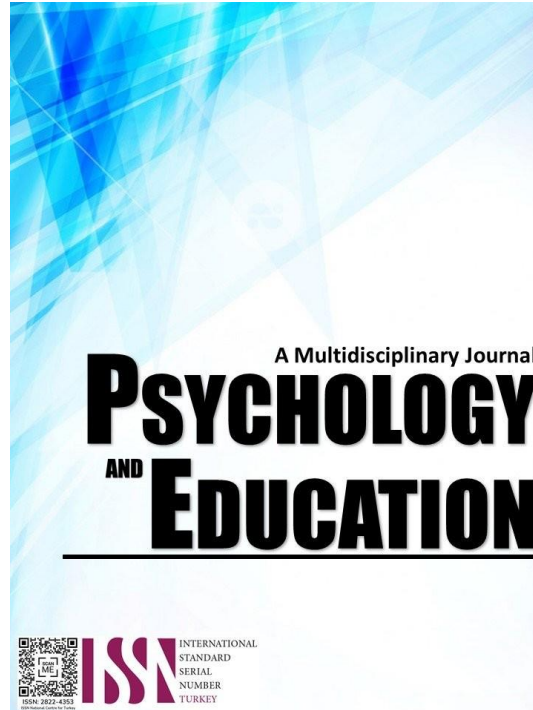


EVALUATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES EDUCATIONAL (IPED) PROGRAM IN SOUTH CENTRAL MINDANAO



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 24

Issue 10

Pages: 1153-1164

Document ID: 2024PEMJ2330

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.13730120

Manuscript Accepted: 08-12-2024

Evaluation of Indigenous Peoples Educational (IPED) Program in South Central Mindanao

Jayson G. Imperial*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

The study delved into the comprehensive implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Educational (IPED) Program within schools situated in South Central Mindanao. It employed an online platform, specifically utilizing Google Forms, to conduct a survey among 275 respondents. The primary objective was to assess the extent to which the IPED Program has been integrated into these educational institutions, focusing on various critical aspects such as expected learning competencies and standards, availability of learning resources, adequacy of learning spaces and environments, and the efficacy of teaching strategies and methodologies. According to the findings, all these elements—learning competencies and standards, resources, spaces, and teaching methods—were reported as highly evident in their implementation across the surveyed schools. This indicates a significant effort and achievement in embedding the IPED Program into the educational framework of the region, specifically tailored to meet the needs and respect the cultural identities of Indigenous Peoples. Furthermore, the study highlighted that while the assessment tools and procedures were also evident, there might be opportunities for further refinement and enhancement to better cater to the unique contexts of IP communities. Despite this, the overall conclusion of the study is overwhelmingly positive: the IPED Program has effectively extended educational opportunities to IP students, ensuring that their cultural heritage and identity are respected and integrated into the learning process. By providing access to education that is culturally sensitive and relevant, the IPED Program not only promotes academic advancement but also contributes to the preservation and celebration of Indigenous cultures. This approach not only enhances educational outcomes but also fosters greater inclusivity and equity within the educational landscape of South Central Mindanao. The study's findings underscore the importance of such programs in promoting cultural diversity and understanding within educational settings.

Keywords: *IPED Program, IP Learners, Attainment of IPED*

Introduction

According to the World Bank (2022), an estimated 476 million Indigenous Peoples make up 6% of the global population, with 19% living in impoverished conditions. Despite their significant presence, Indigenous Peoples often face marginalization and disadvantage, particularly in accessing quality education. This lack of access perpetuates disparities and hinders their socio-economic development.

Quality education for Indigenous Peoples is crucial and should be characterized by sufficient resources, cultural sensitivity, alignment with their unique learning needs, languages, priorities, and aspirations. Reyes (2022) emphasizes that education must be delivered using culturally appropriate teaching strategies and in settings that respect and celebrate Indigenous cultures.

To address these challenges, there is a pressing need to safeguard the identity and rights of Indigenous Peoples through education. This can be facilitated through the implementation of policies and declarations that promote inclusive and equitable educational opportunities. Such initiatives not only enhance academic outcomes but also foster cultural pride and preservation among Indigenous communities.

Policies aimed at integrating Indigenous knowledge systems into mainstream education, supporting bilingual and multilingual education programs, and providing culturally relevant learning materials are crucial steps toward ensuring that Indigenous students receive education that respects and reflects their cultural heritage. By recognizing and valuing Indigenous languages, traditions, and knowledge, education can become a tool for empowerment, enabling Indigenous Peoples to participate more fully in societal and economic life while maintaining their distinct identities.

In conclusion, the advancement of Indigenous Peoples' education requires concerted efforts to address systemic barriers and promote inclusive educational practices that honor and preserve their cultural identities. By doing so, societies can move towards greater equality, social justice, and sustainable development for all.

Research Questions

This research evaluated the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the implementing schools in South Central Mindanao for policy recommendation. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

1. What is the extent of the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of:
 - 1.1. expected learning competencies and standards;
 - 1.2. learning resources;
 - 1.3. learning space and environment;

- 1.4. teaching strategies and methodologies; and
- 1.5. assessment tools and procedures?

Literature Review

Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education Program

Today, Indigenous Peoples' education is not only related to traditional educational methods, beliefs, and practices that have secured the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills from generation to generation, but also incorporates the adoption of technology in the curriculum. In addition, new types of indigenous education are developing that assist indigenous peoples in addressing today's challenges (Reyes, 2022).

Moreover, providing Indigenous Peoples with education that is culturally rooted and responsive has been the concern of many countries and a number of both local and international organizations (Montaner, 2020). For instance, he further cited that in the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued a Department Order series 2011, entitled "National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework," which aims to create an educational system that is inclusive and respectful of Indigenous learners. This policy would enable them to face various social realities and challenges such as exercising self-determination, preservation and promotion of their local language, digital technology, and intercultural collaboration. Thus, this signifies that the objectives and contents of the curriculum must encourage the self-determination of the IPs, including freedom to use their language and promote their culture and traditions.

Expected Learning Competencies and Standards

The National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework was prepared in consultation with the representatives from Indigenous Peoples communities, civil society, and other government agencies. This is expected to identify the learning competencies and standards that can guide the teachers. Further, it hopes to be the tool for promoting shared accountability, continuous dialogue, engagement, and partnership among government, Indigenous Peoples communities, civil society, and other education stakeholders. It highlighted the importance of inclusive education as a necessary means to realize other human rights and fundamental freedoms. DepEd urges the strengthening of its policy on IP education and develop and implement an IP Education Program (DepEd Order No. 22, 2016).

Learning Resources

Learning materials are important motivation tools for learners (DepEd, 2023). However, many schools implementing the IPED curriculum have experienced challenges. In particular, Villaplaza's (2021) study revealed that these challenges were due to the poor implementation of the IPED program in terms of materials used. This is evidenced by the low means in all items exposed in Table 6 of the study. Specifically, both the highest and lowest means show an evidently poor manifestation of the corresponding items. The respondents perceived that there is poor usage of materials that are translated into indigenous languages and incorporate indigenous knowledge produced with the participation and consent of indigenous communities, teachers, and learners.

In contrast, the study by Suazo and Montenegro (2018) explained that learning resources written in vernacular language are not adequate. As a result, teachers encountered difficulties in using these resources for their students. Nonetheless, limited resources written in localized languages are beneficial for young learners to understand their learning materials.

Furthermore, Cezer and Cakan (2022) emphasized that learning resources are considered the heart of a learning session. The adequacy and presence of these resources can help in encouraging students to participate in class sessions. Consequently, this enables students to relate the topic to their own perceptions and experiences.

Learning Space and Environment

Education is a fundamental right and essential for the exercise of all other human rights. It not only promotes individual freedom and empowerment but also yields important development benefits. Thus, every individual, irrespective of race, gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion or political preference, age, or disability, is entitled to free elementary education. Furthermore, the right to education is one of the most essential principles in becoming a rights-respecting school. Providing a good learning space and environment in education is a critical social and cultural right and plays a crucial role in reducing poverty and child labor. Moreover, education must include learning spaces for Indigenous Peoples (IP) to maximize learning activities (UNICEF, 2018).

Teaching Methodologies and Strategies

In the study of Romero (2020), it was emphasized that the policies of the government to ensure the rights to education of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) are intended to correct the decades-old problem of colonial education in the Philippines. Specifically, these policies must focus on teaching strategies and methodologies that are adaptive to the culture of the learners. Consequently, the policies are designed to ensure that teaching methodologies and strategies are culturally responsive to the IPs. Moreover, these are embedded in the culture-based curriculum, which can reflect the traditions and languages of the IP learners (Gabriel & Mangahas, 2017).

Assessment Tools and Procedures

Assessment of the learning process includes activities such as observing, monitoring, exchanging, checking, and commenting on the learning and practice processes of students. Additionally, it involves advising, guiding, and motivating students, as well as providing qualitative or quantitative comments on learning outcomes and the formation and development of students' competences and qualities. These assessment activities are designed to help students learn from their own experiences and comment on each other in the process. Furthermore, they encourage students to adjust their learning approaches independently, thereby gradually forming and developing the ability to apply knowledge, self-study, and problem-solving skills in a communicative and cooperative environment. As a result, this enhances students' interest in learning throughout the educational process (Tran et al., 2022).

Methodology

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive research design for the study. This design focused on describing how the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program was implemented, the strategies employed to achieve its objectives, and the extent to which these objectives were attained.

Descriptive research proved valuable in providing a comprehensive overview and understanding of the specific situation or program, particularly in examining educational initiatives among Indigenous communities in South Central Mindanao. This approach enabled the researcher to gather insights into the effectiveness of the program, identify areas of strength or areas needing improvement, and ultimately provide recommendations to policymakers and stakeholders involved in Indigenous education.

The descriptive aspect of the research allowed the researcher to paint a clear picture of how the program operated in practice, the methods employed to support the educational needs of Indigenous students, and the outcomes achieved as a result. This methodology was essential for generating data that informed evidence-based decision-making and contributed to enhancing educational opportunities for Indigenous Peoples.

Respondents

The study engaged a total of 275 participants, comprising IPED (Indigenous Peoples Education) teachers and administrators from selected schools for the 2023-2024 academic year. All participants were permanent employees within their respective institutions. To determine the appropriate number of respondents, the research team consulted with a statistician to ensure the sample size was adequate and representative.

The selection of the schools and participants was carried out with the assistance of Division IPED Program coordinators or Focal Persons. These individuals played a crucial role in identifying and selecting schools that have been actively implementing the IPED program for at least five years. This criterion ensured that the selected schools had substantial experience with the IPED program, contributing to the study's aim of gathering informed and relevant insights from those directly involved in the program's delivery and management.

Instruments

The researcher utilized a survey questionnaire adapted from Ernesto Bastida's 2021 study. This questionnaire consisted of 10 close-ended checklist items specifically designed to assess the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program (IPED). The researcher opted not to modify the original questionnaire because it was already well-aligned with the IPED program's guidelines and objectives.

To ensure the questionnaire's validity and accuracy, it underwent a thorough validation process. This involved a review by experts from the university who are well-versed in the IPED program. Additionally, an external expert with specialized knowledge in IPED also assessed the questionnaire. This dual-layer validation process was conducted to confirm that the questionnaire effectively captured relevant data and accurately reflected the implementation of the IPED program.

Procedure

The researcher followed a systematic data gathering process based on the school system. The first step involved writing and distributing a letter of permission to conduct the study, which needed approval from the Dean of the Graduate School at Cotabato State University. Following this, approval was sought from the DepEd Regional Director. Subsequently, the researcher requested assistance from the regional IPED focal person to obtain the names or contacts of various IPED program holders or focal persons. Then, visits were made to four different division offices: Schools Division Superintendent of South Cotabato Division, Sultan Kudarat Division, Sarangani Division, and Division of Cotabato, to seek approval for conducting the research.

The researcher ensured compliance with research protocols, including obtaining permission from the IPED focal persons and providing an orientation on the study's purpose. Ample time was given to all respondents to secure their voluntary consent. The researcher also adhered to basic health protocols such as wearing a face mask and practicing social distancing during visits to division offices and

interactions with administrators.

After completing the survey, the collected data were tabulated, analyzed with the assistance of a statistician, and interpreted based on the research questions.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to compute the mean scores as a descriptive statistic. This analysis aimed to evaluate the extent to which the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program (IPED) was inclusive and respectful towards Indigenous learners. SPSS facilitated the computation of mean scores for various aspects of the IPED implementation, including curriculum adaptation, the cultural relevance of teaching methods, the availability of Indigenous learning resources, and overall support for Indigenous students.

By leveraging SPSS, the researcher could efficiently handle and analyze large volumes of survey data, ensuring accuracy in the mean calculations and providing a clear quantitative measure of the program's effectiveness in addressing the unique educational needs and cultural sensitivities of Indigenous students. Higher mean scores indicated a stronger alignment with the objectives of inclusivity and respect, while lower scores highlighted areas needing improvement.

The use of SPSS allowed for a systematic and precise assessment of the survey responses, enabling the researcher to draw nuanced conclusions about the program's impact. This approach not only offered a snapshot of current practices but also informed potential strategies for enhancing educational experiences and outcomes for Indigenous communities.

In summary, employing SPSS for mean analysis was crucial in evaluating the IPED program's alignment with its goals of inclusivity and respectfulness towards Indigenous learners. It provided valuable insights into the program's strengths and areas for development, thereby contributing to efforts aimed at improving educational equity and cultural responsiveness within Indigenous education initiatives.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion of data gathered in tabular form.

Extent of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the Schools in terms of Expected Learning Competencies and Standards

Table 1 presents the extent of implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of expected learning competencies and standards that got an overall mean of 3.35 highly evident.

In the study of Eduardo, et al (2021) he highlighted that the center of Indigenous Peoples curriculum is to develop core competencies to make development for them to be competitive. These competencies can make the students have the needed knowledge and skills needed by the industry. This can prepare them for future opportunities in the needs of society.

Among the answers, the respondents rated the statement "respects and appreciates the community's expression of spirituality in some school-based activities as guidance to the way of life" with the highest mean of 3.47 interpreted as highly evident. This result shows that integration of spirituality can be a good foundation of values for learners. The big emphasis on integrating religious teachings can make the students connect it with the actions they will make and decisions in situations.

In corroboration with Gerodias (2023) it was explained that the unique characteristics of IPED curriculum is the integration of religious teachings. It is believed that it can provide guidance in the characters of the learners.

Thus, the competencies on values development can provide not only knowledge development but attitude refinement for the students.

The answer on statement about "links the indigenous teaching methods and the teaching methodologies prescribed by the national curriculum in content and performance standards to promote a genuine human development to learners" got the lowest mean of 3.27 interpreted as highly evident. This result shows the content of the curriculum targets development of lifelong skills. As designed by the national level, the competencies of the curriculum of education programs harmonizes the teaching methods to all subjects regardless of the content.

According to Nalla (2022) the education standards are designed by national level that is used by all teachers. Guided by the standards mandated that is patterned to the international standards education activities in order to meet the needs of the society when students graduate from their education. Therefore, bearing the standards mandated by the education department prepares the learner with competencies for lifelong learning.

Meanwhile the item number 1 about "Anchors the learning activities on the ancestral domain, community's world view, and indigenous cultural knowledge to highlight the importance of cultural heritage and ancestral values in schools for conservation, which is supported by Ancestral Domain-Based School Improvement Plan (AD-SIP)" and item number 2 "Respects and appreciates the community's expression of spirituality in some school-based activities as guidance to the way of life" got the same mean of 3.18 which means that

the integration of lessons was quite evident as well as the aspect about respecting and appreciating the community's expression of spirituality. Everyone knows that spirituality means a lot to the IP communities and they really much of their doings in the life from their belief and traditions.

Table 1.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Anchors the learning activities on the ancestral domain, community's world view, and indigenous cultural knowledge to highlight the importance of cultural heritage and ancestral values in schools for conservation, which is supported by Ancestral Domain-Based School Improvement Plan (AD-SIP).	3.28	Highly Evident
2. Respects and appreciates the community's expression of spirituality in some school-based activities as guidance to the way of life.	3.47	Highly Evident
3. Involves coordination with local stakeholders and IP community leaders in revisiting the competencies and skills required to be taught in every learning area across grade levels.	3.30	Highly Evident
4. Highlights learning standards and objectives that depict the cultural wealth and rich resources of the community to develop a sense of belongingness and appreciation of one's ancestral domain.	3.38	Highly Evident
5. Revitalizes and regenerates IKSPs and ILs as inherited cultural capitals of the community through integration of culturally appropriate concepts into learning standards and lesson contents.	3.28	Highly Evident
6. Links the indigenous teaching methods and the teaching methodologies prescribed by the national curriculum in content and performance standards to promote a genuine human development to learners.	3.27	Highly Evident
7. Emphasizes competencies that are deemed necessary to support the development and protection of ancestral domain, the vitality of their culture, and the advancement of indigenous peoples' rights and welfare.	3.29	Highly Evident
8. Supports learners' efforts to discern new concepts that will contribute to the community's cultural integrity through enabling meaningful relations with the broader society and involving in community-driven learning activities.	3.39	Highly Evident
9. Fosters a deep appreciation of the IPs' own socio-political structures and organizational and indigenous leadership systems through integrating community-based learning activities in learning competencies.	3.40	Highly Evident
10. Appreciates the importance of ancestral domain as a learning source through localizing the learning objectives and activities stated in the K-12 curriculum.	3.40	Highly Evident
OVERALL MEAN	3.35	Highly Evident

Aside from that, there were also another items with the same mean, these were the “Fosters a deep appreciation of the IPs' own socio-political structures and organizational and indigenous leadership systems through integrating community-based learning activities in learning competencies” and “Appreciates the importance of ancestral domain as a learning source through localizing the learning objectives and activities stated in the K-12 curriculum”. These items imply that the leadership aspect of the community were not compromised in the lesson delivery as well as the appreciation of the ancestral domain in the manner of localizing learning resources. The rest of the items were interpreted as highly evident which simply mean that the implementation of the IPED learning competencies and learning standards were really implemented and observed.

Extent of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the Schools in terms of Learning Resources

Table 2 presents the extent of the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of learning resources that got an overall mean of 3.27 highly evident. The result revealed there were adequate resources for the implementation of IPED learning sessions. The resources can help as references for students. This can also motivate them to get engage in class activities.

In the study of Cezer & Cakan (2022) learning resources are considered the heart of learning session. The adequacy and presence of learning resources can help in encouraging students to participate in class sessions. It makes the students be able to relate the topic with their own perceptions.

The respondents gave the highest rating on statement about “observes cultural sensitivities and protocols such as consent-seeking and validation when developing and instructional materials and other learning resources through consulting regularly with IKSP holders and culture bearers for guidance” with a mean of 3.35 interpreted as highly evident.

This result manifests that the learning resources of IPED curriculum were carefully designed to ensure it adopts and aligns with cultural practices. This can be very important since the culture of the people must be respected and each tribe can have different cultures.

The respondents gave the highest rating on statement about “observes cultural sensitivities and protocols such as consent-seeking and validation when developing and instructional materials and other learning resources through consulting regularly with IKSP holders

and culture bearers for guidance” with a mean of 3.35 interpreted as highly evident.

Table 2.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Utilizes mother tongue as a medium of communication in teaching learners and as a language used for the development of instructional materials to make sure that learning resources are linguistically appropriate to the learners' context.	3.23	Evident
2. Utilizes culturally generated resources, both material and non-material resources, but not limited to artifacts, stories, dance, songs, musical instruments, etc. to make learners well-aware of their own cultural representations.	3.19	Evident
3. Uses some local language or equivalent terms from cultural community' native dialect when discussing concepts to put importance to the learners' unique linguistic background.	3.24	Evident
4. Encourages coordination with the community leaders and elders in the instructional materials development who would determine the cultural appropriateness of these learning supports.	3.31	Highly Evident
	3.27	Highly Evident
5. Includes local facts and resources as instructional aid to appreciate/ highlight bio-geographical, historical, and socio-cultural context of the learner's community.	3.21	Evident
6. Develops culturally and linguistically appropriate audio-visual learning materials to promote cultural appreciation and to recognize learners' own interests, cultural values, historical background, and unique needs.	3.35	Highly Evident
7. Observes cultural sensitivities and protocols such as consent-seeking and validation when developing and instructional materials and other learning resources through consulting regularly with IKSP holders and culture bearers for guidance.	3.31	Highly Evident
8. Adheres to the protocols in the development of learning resources such getting community's approval and consent when using instructional materials taken from their cultural representations to protect the community's intellectual property rights and in keeping with related ethical principles and practice.	3.29	Highly Evident
9. Incorporates indigenous and traditional knowledge systems in the learning resources to be used in the classroom with the aim of interfacing and not to compare with innovative competencies prescribed by K-12 national curriculum.	3.30	Highly Evident
10. Uses learning resources that highlight indigenous culture and that do not consist of discriminatory contents that show "backwardness", "inferiority", "invalid" or "primitive".		
OVERALL MEAN	3.27	Highly Evident

This result manifests that the learning resources of IPED curriculum were carefully designed to ensure it adopts and aligns with cultural practices. This can be very important since the culture of the people must be respected and each tribe can have different cultures.

Aside from that, the items 4 and 8 also got the mean of 3.31 interpreted as highly evident. Item 4 states states about “Encourages coordination with the community leaders and elders in the instructional materials development who would determine the cultural appropriateness of these learning supports”, this aspect means a lot to IP communities because they respect much their tribal leaders specially in decision making as well as in the aspect on item number 8 “Adheres to the protocols in the development of learning resources such getting community's approval and consent when using instructional materials taken from their cultural representations to protect the community's intellectual property rights and in keeping with related ethical principles and practice.” This signifies that the indigenization of lessons with the help of IP elders and experts are really crucial in the development of learning materials for IP learners.

According to UNESCO (2020) resources for Indigenous Education must integrate the culture and shows respect of general traditions of different cultures. The uniqueness of IPED is that it centers towards promoting and preserving culture in integrating this to modern learning. Meaning despite teaching students how to adopt with modernization and change, still their culture were integrated on their teachings that it must be preserved to them.

Meanwhile, the answers on statement about “utilizes culturally generated resources, both material and non-material resources, but not limited to artifacts, stories, dance, songs, musical instruments, etc. to make learners well-aware of their own cultural representations” got the lowest mean of 3.19 interpreted as evident. This answer shows that the teachers are able to innovate in ensuring resources which include adopting the actual cultural practices and beliefs of the student's tribe. Despite the resources not able to be locally designed, still teachers can make learning resource to be adoptive of the local setting to ensure the actual cultural nature of the learners are adopted.

Similarly, Wahyuningsih (2021) explained that learning resources must be developed before being used are known as learning resources by design. In developing these learning resources, special abilities are needed to understand the characteristics of the field of study like in indigenous curriculum. The integration of designs to ensure it meets the culture of the people is not easy. Teachers must be familiar with the culture of the students to be able to integrate them in their learning resources.

The other statements like in items number 1, 3, and 6 were also interpreted as evident. Item 1 states that “Utilizes mother tongue as a medium of communication in teaching learners and as a language used for the development of instructional materials to make sure that learning resources are linguistically appropriate to the learners’ context”. The use of mother-tongue as medium of instruction should always be practiced by all teachers especially those who are teaching in IP schools. We cannot deny the fact that only few of the learners especially in Key stage 1 who can really understand other dialect or language. This was also supported by the result by the statement in item number 3 about “Uses some local language or equivalent terms from cultural community’ native dialect when discussing concepts to put importance to the learners’ unique linguistic background” as well as the statement in item number 6 about “Develops culturally and linguistically appropriate audio-visual learning materials to promote cultural appreciation and to recognize earners’ own interests, cultural values, historical background, and unique needs”. These statements fall under one context, and that is about the appropriate learning resources that should be used by the teachers while teaching IP students and most specially the language or dialect that the teachers should be using while teaching their young IP learners.

Extent of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the Schools in terms of Learning Space and Environment

Table 3 presents the extent of implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of learning space and environment that got an overall mean of 3.31 highly evident. This result means that the schools for IPED communities are comfortable and facilitative of learning. The presence of safe and comfortable classroom and school campus can increase students ease during learning sessions making them more attentive to the class.

Table 3.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Recognizes ancestral domain as a main learning space that serves as a foundation of learning IKSPs and ILSs.	3.32	Highly Evident
2. Designs learning activities that involve going to a particular place in the ancestral domain for the learners to be exposed to the wealth and rich natural resources of their community.	3.19	Evident
3. Maximizes ancestral domain as a relevant avenue and setting for learning in combination with K-12 classroom-based sessions, fostering among learners the appreciation for and practice of lifelong learning while deepening their relationship with the ancestral domain.	3.24	Evident
4. Incorporates cultural integrity and identity when designing the classroom setting to highlight the relevance of protecting, recognizing, and promoting their own cultural heritage.	3.29	Highly Evident
5. Involves observation of the IPs’ cultural norms present and that are exhibited in their ancestral domain to ensure that sacred places are not violated while going and staying in the learning area.	3.31	Highly Evident
6. Encourages community excursion in the ancestral domain as a learning environment to promote appreciation of their community’s world view.	3.28	Highly Evident
7. Ensures that the classroom environment serves as a mini society that reflects the community’s cultural identity through posting of pictures, posters, and other materials that remind pupils of their unique cultural background.	3.27	Highly Evident
	3.37	Highly Evident
8. Fosters an environment that encourages collaborative efforts among stakeholders such as community elders and leaders, teachers, barangay officials, and administration to make a school environment relevant and respectful to the rights of the IPs.	3.41	Highly Evident
9. Ensures a non-discriminatory and supportive school/classroom ambiance for the indigenous learners to freely exercise and extend their own selves in the classroom through recognition of their own inherited rights to ancestral domain, cultural integrity, social justice, and self-governance.	3.40	Highly Evident
10. Exposes indigenous learners to an environment that respects their unique customary laws, indigenous political structures, and indigenous learning systems to ensure inclusiveness and self-determination.		
OVERALL MEAN	3.31	Highly Evident

The same idea was expressed by Verma (2019) who explained learning environment to play vital role in teaching learning process. It was given emphasis that classroom environment is one of the most important factors that affect student’s learning. An ideal learning classroom is when students view their classrooms as positive and supportive. It is a space where they feel safe and secure. A positive

nurturing environment is an indispensable part of learning. It is in a positive environment that a student feels comfortable; a place where healthy relationships with peers and teachers flourish.

The common answers of the respondents revealed that ensuring a non-discriminatory and supportive school/classroom ambiance for the indigenous learners to freely exercise and extend their own selves in the classroom through recognition of their own inherited rights to ancestral domain, cultural integrity, social justice, and self-governance got the highest mean of 3.41 interpreted as highly evident. This answer denotes that the classrooms of Indigenous Communities offer students with culture friendly environment. The decorations and amenities match with the culture of the students. These can make the students feel familiar with their learning environment.

The remaining statements listed in Table 3, specifically numbers 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10, were all regarded as highly evident. This indicates that the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Educational (IPED) program, particularly concerning learning space and environment, was notably evident and received significant attention and careful consideration.

Same point was explained by Howthorne (2022) who concluded that inclusive classroom ambiance can promote feeling of acceptance and comfort for students. Non-discriminating classroom can help boost learning since students will be able to relate to their fellow classmates with confidence and self-belongingness. The acceptance of learners of their own culture and identity can also increase motivation to attend classes.

Meanwhile, among the answers, the statement about “designs learning activities that involve going to a particular place in the ancestral domain for the learners to be exposed to the wealth and rich natural resources of their community” got the lowest mean of 3.19 interpreted as evident. The result means teachers included the natural resources and actual scenario in their learning activities. This can make students easily understand their lessons for it can mean familiar setting. The same evident interpretation was also about the statement “Maximizes ancestral domain as a relevant avenue and setting for learning in combination with K-12 classroom-based sessions, fostering among learners the appreciation for and practice of lifelong learning while deepening their relationship with the ancestral domain.” This emphasizes also that the implementation also adheres to the mandate of the IPED curriculum is the sense of considering the community or the ancestral domain as an avenue for learning.

The same recommendation was mentioned by Otxero (2022) who put emphasis on familiar school setting and topics. The use of localized situations and actual scenario in giving examples can make the young mind of the learners picture out their lessons. This can make the learners participate eagerly in reciting to the lectures and discussions.

Likewise, in the study of Arzadon (2020) it was cited that in order for education to be inclusive and respectful there is a need for the IP to feel there is a self-determination opportunity by having familiar setting in the learning activities.

They must be given chances to participate in decisions align with cultural traditions and must use local places and people in examples. Also, there is a need to ensure freedom to be allowed to study and participate in class activities and share their ideas in developing programs for IP children.

Extent of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the Schools in terms of Teaching Strategies and Methodologies

Table 4 presents the extent of implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of teaching strategies and methodologies that got an overall mean of 3.26 highly evident. The result confirms that teachers use indigenous learning strategies that can be responsive to the students' understanding. The use of mother tongue can be one of the ways to make sure teaching strategies are adoptive to IPED.

According to Bastida, et al (2022) the implementation of IPED program helped in developing good communication skills to students that strengthen their self-identity which can be considered developing higher order of thinking. Language spoken by teacher during lessons that is native to the students is a recognition of their own culture and is important to feel their rights are recognized and respected. This can be a good strategy in instructional delivery methodology.

The respondents rated the statement “includes activities that highlight collective solidarity and community camaraderie which are essential components in living with IPs” with the highest mean of 3.31 interpreted as highly evident. This result means, the learning activities conducted by teachers can be planned together with the students and community like parents and stakeholders. The difference with IPED program is that it must be acceptable to the community practices. Therefore, ensuring that the lectures pass the consultation with parents is an important way of having the learning activities be considered collective measure.

Additionally, statements pertaining to items 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 10 received a classification of highly evident. This indicates that the teaching strategies and methodologies implemented by teachers in the school align closely with the requirements of the learners. Moreover, it underscores the teachers' awareness of the students' needs concerning appropriate teaching strategies and pedagogy tailored for Indigenous learners.

The same idea was opened up by Bastida et al (2022) highlighted the contribution of the community in developing learning activities for Indigenous learning methodology. The collective meeting done to ensure learning activities fit to the culture and language of the people is a good means to develop participative learning measure. An effective instructional strategy must always be shared by people

who knows the actual needs in the learning ground.

On the other hand, the answer on “planning with the cultural bearers and/ or IKSP holders as co-facilitators in the teaching-learning process in the classroom to make sure that teaching methodologies are designed to suit community’s needs, concerns, and aspirations” got the lowest mean of 3.20 interpreted as evident. The answer agrees with the process of designing instructional strategies and methodologies that is always contributed by different sectors. This selection of different teaching strategies is developed through suggestions and recommendations of different sectors in the community. Thus, teachers must select which fitted their needs during lessons. And also, statements in item number 8 about “Incorporates the community’s narratives of local and national history and contemporary issues and concerns confronted by their community when teaching some lessons for them to better understand the importance of realization of their own rights towards increased participation, inclusion, and empowerment” and item number 1 on “Invites the participation of community leaders and IP elders in teaching IKSP s and ILs to make the learning a real reflection of the learners’ authentic cultures” tied with a mean of 3.23 and interpreted as evident.

Table 4.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Invites the participation of community leaders and IP elders in teaching IKSP s and ILs to make the learning a real reflection of the learners’ authentic cultures.	3.23	Evident
2. Uses community-based activities for the learners to better understand their own cultural heritage, uniqueness of the ancestral lineage, and needs of the whole community.	3.26	Highly Evident
3. Ensures that the learning programs and methodologies used in school/ classroom promote among learners an affirmation, recognition, and promotion of indigenous cultural identity to sustain intergenerational relationship and cultural integrity in the community.	3.30	Highly Evident
4. Recognizes and appreciates the spiritual dimensions of teaching and learning IKSPs in planning learning activities through conducting rituals as a part of school program that reflect the purview of the community with the approval, support, and participation of community elders.	3.29	Highly Evident
5. Includes activities that highlight collective solidarity and community camaraderie which are essential components in living with IPs.	3.31	Highly Evident
6. Integrates the indigenous way of teaching such as modeling, observation, apprenticeship, enculturation, and socialization strategies to teach Deped required competencies at the same time to give importance to IKSPs and ILs of the cultural communities.	3.28	Highly Evident
7. Links teaching strategies to community life and cultures to articulate and promote community’s aspirations, ideals, and way of living for empowerment and participation.	3.29	Highly Evident
8. Incorporates the community’s narratives of local and national history and contemporary issues and concerns confronted by their community when teaching some lessons for them to better understand the importance of realization of their own rights towards increased participation, inclusion, and empowerment.	3.23	Evident
9. Plans with the cultural bearers and/ or IKSP holders as co-facilitators in the teaching-learning process in the classroom to make sure that teaching methodologies are designed to suit community’s needs, concerns, and aspirations.	3.20	Evident
10. Uses belief systems and cultural practices in teaching related lessons to nurture the sense of identity of the indigenous learners leading to positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging to their own cultural community and heritage.	3.26	Highly Evident
OVERALL MEAN	3.26	Highly Evident

Incorporating community narratives is very important also in the learning delivery because it upholds the history and background of their ancestors. It is somewhat a form of history for them that should not be left and forgotten. The participation of IP elders if necessary should also address the concern of making sure that whatever integration of cultural concerns in the lesson will be confirmed and validated by those IP elders and experts.

This agrees with Erling et al. (2022) who presented the importance of collaboration of different stakeholders in designing a teaching strategy for students. They emphasized that teachers’ ability to integrate the different ideas of stakeholders makes their instructional method more diverse that can be helpful to different types of learners.

Extent of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the Schools in terms of Assessment Tools and Procedures

Table 5 below shows the extent of implementation of Indigenous Peoples Educational Program among the schools in terms of assessment tools and procedures that got an overall mean of 3.20 evident. The result implies that the teachers are using assessment tools in evaluating learning as part of the routine activities of teaching learning process. This learning and assessment tools content is important in measuring the progress and development of the students.

However, how appropriate the content to the actual culture and practices of the IPs is not totally integrated since the tools are pre made from the national level and adopted by the teachers.

Table 5.

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. Includes community-oriented learning assessment to put importance to community needs and cultural understanding as bases for fostering lifelong learning competencies.	3.21	Evident
2. Fosters community-based involvement activity as an assessment tool that promotes meaningful participation towards a deep understanding of IKSPs and ILSS premised by the recognition of the rights of IPs.	3.21	Evident
3. Highlights practical and performance-based assessments to value community responsibilities as they engage in the actual community activities and situations.	3.22	Evident
4. Involves assessing the learning outcomes using the prescribed state-approved assessment tools with equal emphasis to community-required assessment procedures.	3.24	Evident
5. Makes use of observation technique and self-reported journal/ diary to determine how well the indigenous learners acquired and understood their own IKSPs and ILSS and state-approved competencies.	3.16	Evident
6. Determines the validity and reliability of the assessment tools through community leaders and elders' consultations and suggestions.	3.15	Evident
7. Emphasizes the acquisition of learning competencies both from the national prescribed curriculum and from the community's IKSPs and ILSS, as an interfacing strategy of DepEd and IPRA law.	3.18	Evident
8. Utilizes assessment tools that are taken from learners' own locality or recognized ancestral domain to promote not only the concept of their recognized territories, but also spiritual and cultural bonds entitled to them.	3.21	Evident
9. Considers assessment tools that are more reflective and inclusive by nature such as essays and daily journal to measure the growth and development of the learners as to how well they understand, acquire, and utilize their rights to ancestral domain, cultural integrity, social justice, and self-governance.	3.19	Evident
10. Uses a comprehensive grading and reporting system that manifests their own cultural and historical upbringing and that reflects cultural sensitivity and responsiveness.	3.17	Evident
OVERALL MEAN	3.20	Evident

This is the common sentiments of teachers teaching IPed that the content of assessment is not localized based on the actual scenario. Mostly it was designed in the national level where some aspect are not fitted to their needs. The discrepancy often leads to difficulty of teachers in using it based on the actual situation in the class (Manuel & Queroda, 2018).

The respondents rated, the statement “involves assessing the learning outcomes using the prescribed state-approved assessment tools with equal emphasis to community-required assessment procedures with the highest mean of 3.24 interpreted as highly evident. The answers imply that the assessment tools used to evaluate learning follows the guidelines of the education sector as mandated by the curriculum. This assessment tool complies with community contribution when it was developed.

Similarly, Warantz (2019) agreed that community participation in designing assessment tools for IPED learners must be included. This can provide a localized evaluation measure for learning. This means a more real situation learning assessment.

However, the respondents gave the lowest rating on “determining the validity and reliability of the assessment tools through community leaders and elders' consultations and suggestions” with a mean of 3.15 interpreted as evident. This result signifies that the assessment tools follow the standards implemented by the school. This integrates the tribal leaders' suggestion upon designing the tools. Although there were instances that the local leaders are giving suggestions about the content but most of the time it will be as is.

According to Pepin, et al (2017) suggestions of tribal leaders or elders is a vital aspect of designing learning activities. These leaders know the ways of life of IPs, thus their suggestions are important in knowing what things must be included in the assessment of learning.

Similarly depicted in Table 5, the remaining statements were classified as evident. This implies that regarding the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program concerning assessment and tools, the educators or academic facilitators ensure meticulous management of student records, emphasizing holistic learning. It also indicates that teachers closely monitor student progress and promptly address the needs of any students requiring immediate academic assistance.

Conclusions

Based on the findings from the survey in South Central Mindanao, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program:

Implementation of IPED Learning Competencies: The majority of items related to IPED learning competencies and standards were rated highly evident, indicating that the program has been effectively implemented across the surveyed schools. However, there were specific areas, such as linking Indigenous teaching methods with national curriculum standards, where there is room for improvement to better integrate cultural practices and leadership aspects.

Cultural Sensitivity and Protocols: Respondents emphasized the importance of observing cultural sensitivities and protocols, particularly in the development of instructional materials. This aspect received the highest rating, highlighting the significance placed on consulting with Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) holders and culture bearers. This ensures that learning resources are culturally appropriate and respectful of Indigenous cultures.

Language and Cultural Integration: Utilizing mother tongue as a medium of instruction and incorporating local languages in teaching concepts were seen as crucial in honoring learners' linguistic backgrounds and cultural heritage. Developing culturally and linguistically appropriate learning materials was also underscored as essential for promoting cultural appreciation among students.

Classroom Environment and Community Engagement: Creating a non-discriminatory and supportive classroom environment, aligned with Indigenous cultural values, received high ratings. Activities promoting collective solidarity and community camaraderie were also valued, indicating the importance of involving parents and stakeholders in educational activities that reflect community practices and values.

Assessment Practices: While assessment tools generally followed state-approved guidelines, there was room for improvement in ensuring validity and reliability through increased consultation with community leaders and elders. This suggests a need for more inclusive practices in assessment development to better align with community expectations and contributions.

In conclusion, while the Indigenous Peoples Educational Program in South Central Mindanao demonstrates strengths in promoting cultural inclusivity and respectful education practices, there are opportunities for enhancement. Emphasizing deeper integration of Indigenous teaching methods, enhancing cultural sensitivity in instructional materials, and strengthening community involvement in assessment processes can further enrich the educational experiences of Indigenous learners. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers and educators aiming to foster equitable and culturally responsive education for Indigenous communities.

References

- Arzadon, M. (2020). The making of transformative teacher-intellectuals: Implications for indigenous people education. *Asian Journal on Perspectives in Education*, 1(1), 1-10.
- Bastida, E., et al. (2022). Pedagogical struggles and gaps in language literacy enhancement: The case of indigenous people's education teachers in the Philippines. ERIC. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1383105.pdf>
- Cezer, E., & Cakan, M. (2022). Role of teacher quality and working conditions in TIMSS 2019 mathematics achievement. *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim*, 15(2), 39. <https://doi.org/10.30831/akukeg.971286>
- Department of Education. (2016). DepEd order no. 22, s. 2016: Guidelines on the implementation of the Integrated School-Based and Community-Based Program for Indigenous Peoples Education (No. 22). Department of Education. <http://www.deped.gov.ph/orders/do-22-s-2016>
- Department of Education. (2015). DepEd order no. 32, s. 2015: Guidelines on the implementation of the enhanced basic education act of 2013 (RA 10533). Department of Education. <http://www.deped.gov.ph/orders/do-32-s-2015>
- Eduardo, J. P., & Gabriel, A. G. (2021). Indigenous peoples and the right to education: The Dumagat experience in the provinces of Nueva Ecija and Aurora, in the Philippines. *SAGE Open*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211009491>
- Erling, E. J., Foltz, A., Siwik, F., & Brummer, M. (2022). Teaching English to linguistically diverse students from migration backgrounds: From deficit perspectives to pockets of possibility. *Languages*, 7(3), 186. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages7030186>
- Gabriel, A., & Mangahas, T. (2017). Indigenous people's contribution to the mitigation of climate variation, their perception, and organizing strategy for sustainable community-based forest resources management in Caraballo Mountain, Philippines. *Open Journal of Ecology*, 7, 85–100. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oje.2017.72007>
- Gerodias, D. (2023). A focus on the contextualized learning activity sheets. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research and Innovation*, 1(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7377366>
- Hawthorne, H. (2022, August 10). How to create a positive learning environment. High Speed Training. <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/how-to-create-a-positive-learning-environment/>
- Manuel, M., & Queroda, P. (2018). Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Education Framework in Mapita Integrated School, Philippines. Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus.
- Montaner, R. (2020). The implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education Program in the Ayta Magbukun Tribe of Bataan, Philippines. Ateneo de Manila University. <https://archium.ateneo.edu/theses-dissertations/349>
- Nalla, R. C. (2022). Lived experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of teachers on the current paradigm shift in education: A phenomenological study. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2022.010101>

Oxtero, I. (2022). Problems encountered in the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program in Agusan del Sur: Basis for proposed intervention program.

Pepin, B., Gueudet, G., & Trouche, L. (2017). Refining teacher design capacity: Mathematics teachers' interactions with digital curriculum resources. *ZDM*, 49(5), 799-812. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-017-0870-8>

Reyes, A. (2022). The implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program: Towards a proposed plan of action. *Asia Pacific Journal of Advanced Education and Technology*, Special Issue, September 2022. P-ISSN 2815-245X / E-ISSN 2815-2468.

Romero, N. (2020). Post-colonial philosophy in the Philippines. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. <https://oxfordre.com/education>

Suazo, M., & Montenegro, G. (2018). Implementation of a culture-based education. *International Journal of Applied Science and Engineering Research*. <http://iasir.net/AIJRHASSpapers/AIJRHASS18-231.pdf>

The World Bank. (2022). Indigenous peoples. The World Bank Website. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>

Tran, V. H., Dang, N. T., & Ngo, T. T. (2022). Assessment of high school students' learning and development of qualities and competencies: A case study. *Journal of Education and eLearning Research*, 9(4), 216-223. <https://doi.org/10.20448/jeelr.v9i4.4196>

UNESCO. (2020). The implementation of IP curriculum. UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/>

UNICEF. (2019). IPEd curriculum implementation. UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org>

Verma, G. (2019). The importance of a positive learning environment. LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-positive-learning-environment-geeta-verma>

Villaplaza, L. (2021). Level of implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education Program in Agusan del Sur, Philippines. *Asia Pacific Journal of Contemporary Education and Communication Technology*, 7(1), 20-33. https://apiar.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/3_APJCECT_V7I1_pp20-33.pdf

Warantz, E. M. (2019). The effectiveness of a digital iPad curriculum in the classroom (Doctoral dissertation). Rowan University. <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/2711>

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Jayson G. Imperial, PhD

Bolebak Integrated School

Department of Education – Philippines