistently emphasized domains, while identity shifts, instructional adaptation, and structural constraints showed greater contextual variation. More recent studies introduced additional subthemes that enriched the model, including minority identity awareness, credentialing and policy pressures, technology-mediated and inclusive pedagogical demands, expatriate support networks, and transnational career mobility. Rather than constituting separate domains, these elements extended and refined the explanatory depth of the original CIAM structure. The findings suggest that internationally recruited teachers' adaptation is dynamic, context-dependent, and shaped by interactions among institutional conditions, professional expectations, and relational support. The synthesis highlights the importance of structured induction, mentorship, credentialing guidance, inclusive professional development, and sustained relational support systems in promoting successful adaptation and retention among internationally recruited teachers across international school contexts.

KEYWORDS: internationally recruited teachers, teacher migration, professional adaptation, qualitative systematic review, Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM), instructional adaptation

INTRODUCTION

The global movement of teachers across national borders has become an increasingly visible response to persistent teacher shortages worldwide (UNESCO, 2024). UNESCO identifies these shortages as a structural challenge affecting educational access and quality, with workforce mobility emerging as one strategy for maintaining system stability (UNESCO, 2024). Many countries now rely on internationally recruited educators to address staffing gaps and sustain instructional continuity (Economic Policy Institute, 2019; Garcia & Weiss, 2022). Consequently, teachers are not only knowledge carriers but also professionals navigating transitions across cultural, institutional, and pedagogical systems (Alsado & Oliveros, 2025; Oca & Malaga, 2025).

Research consistently shows that internationally recruited teachers encounter significant adjustments when entering new educational systems. Differences in classroom management, assessment practices, communication styles, and professional expectations often require teachers to recalibrate instructional practices and professional identities (Garcia & Weiss, 2022; Ralph, 2024; Russell, 2023; Merritt, 2024; Trinidad, 2025). Qualitative studies describe migration as a process of professional repositioning within unfamiliar institutional and cultural environments (Harrison-Reid, 2025; Rosales, 2024). At the same time, adaptation can foster professional growth, pedagogical flexibility, and expanded instructional skills as teachers respond to diverse student populations and institutional contexts (Merritt, 2024; Calbi & Diano, 2025; Cutor, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Gomez-Lange, 2024).

The literature identifies several recurring challenges associated with international teacher recruitment. Teachers frequently navigate unfamiliar classroom management systems, accountability structures, licensure requirements, immigration processes, and evaluation procedures that differ from those in their home countries (Ralph, 2024; Russell, 2023; Merritt, 2024;

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Trinidad, 2025; Kanagaratnam, 2023). Studies focusing on Filipino and other migrant educators further highlight relocation stress, housing and financial difficulties, and emotional strain related to family separation (Alsado & Oliveros, 2025; Oca & Malaga, 2025; Modesto, 2020). Teachers also report renegotiating professional and cultural identities while managing perceptions related to language, accent, culture, and visible markers of foreignness (Rosales, 2024; Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023).

Instructional adaptation is a central component of the transition process. Teachers often modify pedagogical approaches, classroom management strategies, assessment practices, and communication methods to align with local expectations (Ralph, 2024; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Rosales, 2024). Recent studies also emphasize adaptation to technology-mediated instruction, inclusive education practices, and culturally responsive teaching environments (Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020). Equally important are relational and emotional support. Mentorship, collegial collaboration, expatriate communities, and professional networks contribute to adjustment, confidence, and belonging (Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Tatel, 2021; Bassett, 2018; Lanoy & Idul, 2025). Institutional supports such as induction programs, coaching, and leadership mentoring also influence adaptation, although their effectiveness varies across contexts (Gomez-Lange, 2024; Trinidad, 2025; Modesto, 2020).

Internationally recruited teachers operate within policy environments that both support and constrain adaptation. Certification requirements, visa regulations, accountability systems, and institutional policies shape professional experiences and long-term mobility decisions (Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025). Conceptual frameworks such as Villaver's Adaptive Cross-Cultural Pedagogy Theory and the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM) explain how teachers navigate these overlapping professional, relational, and structural demands (Villaver, 2024). CIAM conceptualizes adaptation as a non-linear process influenced by transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints (Finfgeld-Connett, 2013, 2014; Trinidad, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025).

Despite growing scholarship, research on internationally recruited teachers remains fragmented across countries, recruitment pathways, and institutional settings. Much of the literature focuses on specific migration programs or populations, making it difficult to determine whether reported experiences reflect broader global patterns or localized conditions (Rosales, 2024; Ralph, 2024; UNESCO, 2024). Although prior conceptual work informed the development of CIAM, it remains unclear how consistently its adaptation domains appear across diverse international contexts. This gap provides the rationale for the present review.

This qualitative systematic review examines whether the domains proposed in the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM) appear consistently across diverse international school contexts and recruitment pathways. The review synthesizes findings from 18 studies involving internationally recruited teachers to evaluate how transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints operate across settings.

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do internationally recruited teachers across global international school contexts experience transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints within host education systems?
2. How often, and how strongly, do transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints appear across qualitative studies of internationally recruited teachers?
3. How do these patterns support, extend, or refine the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)?

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study used a qualitative systematic review (QSR), a well-known method that combines results from different qualitative studies to create a deeper understanding while staying based on the evidence provided (Thomas & Harden, 2008; Finfgeld-Connett, 2014).

2.1.1 Protocol and Reporting Standards

A review protocol was not prospectively registered. However, the review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines and employed predefined eligibility criteria, search procedures, screening methods, data extraction procedures, and analytic strategies to support methodological transparency and rigor.

2.2 Data Sources, Search Strategy, and Search Procedures

Systematic searches were conducted using ERIC and Google Scholar, which are widely used databases for educational research, to find studies published from 2012 to 2025 about teachers from other countries working in an international school context. Table 1 shows the search strings were organized to capture population, transition and adaptation experiences,

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

professional and relational processes, and methodological filters. These combinations were designed to identify and ensure that included studies provided sufficiently rich narrative findings for thematic synthesis.

Table 1. Search Strategy Strings and Conceptual Focus

Search String	Conceptual Focus	Keywords Used
String 1	Population (Internationally Recruited Teachers)	"international teachers" OR "migrant teachers" OR "overseas-trained teachers" OR "internationally recruited teachers"
String 2	Transition & Adaptation Processes	"teacher migration" OR transition OR adaptation OR adjustment OR integration
String 3	Professional & Relational Dimensions	"professional identity" OR "instructional adaptation" OR coping OR belonging OR support
String 4	Methodology Filter	qualitative OR interviews OR "case study" OR phenomenology OR ethnography

2.3 Screening Process

The four search-string components were applied separately across both databases. Across all ERIC searches, 48 records were retrieved; across all Google Scholar searches, 2,345 records were retrieved, for a total of 2,393 records exported to Microsoft Excel. After removing duplicates, 2,248 unique records remained for screening.

2.4 Eligibility Criteria

In Table 2, studies were included if they focused on internationally recruited teachers; examined professional transition, adaptation, identity, instructional practice, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints; were located in international school contexts; were qualitative studies or mixed methods; and were published in peer-reviewed journals or master's theses/dissertations in English. In Table 3, studies were excluded if they focused on pre-service teachers only, migrants who were not teachers, or migration unrelated to teaching; occurred outside international school context settings; relied on quantitative data instead of qualitative data; or were unpublished reports, conference summaries, or opinion pieces.

Table 2. Inclusion Criteria

Subject	Criteria	Justification
Population	Studies focused on internationally recruited, migrant, or overseas-trained teachers	Ensures alignment with the study's focus on international teacher migration experiences
Phenomenon of Interest	Examines professional transition, adaptation, identity, instructional practice, relational and emotional coping, or structural constraints	Captures the core dimensions relevant to the research questions
Setting	Located in international school contexts	Ensures consistency with the study's focus on in-service teachers in school-based contexts
Methodology	Qualitative studies or studies reporting qualitative findings	Supports thematic synthesis and interpretive analysis
Publication Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles or master's thesis/dissertations	Ensures scholarly rigor of included evidence; university master's theses/dissertations were included due to formal review and rigorous qualitative methods
Language	Published in English	Allows consistent interpretation and analysis of findings

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Table 3. Exclusion Criteria

Subject	Criteria	Justification
Population	Studies focused solely on pre-service teachers or non-teaching migrants	Not directly related to in-service international teacher migration experiences
Phenomenon of Interest	Studies addressing general migration without professional teaching context	Outside the scope of professional transition and adaptation in education
Setting	Studies conducted outside international school contexts	Maintains alignment with the international school context focus
Methodology	Purely quantitative studies without qualitative components	Does not provide data suitable for qualitative synthesis
Publication Type	Unpublished reports, conference abstracts, or opinion papers	Maintains consistency in peer-reviewed academic quality
Language	Non-English publications	Limits potential misinterpretation and ensures analytic consistency

2.5 Study Selection

Study identification, screening, and eligibility followed PRISMA 2020 guidelines and are summarized in Figure 1. Of the 2,393 records initially identified through database searches (ERIC and Google Scholar), duplicates were removed, resulting in 2,248 records for screening. Title and abstract screening eliminated studies based on exclusion criteria in Table 3. After this stage, 23 records advanced to a full-text eligibility review. A full-text assessment resulted in a final dataset of 18 studies that closely aligned with the inclusion criteria in Table 2, study purpose, and research questions. The final dataset included 18 studies that closely aligned with the inclusion criteria in Table 2, the study purpose, and the research questions. Eleven studies had previously informed the conceptual development of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM), while seven additional studies were incorporated to examine the model across a broader range of contexts and to identify potential refinements. The present review was conducted as an independent synthesis of all 18 studies to evaluate the extent to which the CIAM domains were represented across diverse internationally recruited teacher adaptation experiences. The earlier analysis that informed CIAM development has not been published as a journal article, allowing the present review to provide a transparent synthesis of the complete evidence base while examining both model support and model enrichment.

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

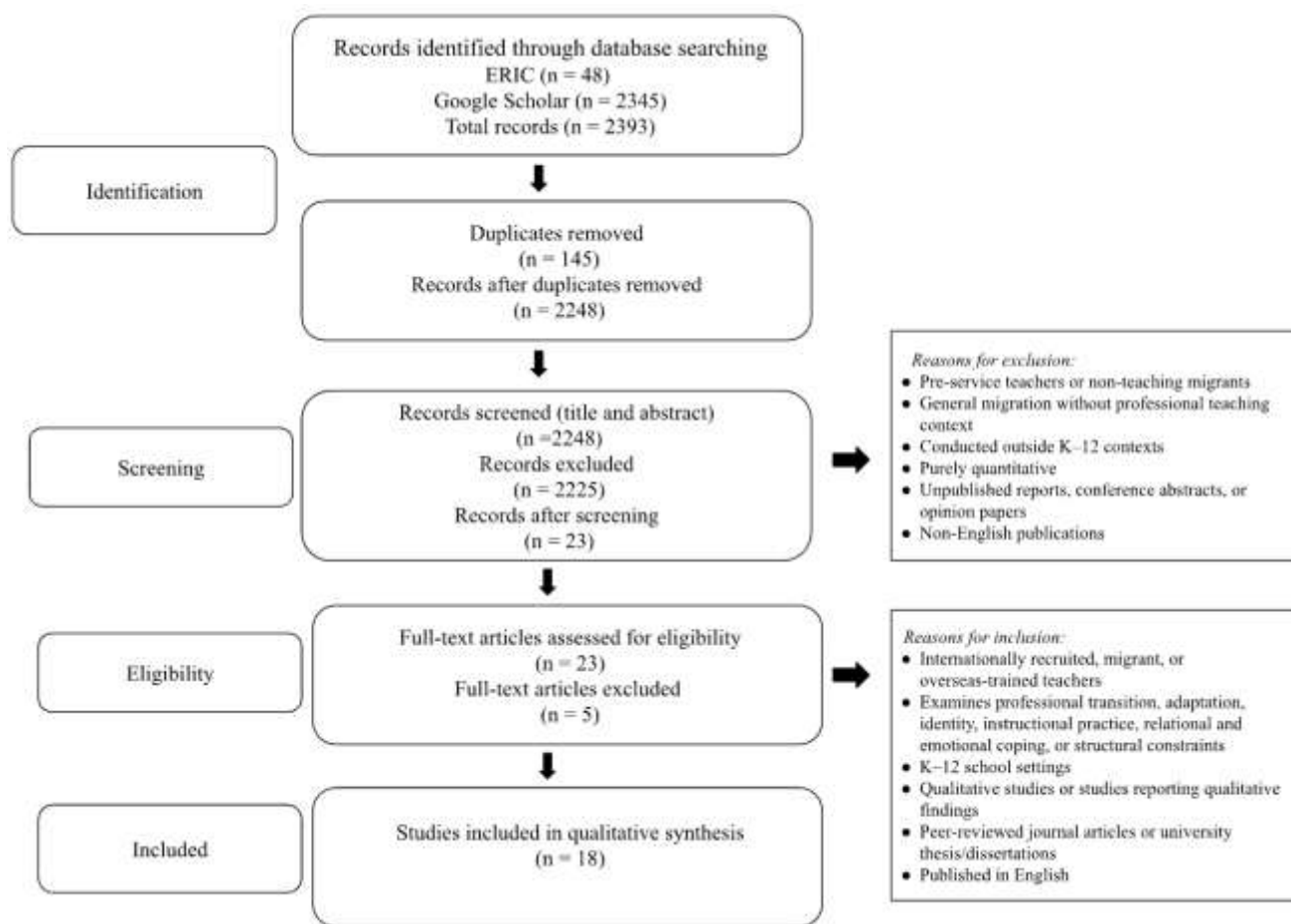


Figure 1. The PRISMA 2020 diagram provides a summary of the processes involved in identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

2.6 Data Extraction

Qualitative findings were gathered from the results, findings, and discussion sections of each study that focused on internationally recruited teachers. Emergent or unanticipated themes were also documented to help compare different, new, or unanticipated themes to support cross-context comparison. Both author interpretations and participant-reported experiences were retained when they helped define adjustment processes in new educational systems. The collected data was entered into a structured synthesis matrix and arranged into meaningful sections linked to the five CIAM domains and subthemes (see Appendix E).

2.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved iterative thematic synthesis procedures (Thomas & Harden, 2008) using a set framework from the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM). Themes matched CIAM to confirm and expand the model that showed common patterns of professional change and adjustment. Magnitude coding was used to show how important each domain was in each study. A domain was rated "Strong" when it was a central focus supported by multiple examples, "Moderate" when clearly present but not central, "Weak" when mentioned briefly, and "Absent" when not reported. These ratings were recorded in the synthesis matrix (Appendix B) and summarized in frequency form (Appendix C). In writing up the synthesis, themes were arranged conceptually rather than by frequency, with contextual conditions presented first and adaptive responses following. Finally, themes were aligned with CIAM to validate and extend the model. Additional subthemes identified in Studies 12–18 (Appendix D) were incorporated to refine the framework while remaining grounded in the original findings.

2.8 Trustworthiness and Reflexivity

Trustworthiness was supported through transparent documentation of search decisions, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and analytic steps. *Rigor* was improved by consistently comparing studies, repeatedly refining themes, and ensuring consistency between extracted findings and interpretive conclusions. *Reflexivity* was addressed by examining how prior experience as an internationally recruited teacher and researcher could shape interpretation and by explicitly documenting interpretive decisions.

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

2.9 Quality Appraisal

To assess the methodological quality of the included studies, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) Qualitative Checklist (CASP, 2018) was used. The CASP tool evaluates qualitative studies across ten domains, including clarity of research aims, appropriateness of methodology, research design, recruitment strategy, data collection, researcher-participant relationships, ethical considerations, rigor of analysis, clarity of findings, and overall value of the research.

Each included study was reviewed against the CASP criteria and classified as high, moderate, or lower methodological quality based on the extent to which the criteria were addressed. The quality appraisal was used to evaluate the trustworthiness and rigor of the evidence base rather than to exclude studies from the review. Consistent with qualitative systematic review methodology, all studies meeting the inclusion criteria were retained because each contributed relevant insights into internationally recruited teachers' adaptation experiences.

Overall, the included studies demonstrated acceptable methodological quality. Most studies clearly articulated research purposes, employed appropriate qualitative methodologies, and provided sufficient evidence to support their findings. Variations were observed in the reporting of reflexivity, researcher positionality, and ethical procedures; however, these limitations did not substantially affect the relevance of the findings to the review questions. The quality appraisal therefore supported inclusion of all 18 studies in the thematic synthesis.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Overview of the Studies Included

This qualitative synthesis examined 18 studies focusing exclusively on internationally recruited teachers across multiple national settings. While most studies took place in the United States, several involved multi-country placements and international school contexts, which provided broader perspectives on teacher mobility and adaptation. The studies varied in focus, including transition experiences, instructional adaptation, institutional conditions, identity negotiation, and policy environments shaping migrant teachers' work.

Studies 1–11 formed the empirical foundation of the original Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM) and primarily emphasized transition challenges, identity shifts, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints within host school systems. Studies 12–18 expanded the dataset by examining broader contextual dimensions such as inclusive education settings, instructional policy environments, technology-mediated teaching, professional mobility, and identity positioning (Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025; Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020; Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023). The inclusion of these later studies enabled deeper examination of adaptation across diverse institutional and cultural settings.

Within CIAM, internationally recruited teachers experience five interconnected domains: transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints. Transition challenges refer to the personal, instructional, cultural, and institutional difficulties teachers encounter as they enter new educational systems. Identity shifts involve renegotiation of professional, linguistic, and cultural identities within host contexts. Instructional adaptation reflects modifications in pedagogy, curriculum alignment, assessment, and classroom management. Relational and emotional coping encompasses the support systems and emotional strategies teachers use during adaptation. Structural constraints refer to policies, certification systems, accountability structures, and institutional conditions shaping adaptation opportunities and limitations.

Taken together, the included studies represented varied school placements, including urban and rural districts, inclusive education settings, mainstream classrooms, and international school systems. This diversity provided a broad empirical basis for examining teacher adaptation across international school contexts and for evaluating the explanatory reach of the CIAM framework.

3.2 Experiences of Transition and Adaptation Across CIAM Domains

The synthesis revealed that internationally recruited teachers experienced transition and adaptation in ways that consistently aligned with the five CIAM domains. Across studies, adaptation emerged as a complex and ongoing process shaped by institutional expectations, cultural environments, classroom realities, and broader structural conditions.

Transition Challenges. Transition challenges emerged as one of the most consistently emphasized domains across the dataset. Teachers described difficulties adjusting to unfamiliar classroom expectations, assessment systems, accountability structures, communication norms, and workplace cultures (Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Merritt, 2024; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Ralph, 2024; Tatel, 2021; Trinidad, 2025). These early pressures often shaped confidence, professional positioning, and longer-term adaptation trajectories. Several studies also highlighted relocation stress, financial pressures, housing difficulties, and separation

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

from family as major components of early adjustment experiences (Alsado & Oliveros, 2025; Oca & Malaga, 2025; Modesto, 2020). Later studies further indicated that geographic placement and institutional context influenced transition experiences, particularly in rural and isolated settings.

Identity Shifts. Identity shifts appeared throughout the dataset, although the intensity of emphasis varied across studies. Teachers frequently described heightened awareness of cultural differences associated with language, accent, ethnicity, and professional positioning within host systems (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023). Interactions within school communities and broader institutional perceptions of internationally recruited educators shaped experiences of belonging and non-belonging. Several studies documented tensions between teachers' prior professional identities and host-country expectations, while others emphasized the development of intercultural awareness, professional agency, and identity reconstruction over time (Trinidad, 2025; Harrison-Reid, 2025).

Instructional Adaptation. Instructional adaptation emerged as a major component of professional adjustment. Teachers described modifying teaching approaches, curriculum alignment, classroom management strategies, and assessment practices to meet local instructional expectations (Ralph, 2024; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Rosales, 2024; Calbi & Diano, 2025; Gomez-Lange, 2024). More recent studies expanded this domain by emphasizing adaptation to technology-mediated instruction, inclusive education practices, culturally responsive teaching, and family-school partnerships (Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020). These findings indicated that adaptation extended beyond technical instructional adjustments to broader shifts in professional roles and educational expectations.

Relational and Emotional Coping. Relational and emotional coping appeared consistently across all 18 studies and functioned as a central support mechanism during adaptation. Teachers relied heavily on mentorship, collegial collaboration, expatriate communities, and informal professional networks to navigate professional and emotional challenges (Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Ralph, 2024; Rosales, 2024; Trinidad, 2025). These relational structures frequently provided emotional stability, practical guidance, professional confidence, and a sense of belonging during transition. Several studies also emphasized resilience-building and emotional endurance as important dimensions of long-term adaptation.

Structural Constraints. Structural constraints shaped adaptation experiences across contexts. Teachers encountered certification requirements, policy regulations, accountability systems, institutional expectations, workload pressures, and bureaucratic processes that influenced both professional autonomy and classroom practice (Ralph, 2024; Trinidad, 2025; Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025). Later studies particularly emphasized the influence of system-level policies and institutional regulations on instructional practice, mobility decisions, and long-term professional positioning.

Taken together, these findings demonstrated that internationally recruited teachers' experiences consistently aligned with the five CIAM domains. The findings further suggested that adaptation is not a single event but an ongoing process shaped by interactions among personal, instructional, relational, and structural conditions.

3.3 Patterns Across the Five CIAM Domains

The review revealed clear patterns regarding the frequency and magnitude of the five CIAM domains across studies. As summarized in Appendix B and Appendix C, transition challenges and relational and emotional coping emerged as the most consistently emphasized domains. *Transition challenges* were coded as strong in the majority of studies, indicating that early adjustment pressures remain a defining feature of internationally recruited teachers' experiences across contexts (Calbi & Diano, 2025; Harrison-Reid, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Merritt, 2024; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Ralph, 2024; Tatel, 2021; Trinidad, 2025). *Relational and emotional coping* was coded as strong or moderate across all 18 studies, with no weak or absent ratings. This pattern highlighted the central role of mentorship, collegial relationships, peer support, and social networks in supporting adaptation and emotional resilience during transition. *Identity shifts* were present across most studies but varied in intensity. In some studies, identity negotiation functioned as a central theme linked to belonging, cultural visibility, and professional positioning, while in others it appeared less prominently (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023). *Instructional adaptation* appeared in most studies, particularly those focusing on classroom integration and pedagogical adjustment. Later studies further expanded this domain through emphasis on technology integration, inclusive education, and policy-driven instructional expectations (Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020). *Structural constraints* were widely documented across the dataset and frequently associated with certification systems, policy environments, accountability structures, and institutional expectations influencing teachers' professional experiences and mobility decisions (Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025). Overall, the presence of all five domains across the included studies provided strong empirical support for the CIAM framework across diverse international school contexts.

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

3.4 Enrichment of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Figure 2 presents the enriched Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM), illustrating how the five core domains interact with additional subthemes identified in Studies 12–18.

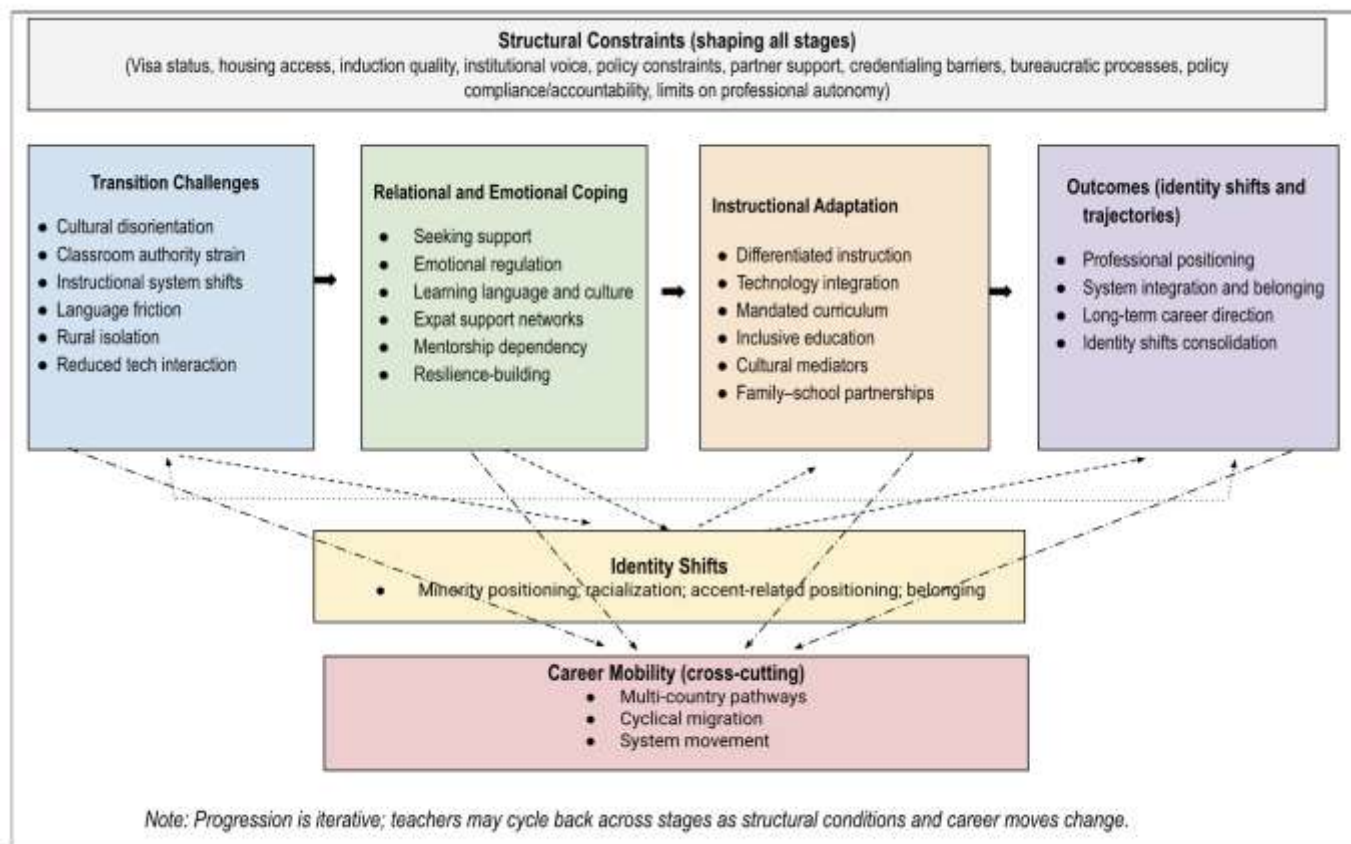


Figure 2. Enriched Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM) for Internationally Recruited Teachers

The later studies introduced additional contextual dimensions related to identity positioning, instructional policy environments, structural regulation, and professional mobility (Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025; Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020; Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023). Within *transition challenges*, new subthemes included geographic isolation, placement context, and reduced interpersonal connection in technology-mediated environments. These findings suggested that adaptation is shaped not only by system entry but also by institutional and geographic conditions. *Identity shifts* were further elaborated through themes such as minority identity awareness, racialization experiences, accent-related positioning, and tensions surrounding cultural belonging (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023). These dimensions highlighted the social visibility of internationally recruited teachers within host institutions. *Instructional adaptation* was enriched through themes related to mandated curriculum pressures, inclusive education ideology, teachers functioning as cultural mediators, and family-school partnership practices (Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020). These findings demonstrated that adaptation involves negotiation of both pedagogical expectations and institutional priorities. *Relational and emotional coping* was extended through the identification of expatriate support networks, mentorship dependency, emotional endurance, and resilience-building processes. These findings reinforced the importance of relational structures in sustaining long-term adaptation. *Structural constraints* were broadened to include credentialing barriers, policy compliance pressures, accountability systems, and limitations on professional autonomy.

Studies 12–18 also identified career mobility as a cross-cutting dimension encompassing transnational career trajectories, repeated migration, and long-term mobility decisions (Bassett, 2018; Thomas, 2019). Rather than functioning as a sixth domain, career mobility intersected with transition challenges, identity shifts, and structural constraints across teachers' professional trajectories. Several extended subthemes also overlapped across domains. For example, mandated curriculum pressures operated simultaneously as instructional adaptation demands and structural constraints, while family-school partnership practices functioned as both instructional strategies and relational coping mechanisms. These overlaps suggested that adaptation processes are interconnected rather than discrete, reinforcing the integrative nature of the CIAM framework.

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

4. DISCUSSION

The findings provide strong empirical support for the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM) as a comprehensive framework for understanding internationally recruited teachers' adaptation across international school contexts. All five domains—transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints—appeared consistently across the 18 studies, indicating that these experiences reflect broader patterns of teacher migration rather than isolated contextual cases (Tatel, 2021; Ralph, 2024; Trinidad, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Rosales, 2024; Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019).

A major insight from the synthesis is the centrality of transition challenges and relational and emotional coping. The prominence of these domains suggests that the tension between early disruption and the availability of support systems shapes adaptation. Teachers entered host systems facing immediate professional and personal demands, and their ability to navigate these pressures depended heavily on mentorship, collegial relationships, peer networks, and community connections (Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Ralph, 2024; Rosales, 2024; Trinidad, 2025). These findings reinforce the view that adaptation is not solely an individual process but a socially mediated one.

The findings also deepen understanding of identity as a central dimension of professional adaptation. Teachers did not simply acquire new instructional skills; they renegotiated belonging, credibility, and professional identity within unfamiliar institutional environments. Later studies emphasizing minority positioning, cultural navigation, and accent-related experiences demonstrated that identity is shaped through both internal reflection and external institutional perception (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023; Trinidad, 2025; Harrison-Reid, 2025).

Instructional adaptation similarly emerged as an evolving and context-dependent process. Teachers adapted not only to new curricula and classroom expectations but also to broader educational priorities such as inclusive education and technology integration (Ralph, 2024; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Rosales, 2024; Calbi & Diano, 2025; Gomez-Lange, 2024; Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020). These findings suggest that instructional adaptation involves continuous recalibration rather than movement toward a fixed endpoint.

The synthesis further points out the importance of structural constraints in shaping adaptation trajectories. Policies related to certification, accountability, immigration, and curriculum standards directly influenced teachers' experiences and opportunities (Ralph, 2024; Trinidad, 2025; Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019; Karanikola et al., 2025). These structural conditions acted as background forces that shaped how all other domains were experienced.

An important contribution of this synthesis is clarification of how CIAM domains interact dynamically rather than functioning independently. Transition challenges often acted as initial triggers that set in motion processes of identity renegotiation and instructional adaptation. Relational and emotional coping mechanisms functioned as mediating supports, while structural constraints defined the institutional boundaries within which adaptation occurred (Trinidad, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Thomas, 2019). This interconnectedness supports a more integrative understanding of adaptation consistent with CIAM's theoretical foundation.

The synthesis also identified important gaps within the current literature. Most studies focused on early transition phases, leaving long-term adaptation, retention, and career mobility comparatively underexplored (Ralph, 2024; Rosales, 2024). In addition, the concentration of studies within U.S.-linked educational settings calls for broader geographic representation across international contexts.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the value of CIAM while also indicating areas for continued conceptual refinement. The additional subthemes identified in Studies 12–18—particularly those related to identity positioning, policy environments, and career mobility—extend the explanatory depth of the model without altering its core domains.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that mentorship systems, induction programs, collegial support structures, and credentialing guidance should be treated as central components of teacher integration rather than supplementary supports (Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Gomez-Lange, 2024). Likewise, instructional adaptation findings emphasize the necessity of professional development related to inclusive and technology-driven teaching practices (Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020; Karanikola et al., 2025).

Collectively, these findings reinforce the value of CIAM as a flexible framework for understanding internationally recruited teachers' adaptation across evolving global educational environments.

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This synthesis focused exclusively on English-language qualitative studies, which may limit representation across non-English-speaking educational systems. Although Google Scholar facilitated broad retrieval of educational studies and dissertations, its indexing procedures are less transparent than those of subscription databases, which may have influenced study retrieval. In addition, a substantial proportion of the included studies took place in U.S.-linked educational contexts, which may have influenced the prominence of certain structural and policy-related themes. The review also relied on published qualitative studies and dissertations rather than longitudinal observational evidence.

Future research should examine how CIAM domains interact longitudinally across teachers' professional trajectories and migration pathways. Additional studies involving non-U.S. educational systems, comparative policy environments, and underrepresented international school contexts would further strengthen understanding of adaptation across diverse settings. Mixed-methods and longitudinal research designs may also clarify how instructional adaptation, identity negotiation, and structural conditions evolve.

6. CONCLUSION

This qualitative systematic review synthesized 18 studies to examine how internationally recruited teachers adapt across international school contexts and to evaluate the explanatory strength of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM). The findings provide strong and consistent support for all five CIAM domains—transition challenges, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, relational and emotional coping, and structural constraints—demonstrating their relevance across diverse educational settings and institutional contexts (Tatel, 2021; Ralph, 2024; Trinidad, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Pennington & Tracy, 2022; Rosales, 2024; Modesto, 2020; Thomas, 2019).

Transition challenges and relational and emotional coping emerged as the most consistently emphasized domains, highlighting the importance of early adjustment experiences and the critical role of support systems in sustaining adaptation. At the same time, identity shifts, instructional adaptation, and structural constraints contributed important layers of complexity by illustrating how adaptation involves ongoing negotiation of professional roles, pedagogical practices, and institutional expectations (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023; Tang, 2020; Miller et al., 2020; Karanikola et al., 2025).

The inclusion of later studies further enriched CIAM by introducing subthemes related to minority positioning, policy pressures, inclusive and technology-based teaching, expatriate support networks, and career mobility (Bassett, 2018; Kanagaratnam, 2023; Thomas, 2019; Miller et al., 2020; Tang, 2020). These extensions enhance the explanatory depth of the model while preserving its original conceptual structure.

Overall, the synthesis demonstrates that CIAM is a robust, flexible, and transferable framework for understanding internationally recruited teachers' adaptation. Rather than conceptualizing adaptation as a linear progression through discrete stages, the findings indicate that adaptation is an ongoing and interactive process shaped by the interplay of personal, relational, instructional, and structural conditions over time (Trinidad, 2025; Lanoy & Idul, 2025; Thomas, 2019).

The review advances understanding of internationally recruited teachers' adaptation by confirming the empirical strength of CIAM while refining its application to increasingly complex global educational environments. As teacher migration continues to expand across diverse policy and cultural contexts, the model offers a useful framework for understanding how professional adaptation unfolds under varying institutional conditions. In this sense, CIAM contributes not only to international teacher migration research but also to broader conversations about how educational systems can better support internationally recruited teachers throughout their professional trajectories.

Statements and Declarations

1. **Funding details.** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.
2. **Disclosure statement.** The author reports that there are no competing interests to declare.
3. **Acknowledgment:** The author gratefully acknowledges the scholars whose published studies made this qualitative systematic review possible.
4. **Ethical Approval:** This study is a qualitative systematic review based solely on previously published research and dissertations. No new data involving human participants were collected, and formal ethical approval was not required.
5. **Declaration of Generative AI in Scientific Writing**
6. **Guidelines for Declaring the Use of Generative AI in Scientific Writing:**

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Generative AI (ChatGPT) was used to assist in organizing the thematic synthesis and refining the academic tone of the manuscript. Grammarly was used for grammar and language correction. All qualitative data extraction and thematic coding of the 18 included studies were conducted manually by the author to ensure research integrity. The author critically reviewed and edited all AI-assisted outputs and takes full responsibility for the accuracy, analysis, and conclusions presented in this manuscript.

7. **Authorship and Citation:** Generative AI (ChatGPT) and AI-assisted tools such as Grammarly were used solely to support the writing process and were not involved in the generation of original research data, analysis, or interpretation. In accordance with journal policy, these tools are not credited as authors or co-authors and are not cited as authors. All authorship responsibilities remain with the human author.
8. **Disclosure Instructions:** The use of generative AI in the preparation of this manuscript has been transparently disclosed in the section titled "Declaration of Generative AI in Scientific Writing." ChatGPT was used to assist with organizing thematic synthesis and refining academic tone, while Grammarly was used for grammar and language correction. All outputs generated with the assistance of these tools were critically reviewed and edited by the author, who takes full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the content presented.

REFERENCES

- 1) Alsado, N., & Oliveros, J. (2025). The exodus of Filipino teachers to the United States of America: the whys and wherefores. *Psychology and Education a Multidisciplinary Journal*, 50(7), 758–783.
<https://doi.org/10.70838/pemj.500702>
- 2) Barrows, K. (2026, March 6). *Use and Abuse of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Teacher Program — Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO*. Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO.
<https://www.dpeaflcio.org/factsheets/use-and-abuse-of-the-j-1-exchange-visitor-teacher-pprogram>
- 3) Bassett, R. (2018). *Intercultural adjustment for teachers abroad*. The Repository at St. Cloud State.
https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/engl_etds/150
- 4) Blad, E. (2025). Will a J-1 visa freeze disrupt teacher staffing? *Education Week*.
<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/will-a-j-1-visa-freeze-disrupt-teacher-staffing/2025/06>
- 5) Calbi, J. S., & Diano, F. J. (2025). Teaching Across Borders: lived experiences of internationally trained mathematics educators in their early U.S. careers. *Randwick International of Education and Linguistics Science Journal*, 6(4), 736–743.
<https://doi.org/10.47175/rielsj.v6i4.1251>
- 6) Cohen, L., Manion, L., Morrison, K. R. B. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
https://www.google.com/books/edition/Research_Methods_in_Education/p7oifuW1A6gC?hl=en&gbpv=0
- 7) Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
<https://study.sagepub.com/creswellrd4e>
- 8) Cutor, G. M. B. (2025). Exploring the Filipino teachers' roles and teaching strategies on student learning experiences in the United States: A qualitative inquiry. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 08(09).
<https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v8-i9-06>
- 9) Department of State. (n.d.). Teacher program. BridgeUSA. <https://j1visa.state.gov/programs/teacher>
- 10) Economic Policy Institute. (2019, March 26). The teacher shortage is a growing national crisis [Press release].
<https://www.epi.org/press/the-teacher-shortage-is-a-growing-national-crisis-epi-releases-first-paper-in-series-on-national-teacher-shortage/>
- 11) Echavez, L., De Los Reyes, C. E., Pinili, L., & Añero, M. (2024). The lived experiences of exchange cultural special education teachers in the USA. *World Journal on Education and Humanities Research*, 4(4), 202–224.
<https://wjehr.com/wjherarticleviewechavezetal36-36/>
- 12) Finfgeld-Connett, D. (2013). Use of content analysis to conduct knowledge-building and theory-generating qualitative systematic reviews. *Qualitative Research*, 13(3), 341–352.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794113481790>
- 13) Finfgeld-Connett, D. (2014). Use of a summary matrix to facilitate data reduction and analysis. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 36(7), 1011–1022.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0193945914524175>

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

- 14) Garcia, E., & Weiss, E. (2022, March 4). The teacher shortage is real, large, and growing, and worse than we thought. Economic Policy Institute. <https://www.epi.org/publication/the-teacher-shortage-is-real-large-and-growing-and-worse-than-we-thought/>
- 15) Gomez-Lange, H. R. (2024). Experiences on cultural differences among Filipino special education teachers in the United States of America. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 12(1), 1–15. <https://ejournals.ph/article.php?id=28355>
- 16) Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59–82. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1525822X05279903>
- 17) Haddaway, N. R., Page, M. J., Pritchard, C. C., & McGuinness, L. A. (2022). PRISMA2020: An R package and Shiny app for producing PRISMA 2020-compliant flow diagrams. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 18(2), e1230. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1230>
- 18) Harrison-Reid, M. R. (2025). *Teacher voices: A qualitative interview investigation of international teachers adjusting to teaching in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation, Gardner-Webb University). Gardner-Webb Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/education-dissertations/252/>
- 19) Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014>
- 20) Kanagaratnam, P. (2023). *The lived experience of international educators working in Mid-Atlantic K–8 schools: A hermeneutic phenomenological study* (Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Publication No. 30633253) <https://www.proquest.com/openview/23013eb4a160cb59e6e4d0871b0f061e/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- 21) Karanikola, Z., Panagiotopoulos, G., Giaki, S., & Arvanitis, E. (2025). Intercultural Teacher Education in International Policy Context: Challenges and Opportunities. *Education Sciences*, 15(10), 1351. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15101351>
- 22) Lanoy, J. A. T., & Idul, M. M. (2025). Transcending borders: The lived experiences of Filipino English teachers in the United States of America. *EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 11(7), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15101351>
- 23) Laureta, D. J. E., & Guanzon, R. S. (2025). Narratives of J-1 cultural exchange teacher alumni. *Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields*, 1(7), 174–194. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16611880>
- 24) Martin, I. P. (2020). Philippine English. In K. Bolton, W. Botha, & A. Kirkpatrick (Eds.), *The handbook of Asian Englishes* (pp. 479–500). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118791882.ch20>
- 25) Merritt, L. (2024). *The lived experiences of first-year international Spanish-speaking dual language teachers in North Carolina* (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Carolina at Charlotte). Niner Commons. https://ninercommons.charlotte.edu/record/2781/files/Merritt_uncc_0694D_13800.pdf
- 26) Miller, A., Wilt, C., Allcock, H., Kurth, J., Morningstar, M., & Ruppar, A. (2020). Teacher agency for inclusive education: An international scoping review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1789766>
- 27) Modesto, O. P. (2020). A Phenomenological Study of Filipino Immigrant Teachers in South Texas. *The Qualitative Report*, 25(8), 3149–3162. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4225>
- 28) O'Brien, B. C., Harris, I. B., Beckman, T. J., Reed, D. A., & Cook, D. A. (2014). Standards for reporting qualitative research (SRQR). *Academic Medicine*, 89(9), 1245–1251. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000000388>
- 29) Oca, J. B. D., & Malaga, R. S. (2025). The diaspora of Filipino teachers leaving their home country for work in the United States. *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, 9(5), 172–186. <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i5.6811>
- 30) Pennington, C., & Tracy, S. (2022). *The journeys of three international teachers working in North Carolina public schools* (Doctoral dissertation). ERIC. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/e957a6a797f8e7ded63ff997dfe0bb2/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

- 31) Pope, C., Mays, N., & Popay, J. (2007). *Synthesizing qualitative and quantitative health evidence: A guide to methods*. Open University Press. <https://cmc.marmot.org/EbscoAcademicCMC/ocn244952920>
- 32) Ralph, A. A. (2024). *The personal and professional experiences of J-1 teacher exchange visitors in a rural school district in South Carolina* (Doctoral dissertation, Liberty University). Liberty University Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/5682/>
- 33) Rathinam, K. (2024). *Lived experiences and perceptions of international teachers in implementing U.S. curriculum* (Doctoral dissertation). ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED660732.pdf>
- 34) Romero, N. (2020). Postcolonial philosophy of education in the Philippines. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1575>
- 35) Rosales, R. R. (2024). *Unheard voices of Filipino immigrant teachers in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Dayton). OhioLINK. https://ijece.virtualrealia.org/wp-content/uploads/journal/published_paper/volume-2/issue-2/IJECE_C0vUGmI7.pdf
- 36) Russell, R. A. (2023). *Internationally trained mathematics and/or science teachers' experiences in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=teaching+mathematics&ff1=pubDissertations%2FTheses+--Doctoral+Dissertations>
- 37) Tang, H. (2020). A qualitative inquiry of K–12 teachers' experience with open educational practices: Perceived benefits and barriers of implementing open educational resources. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 21(3). <https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/4750/5335>
- 38) Tatel, H. (2021). *The impact of the J-1 teacher exchange program on cultural exchange and professional development* (Master's thesis). <https://journals.aloysianpublications.com/index.php/articles/article/download/228/154/384>
- 39) Thomas, J., & Harden, A. (2008). Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 8, 45. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18616818/>
- 40) Thomas, S. (2019). *A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experiences of International Educators Working Abroad: A Global Perspective* (Thesis, Concordia University, St. Paul). Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.csp.edu/cup_commons_grad_edd/386
- 41) Trinidad, A. G. (2025). *Experiences of international Latina/o bilingual teachers in K–12 U.S. public schools* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/0bfb696409adfec87c7ad8d2b39f0040/1.pdf?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- 42) UNESCO. (2024). *Global report on teachers: Addressing teacher shortages and transforming the profession*. <https://doi.org/10.54675/FIGU8035>
- 43) Villaver, M. T. (2024). Adaptive cross-cultural pedagogy theory. *Futurity Education*, 4(4), 35–57. <https://doi.org/10.57125/fed.2024.12.25.03>

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

Appendix A. Magnitude Coding Guide Used for Theme Classification

Rating	Meaning	How it was identified in the study
Strong	The theme is a major focus of the findings	Discussed in several sections, explained in detail, with multiple examples or quotes
Moderate	The theme is clearly present but not central	Discussed in at least one section with some explanation or examples
Weak	The theme is mentioned briefly	Short mention only, with little detail or explanation
Absent	The theme is not discussed	The theme does not appear in the findings/results

Appendix B. Magnitude coding ratings across the five CIAM domains for all included studies.

Study ID	Author (Year)	Country/Context (School Setting)	Transition Challenges	Identity Shifts	Instructional Adaptation	Relational and Emotional Coping	Structural Constraints
1	Tatel (2021)	USA/International teachers in public schools	Strong	Weak	Absent	Moderate	Strong
2	Rathinam (2024)	USA/Overseas teachers in public schools	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Weak
3	Harrison-Reid (2025)	USA/overseas teachers in public schools	Strong	Strong	Absent	Moderate	Weak
4	Ralph (2024)	USA/J-1 exchange teachers in rural schools	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Strong
5	Lanoy & Idul (2025)	USA/Filipino English teachers in schools	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
6	Trinidad (2025)	USA/international bilingual teachers in schools	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong
7	Pennington & Tracy (2022)	USA/international teachers in public schools	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Strong

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

8	Rosales (2024)	USA/Filipino immigrant teachers in schools	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Moderate
9	Merritt (2024)	USA/International dual language teachers	Strong	Weak	Moderate	Moderate	Strong
10	Calbi & Diano (2025)	USA/internationally trained math teachers	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Moderate
11	Gomez-Lang e (2024)	USA/international special education teachers	Strong	Weak	Strong	Strong	Moderate
12	Modesto (2020)	USA/Filipino immigrant teachers in schools	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong
13	Thomas (2019)	International school educators/multiple regions	Weak	Absent	Absent	Strong	Moderate
14	Karanikola et al. (2025)	Multi-country/teacher education and training contexts	Weak	Weak	Strong	Moderate	Strong
15	Tang (2020)	USA / Teachers using instructional technology (school context)	Weak	Weak	Strong	Strong	Moderate
16	Miller et al. (2020)	Multi-country / inclusive education settings (school-age learners)	Weak	Weak	Strong	Strong	Moderate
17	Bassett (2018)	Multi-country/expatriate teachers in international schools	Strong	Strong	Weak	Strong	Moderate

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

18	Kanagaratnam (2023)	USA/International educators in K–8 schools	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong
----	---------------------	--	--------	--------	----------	--------	--------

Appendix B demonstrates that transition challenges (15 of 18 studies rated Strong) and relational and emotional coping (11 Strong and 7 Moderate ratings) were the most consistently represented domains across the included studies.

Appendix C. Frequency Distribution of Core Themes Across 18 Studies

Theme	Strong	Moderate	Weak	Absent
Transition Challenges	15	0	3	0
Identity Shifts	5	6	6	1
Instructional Adaptation	8	6	1	3
Relational Coping	11	7	0	0
Structural Constraints	8	8	2	0

Appendix D. Extended Subthemes Enriching the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

CIAM Core Theme	Extended Subthemes (from Studies 12–18)	Main Contributing Studies
Transition Challenges	Placement-context influences on adjustment; Rural isolation effects; Loss of human connection (online teaching)	13, 14, 17, 18
Identity Shifts	Minority identity awareness; Racialization experiences; Accent discrimination; Cultural belonging tension; “I am one of them” identity positioning; Placement context shaping teacher identity	14, 17, 18
Instructional Adaptation	Mandated curriculum pressure; Inclusive education ideology; Teachers as cultural mediators; Parent partnership building; Family–school partnerships	12, 14, 16, 18
Relational and Emotional Coping	Expat communities as coping networks; Mentorship dependency; Parent partnership building; Emotional endurance; Resilience as professional capital	12, 16, 17, 18
Structural Conditions	Credentialing barriers; Bureaucracy and certification costs; Policy compliance shock/stress; Mandated curriculum pressure; Data-driven accountability culture; Limited professional autonomy	13, 14, 18
Career / Mobility (Cross-cutting)	Boomerang migration; Multi-country career paths	17

Note: Some extended subthemes span multiple CIAM domains. For example, mandated curriculum pressure operates both as an instructional adaptation (how teachers adjust practice) and as a structural constraint (policy mandate). Similarly, parent

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

partnership building functions as both an instructional strategy and a relational coping mechanism. These were therefore located in more than one domain where analytically relevant.

Appendix E. Meaning-Unit Extraction and CIAM Coding Table (Illustrative Rows from Included Studies)

Study ID	Author (Year)	Country/Context (School Setting)	CIAM Theme	Subtheme/Cod e	Meaning Unit (Condensed)	Source Locator
1	Tatel (2021)	USA/international teachers in public schools	Transition Challenges	Orientation gaps	Teachers experienced difficulty adjusting due to limited placement support and insufficient initial orientation.	Findings
1	Tatel (2021)	USA/international teachers in public schools	Relational and Emotional Coping	Professional growth	Exposure to new training and networks helped teachers develop resilience and confidence over time.	Discussion
2	Rathinam (2024)	USA/Overseas teachers in public schools	Transition Challenges	Cultural mismatch	Differences in classroom culture and learning expectations created early adjustment stress.	Findings
2	Rathinam (2024)	USA/Overseas teachers in public schools	Instructional Adaptation	Classroom management learning	Teachers gradually adapted teaching practices and classroom management through experience.	Results
3	Harrison-Reid (2025)	USA/Overseas teachers in public schools	Identity Shifts	Identity loss	Feelings of isolation and loss of professional identity emerged due to the absence	Findings

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

					of cultural peers.	
3	Harrison-Reid (2025)	USA/Overseas teachers in public schools	Relational and Emotional Coping	Social integration	Teachers sought belonging by forming relationships within school communities.	Discussion
4	Ralph (2024)	USA/J-1 exchange teachers in rural schools	Transition Challenges	Housing & relocation stress	High housing costs, relocation stress, and separation from family created strong early adjustment strain.	Results
4	Ralph (2024)	USA/J-1 exchange teachers in rural schools	Instructional Adaptation	Data-driven teaching	Teachers modified instruction using IEP data, differentiation, and new behavior systems.	Findings
4	Ralph (2024)	USA/J-1 exchange teachers in rural schools	Structural Constraints	Workload pressure	Heavy paperwork, curriculum demands, and institutional expectations increased stress.	Findings
5	Lanoy & Idul (2025)	USA/Filipino English teachers in schools	Transition Challenges	Cultural adjustment	Transition was described as overwhelming due to new standards, norms, and communication styles.	Findings

Internationally Recruited Teachers' Adaptation: A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Conditional Integrative Adaptation Model (CIAM)

5	Lanoy & Idul (2025)	USA/Filipino English teachers in schools	Relational and Emotional Coping	Community support	Emotional stability was strengthened through peer friendships and connection with Filipino communities.	Discussion
6	Trinidad (2025)	USA/international bilingual teachers in schools	Identity Shifts	Identity mismatch	Teachers experienced tension between prior professional identity and host-country expectations.	Findings
6	Trinidad (2025)	USA/international bilingual teachers in schools	Structural Constraints	Induction gaps	Weak institutional support and unclear induction processes complicated adjustment.	Results
7	Pennington & Tracy (2022)	USA/international teachers in public schools	Relational and Emotional Coping	Emotional resilience	Teachers relied on flexibility, self-reflection, and personal determination to cope with stress.	Findings
8	Rosales (2024)	USA/Filipino immigrant teachers in schools	Instructional Adaptation	Hybrid pedagogy	Teachers integrated Filipino and U.S. teaching approaches to support diverse learners.	Results
9	Merritt (2024)	USA/International dual language teachers	Structural Constraints	Life logistics	Housing, transport, and financial barriers shaped early adaptation experiences.	Findings
10	Calbi & Diano (2025)	USA/internationally trained math teachers	Instructional Adaptation	Standards alignment	Teachers revised lesson planning to align with pacing guides	Results

and standards.

11	Gomez-Lange (2024)	USA/international special education teachers	Instructional Adaptation	Inclusive strategies	Teachers adopted bilingual and student-centered instructional approaches.	Findings
----	--------------------	--	--------------------------	----------------------	---	----------



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.