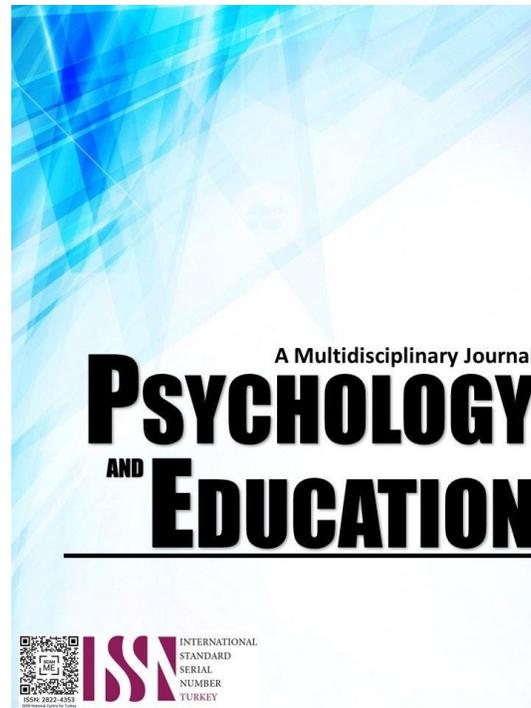# EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES AND ASPIRATIONS OF BATAK LEARNERS IN PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES

Educational Challenges and Aspirations of Batak Learners in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines

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Abstract

This study examined the demographic profile, and educational challenges in terms of access to education, learning environment, support, and curriculum, as well as aspirations, and relationships between variables among Batak parent and student respondents in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. It involved 24 learner respondents and 24 parents. Utilizing a survey with both close-ended and open-ended questions, the study employed a qualitative and quantitative research design, collecting relevant data through interview, data were analyzed using frequency count and percentage. Additionally, mean scores were employed to evaluate educational challenges. Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between student competency and perceived challenges. Results showed that the majority of parents were female, had finished elementary school, were aged between 32 and 45, were pure-blooded Batak, and were beneficiaries of the 4Ps program. Among the students, there were equal numbers of respondents in grades 5 and 6, mostly aged between 10 and 13, with a majority as grade 6 pupils. Parents and students perceived a moderately low level of challenges in access to education and curriculum while reporting a low level of perception regarding educational support and learning environment. Despite the challenges encountered in education, both parents and learners remained optimistic about life. The study found no significant relationship between the demographic profiles of the parent respondents and the learner respondents concerning educational challenges. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between the demographic profiles of the parents and learner respondents regarding their aspirations, all with their educational challenges and their aspirations. The study recommended further exploration of additional factors that highly influence the education of the Batak.

Keywords: *educational challenges, aspirations, access to education, learning environments, educational support*

Introduction

Over 110 different Indigenous peoples, with a combined total of 14-17 million residents, exist in the Philippines. All of them have their own unique languages and cultures. Considering that these communities amongst the Igorot, Lumad, and Aeta were under colonization for hundreds of years, they have managed to hold on to their cultural traditions. They have their own culture, which includes weaving, carving, and even preserving their languages. These areas consist of Northern Luzon, Central Philippines, and Mindanao. The rights of the people are preserved through Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act 1997 in relation to ancestral domains. This preserves the cultural heritage of the tribe, which thrives amid the different persisting challenges.

According to the National Statistics Office (2020), the total population of the country as of May 2020 is 109,035,343. Composed of 78.3% non-indigenous peoples, 6.6% indigenous peoples as reported by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, 2% foreign citizens, 1.7% Muslim ethnic groups identified by the NCIP, and 11.4% unreported. This may imply that the cultural landscape of Palawan will remain diverse. Palawan will continue to be home to approximately 57 ethnolinguistic groups with 3 indigenous peoples: the Tagbanua, Palaw'an, and Batak. While other indigenous groups and migrant communities in Palawan have been increasing, the Batak population has remained statistically constant, thus causing what is actually a declining trend in ratio. In 1995, the Batak population stood at 0.55% of Palawan's total indigenous population, and a mere 0.05% of its total population. In the 2020 survey, there is only an estimated 300 Batak people left in Palawan, composed of approximately 49 family groups (Henson, W, 2012).

According to Miranda (2022), Although primary education is free, the poverty incidence in IP communities remained a challenge to having access to better learning such as available materials, which was usually bridged by the modules personally prepared by the teachers. Education is also not a priority compared to having to work for the family's daily needs. When push comes to shove, Batak parents would even require their children to skip classes and help gather resources to generate income.

Bastida, Saysi and Batuctoc (2023) found that Indigenous Peoples Education teachers commonly struggled with enhancing learners' viewing skills and digital literacy, developing reading comprehension, improving writing skills, contextualizing lessons, following spiral progression in language, and teaching orthography and grammar. Moreover, the results showed that these encountered struggles became more complicated due to the gaps in language learning standards, instructional learning support, learners' literacy, and readiness level, and teachers' competence and strategies used.

According to Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), the province of Palawan's poverty line was P6,786 in 2018. This indicates that in order to cover both essential food and non-food needs in a given month, a household consisting of at least five members must earn the stated amount on average. The cycle of poverty appears to never stop for many Batak families that depend on erratic sources of income, placing their children's education at the bottom of the priority list in order to survive.

Many Filipinos lack the means to attend and finish their formal basic education for a variety of reasons, including the pressing need to work in order to support themselves, the high expense of education, and the difficulty of getting to schools. Because of these factors, indigenous peoples, like the Batak, are frequently more disadvantaged when it comes to getting an education. As a result, a large number of Batak men and women lack basic reading, writing, and math skills (Malampaya, 2016).

According to Cabuena, N.L. et al. (2015), the Batak tribe has a young population, with 35% of children aged 0-10 and 18% aged 11-20. Furthermore, the majority of the tribe's adults are elementary undergraduates. Almost many of them just completed Grade 2 or Grade 3. This demonstrates that the Batak tribe has a low literacy rate. Factors influencing literacy rates include proximity to school, socioeconomic difficulties, and discrimination faced by Indigenous people. International Congress and Convention Association Statistics Report (2015), the Batak are an extremely vulnerable indigenous community in Southeast Asia with a population of less than 300 people. They are among the most vulnerable indigenous communities in the region, with a continuing demographic loss.

Taken together, the current situation of the Indigenous learners indicates a significant gap in access to quality education and the challenges faced by Batak learners. The economic constraints, geographic isolation, and difficulty in getting to schools within IP communities' hinder access to learning materials, while the struggles faced by IPEd teachers in addressing language and literacy development further compound the issue. It is crucial to address these gaps and challenges comprehensively, involving stakeholders at various levels, to ensure equitable and inclusive education for Batak learners and other Indigenous Peoples in similar contexts.

Research Questions

This study generally determined the educational challenges and aspirations of Batak students in Puerto Princesa City. Specifically, it answers to the following questions.

1. What is the demographic profile of parent respondents in terms of:
    1.1. sex;
    1.2. age;
    1.3. highest educational attainment;
    1.4. number of child/children;
    1.5. degree of being Batak member in terms of
        1.5.1. pure blood; and
        1.5.2. half-blooded?
    1.6. average monthly income;
    1.7. occupation;
    1.8. Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4 P's) recipient; and
2. What is the Demographic profile of learner respondents in terms of:
    2.1. age;
    2.2. sex;
    2.3. grade level; and
    2.4. school proximity?
3. What are the educational challenges in terms of:
    3.1. access to education;
    3.2. learning environment;
    3.3. support; and
    3.4. curriculum?
4. What are the educational aspirations of the parents and learners?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the parents and learners to their educational challenges?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the parent and learner to their aspirations?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the parents and learner's educational challenges to their aspirations?

Methodology

Research Design

This research utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research for a thorough understanding. The research conducted by Draucker, C. B. et al. (2020) describes how, through the use of quantitative tools to enhance the ability to conceptualize problems, some qualitative knowledge can in turn be exploited. With this kind of approach, from the outset, there has been the potential of exploring, using qualitative methodologies, the barriers to and aims of Batak students' learning, looking specifically at their experiences of school access and options in terms of learning environments, support systems, and curriculum, including relevance. This will be an initial qualitative phase that will identify the trends in how socio-economic and geographic factors impinge upon their education. This work will then be followed by a subsequent quantitative phase to test these findings upon a larger sample of Batak learners, confirming the pervasiveness of these challenges and their impact on learners' educational aspirations. This kind of approach would give a much deeper understanding both of the barriers and of the motivational

goals of Batak learners, providing valuable insights into how these might be overcome through developing appropriate strategies.

Qualitative data analysis is critical to the understanding of educational challenges and aspirations among Batak learners, who are conceptualized within the broader framework of such learning environments as a marginalized group (Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A., 2020). Access and themes such as the availability of culturally relevant curricula and the prevalence of socio-economic factors influence the life opportunities of these learners. Such sources can be explored through interviews and focus groups, being richer in terms of richly textured impressions than quantitative approaches alone may be able to muster. This approach pays attention to the issues of language support and fewer resources but also throws light on how Batak learners would want their culture to be dealt with in the education framework so that their heritage is respected. According to Salmona, M., and Kaczynski, D. (2024), the collection of 3-5 responses on every theme provides a better understanding of their experiences and allows the educators and policymakers to tailor and present interventions that embody Batak culture to the education framework. Finally, qualitative research allows for a more inclusive and more effective process of schooling in that it empowers the Batak learner to achieve academic and personal pursuits.

Spearman's rank correlation is particularly important in researching Batak learners' educational challenges as it does not strictly require the strict assumptions of normality and linearity associated with Pearson's correlation. This means, of course, that with such a nonparametric approach, this is suitable for the ordinal data as with rankings from surveys or assessments of educational resources where relationships may be curvilinear or monotonic. Such relationships can be discovered through Spearman's correlation, and their strength measured as relating to non-linear associations-for example, the link between parental education levels and students' academic performance. Such knowledge is highly important in the formulation of interventions responsive to the specific educational challenges within the Batak community. Data analysis needs to capture the nuances and dynamics by which the Batak community will experience their education and aspirations.

The study specifically targeted parents of Batak children who were enrolled in grades 5 and 6 at designated elementary schools. In order to ensure a focused representation of the Batak community, respondents were chosen by purposive sampling, which was applied to Batak students and their respective parents. Researchers created own sets of questionnaires specifically designed for student and parent responses, and these sets were sent to gather data. These tools were painstakingly created to collect detailed data on demographic profiles, challenges and aspirations that corresponded with the goals of the study.

Participants

The study's respondents were the five (5) Elementary schools from District III in the Division of Puerto Princesa City.

Table 1. *Learner Respondents*

School	Number of Grade 5 Batak Learners	Number of Grade 6 Batak Learners	Total
Manggapin Elementary School	3	5	8
Concepcion Elementary School- Tagnaya Annex	3	2	5
Tanabag Elementary School	2	3	5
Maoyon Elementary School	3	1	4
Cayasan Elementary School	2	0	2
Total	13	11	24

Table 2. *Parent Respondents*

School	Number of Grade 5 Batak Parents	Number of Grade 6 Batak Parents	Total
Manggapin Elementary School	3	5	8
Concepcion Elementary School- Tagnaya Annex	3	2	5
Tanabag Elementary School	2	3	5
Maoyon Elementary School	3	1	4
Cayasan Elementary School	2	0	2
Total	13	11	24

The total enumeration of the population of both grade 5 and 6 Batak elementary learners and their parents in Puerto Princesa City makes up the study's research population. The goal of this study is to comprehend the barriers to quality education that the Batak population faces, as well as their hopes for the future. The study aims to obtain full insights into the unique problems and barriers to education by including both parents and students thus all Batak elementary learners and their parents are considered as the respondents.

Instrument

The study included two survey instruments: one for elementary Batak students and the other for their parents. The survey questionnaire comprised three sections: demographic characteristics of respondents, educational challenges, and respondents' future aspirations. Part I examined the demographic characteristics of the individuals. Parts II to VI examine the educational challenges and aspirations for the future of Batak pupils and their parents. Certain items were derived from Dacanay, R.T. et al. (2021), while others were created by the researcher to suit local situations.

The instrument has five-point likert scale where Batak parents and learners will select their responses as follows, 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Agree, 5 - Strongly Agree. Part VII included inquiries intended for responses from both learners and their parents, with open-ended questions. The administration of these questionnaires facilitated the collection of comprehensive data regarding demographic background, educational challenges, and future aspirations, in alignment with the research objectives.

Procedure

A letter requesting approval to conduct the research was forwarded to the office of the school head/principal, District Supervisor and Division Superintendent. After approval, the researchers manually contacted the psychometrician to examine the items of the questionnaire. Regarding learner participants, the researchers sought parental authorization and parental signed consent prior to data collection. Content validation and pilot study of the questionnaire used in the study were performed with the assistance of the school principal and a research assistant. It contained questions regarding sociodemographic information, educational barriers, difficulties, and future goals.

Data Analysis

This study employed statistical tools to analyze and interpret the data. The data were analyzed using descriptive measures such as mean, frequency counts, and percentages. Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationships between variables, including the demographic profiles of the respondents and their aspirations.

To describe the academic challenges and aspirations of Batak learners and their parents, frequencies, and means were computed and Spearman rank correlation coefficient was utilized to examine the relationships between demographic profiles and educational challenges as well as aspirations.

Results and Discussion

This section includes the presentation of findings, analysis, and interpretation of data. It presents the profile of grade 5 and 6 batak learners and their parents from five elementary schools cater the batak learners namely Manggapin Elementary School, Concepcion Elementary School-Tagnaya Annex, Tanabag Elementary School, Maoyon Elementary School, and Cayasan Elementary School in terms of challenges they encountered in education in terms of access, learning environment, support and curriculum.

Demographic Profile of the Parent Respondents

Table 3 shows the demographic profile of parent respondents who were participating in the study. The first aspect of the study discovered how parents are distributed in terms of their sex. The respondents is dominated by females and has 14 (79%), and males which are 5 (21%). Women have a strong role in the upbringing and educational support of Batak children, the fact that females were preponderantly represented female respondents. This gender distribution is a factor in family dynamics. The pressure of mothers against fathers may determine the woman's leadership that influences the management of the household and the educational kinds of children in Batak. Using data from a sample of English primary schools, it was shown by Harding, Morris, and Hill (2017) that maternal education is positively associated with children's cognitive development, mainly through better parenting practices.

The high percentage of female respondents may be interpreted to recommend more support and empowerment for mothers, since it is found that women have played a great role in raising Batak children and also providing educational support. According to Davis-Kean, P. Et. Al. 2021, this may involve programs providing the resources and training, especially to mothers, to be better parents and more involved in the education of their children. Recognizing the mother's position in the family could also lead to more successful, laid-out educational strategies that utilize her commitment and influence.

On the one hand, 13 (54%) of the surveyed parents have been through only elementary education and the other 11 (46%) have no education at all. Parents who are less educated will be not only the ones who have difficulty reading letters from teachers and helping their children do homework will continue to be among the most removed parents.

Despite that, collective efforts and networks are required in these cases to eliminate the differences between the two locations and enable every Batak student to experience quality education equally. Vadivel et al. 2020 revealed that children of low-income parents who are less concerned end up with lower academic performance and consequently join the labor market at a younger age. They suggest free vocational training and the provision of parental awareness programs as a way to improve educational outcomes along with securing better livelihoods. Furthermore, Reynolds et al. (2001) outline the anticipated long-term achievements of low-income children's education and social life, arguing for extra studies in high-poverty inner-city areas to determine the best policy.

One of the issues connected to the parents' insufficient support is most of the parents graduated only up to elementary school or never been to any formal educational school according to Kelty and Wakabayashi (2020) adults education programs to teach parents the literacy basic of reading and some other academic skills will be included into the context of this policy. The provision of such facilities would rectify the situation in the home environment by making the parents follow and even participate in learning with their kids. For instance, involving parental education -through school programs in the community would as well play a role in creating a good and peaceful learning environment for Batak children.

Table 3. *Demographic Profile of the Parent Respondents*

	Frequency (n = 24)	Percentage
Sex		
Male	5	21%
Female	19	79%
Highest Educational Attainment		
None at all	11	46%
Elementary Education	13	54%
Age		
22 – 31 years old	6	25%
32 – 41 years old	13	54%
42 – 51 years old	5	21%
Number of Children		
2 – 3	5	21%
4 – 5	12	50%
6 – 7	7	29%
Ethnicity		
Pure-blooded	22	92%
Half-blooded	2	8%
Occupation		
Farmer	24	100%
Average Family Income		
Php 1000 – Php 9999	24	100%
4Ps Beneficiaries		
Yes	23	96%
No	1	4%

The age distribution of the parents shows that 13 (54%) are aged 32-41, 6 (25%) are 22-31, and 5 (21%) are 42-51. These distinct ages would have different life experiences and insights on education. Generational differences are things to be taken into account when parents give feedback to institutions and transmit cultural values and aspirations to their successors. Such distinctions are key if we are to come up with educational strategies that are Batak student-centered, culturally relevant, and meet the preferences and expectations of Batak families.

Specifically, it means that parents' ages go through several generations which offers them a wealth of knowledge and experiences that are specific to their generation in the areas of education. For example, the younger ones will easily get on with new teaching but the older ones will still stick to the old customs. Thus, programs for policy implementation and procedures should be broad but endowed with adaptable training and resource preferences that address specific issues of different generations. Intergenerational conversations can close the gaps that cut across the generations and lead families to unite on the same platform of school, (UNESCO, 2020 and Clymer, C., Lee, J., McLean, E. L., & Burkhardt, A. (2024).

On the household size, 12 respondents (50%) have 4-5 children, 7 respondents (29%) have 6-7 children, and 5 respondents (21%) have 2-3 children. These family structures, to a large extent, determine children's educational success. UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti (2020), where family size and cultural background are concerned, the diversity of survey parents paints a picture of the multifaceted context that the Batak learners live in. Families with more children, especially the ones with 6-7 children, are burdened with more costs and difficult transportation issues which may lead to their limited ability to assist their kids in their education and they have to share their attention between so many children. This overcrowding exacerbates the problem of getting help and being able to guarantee that every child gets what they need in education. On the other hand, the smaller families with only 2-3 children can be resourceful and focus their attention, although they encounter the peculiar Batak community's cultural and socio-economic problems. Osorio-Saez, E. M et.al (2021), the extent of the family sizes as well as the specific cultural characteristics of the cultures of these families, citing the strong community and family bonds, should point to the multifaceted social and cultural context the Batak students face. Educational strategies should be given careful thought to the family size factor so that they can be able to come up with suitable solutions that will facilitate high parental involvement, the usage of resources, and cultural values. A good example is the introduction of projects that are designed to assist in accessing money, educational materials, and programs for parents' involvement. These types of interventions can fill the gaps, hence, the children from larger families being much compensated. Besides that, the household size of families has to be integrated in a more complicated way with the activities of intervention for the successful attainment of educational opportunities by all the learners from the Batak (Reynolds, A.J. et.al, 2022).

For the ethnicity of respondents, pure-blooded Batak accounted for the largest number (92%), followed by half-blooded Batak (8%). This ethnic historical past highlights what must be remembered about circle of relatives and cultural norms for academic cleanup recent aspects. Those findings highlight the need for culturally responsive coaching approaches and inclusive practices. Kortsch, Bashenkhaeva, and Kauffeld (2023), at the current juncture of history, propose that it is time to apply CHAT as a means to scaffold language as a mediational device that can enable different ways of being human, while also emphasizing that this training must have

the dynamic view on culture underpinning it. Likewise, Sparks and Butterwick (2020) concluded that different cultural aspects will pose inequality in terms of accessibility, participation, and achievement about training & urged educators to construct justice.

There is also a growing demand for schools to be more attuned to Batak practices and values, with respondents' ethnicity only as a reference point: pedagogically adapted to Batak culture would be inclusive and enriching in facilitating the learning of learning through a celebration of and contribution to cultural diversity such as Batak traditions. It could also include preparing teachers with cultural training and including Batak history, language and traditions in the school curriculum (Walker, A., 2023).

Every single person interviewed is a farmer (24, 100%) earning Php 1000 to Php 9999 per month with a household income between Php 1000 and Php 9999 per month and almost all of them are recipients of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), 23 (96%) of whom are recipients. This information emphasizes how poor most of the families of the Batak community are. It's time that policymakers consider these income differences in defining educational policy to provide resources, especially for low-income students. According to Beck (2011), every child should be able to learn, no matter where they come from or what their family income. Schools need to solve this to ensure better education without penalizing students based on how much their family has. As Mushtaq and Khan (2012) emphasized, both poverty and income inequality are threatening students' academic attainment.

Some of the factors include learning facilities; classroom conditions; the teachers' and students' relationship; as well as sociological/economic issues among others. The government of the Philippines seeks to reduce poverty by implementing and executing the Conditional Cash Transfer program and also assisting those students who would otherwise not be able to attend school.

Demographic Profile of the Learner Respondents

Table 4 presents in detail the demographic features of the sample population of grade 5 and 6 learners. Investigating these factors leads to some insights that are also applied to a range of the challenges faced in education.

The sex distribution of student respondents, it has 12 males and 12 girls with 50% frequency. In terms of age, the majority, 20 respondents (83%), are among 10-13 years old, showing a predominantly younger pupil population. There are 4 students (17%) are older, aged 22-39 years. This shows exclusive lifestyle stages for expertise academic demanding situations and aspirations. The younger majority is at a vital stage of improvement wherein foundational instructional stories and aspirations are fashioned, while older students strain the want for lifelong getting to know opportunities (UNESCO, 2021). Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, (2020), the age range in the scholar populace affirms the necessity to calibrate academic techniques to distinctive stages of existence and studying needs. While the more junior college students would require solid and strong help systems that may in the end grow to shape a strong basis in education, the senior students might even call for flexibility in learning tracks and in addition support in balancing education with other existing duties. The inclusion of non-stop studying opportunities with a bias to resorting in faculty is the approach required to house both these age segments of training, World Bank. 2022.

In terms of grade level, 13 respondents (44%) are in Grade 5, and 11 respondents (46%) are in Grade 6. This information is critical for educators and policymakers to deal with higher elementary-level demanding situations and aid aspirations correctly. Insights from these facts can inform curriculum development, and educational strategies, and assist programs to ease the transition to secondary schooling.

The grade-level distribution indicates that, in truth, both Grade 5 and six have their respective demanding situations, intervening differently. For Grade five, policy interest is needed to shape robust fundamental abilities, structuring a solid floor for individuals who will strengthen to greater complex subjects, World Bank, (2021). At the Grade 6 stage, readiness for secondary education with better-order thinking talents and challenge-precise understanding have to be fostered. This makes them establish a strong instructional basis and guarantees a clean transition inside the machine of education, UNESCO, (2020).

Distance from school: 15 respondents (63%) live within a kilometer of their school, while nine respondents (37%) live more than 5 kilometers away. This information also brings out the fact that distance may influence academic reviews and aspirations and further necessitates transportation regulations and infrastructural development. The unique distances also underlie the importance of geographical proximity in educational experiences and basic aspirations. Transportation problems and training facilities provision to the students far from faculty should also be considered in creating a truthful and more inclusive instructional setting.

According to Bashaiza (2016), traveling for long hours physically and mentally exhausts students, and hence the overall performance gets affected. Williams (2010) also stated that long-distance traveling causes abnormal attendance, which affects studying. David (2014) further added that scholars who walk long distances reach college exhausted, which lowers their concentration and gaining knowledge of effectiveness. Therefore, these demanding situations need to be addressed in order to enhance academic results.

Smith, J., & Johnson, L. (2020), referring distance to be traveled to school as one of the geographical factors that have a strong influence on the students' experience and expectations of education. 37% of students travel more than 5 kilometers, and transport issue becomes one of importance. Problems that long distances to school usually pose include tiredness, irregular attendance, and poor academic performance. Most of these issues would be mitigated if the policies attempted to address the inefficiencies associated with the transport infrastructure and aimed at making all students achieve safe and reliable access. This could be in forms of school buses, allowing fare subsidization in public transport, and even opening schools in deprived parts of town. Being in school assumes that access to education

facilities is possible and assures regular attendance with ideal learning conditions.

Table 4. *Demographic Profile of the Student Respondents*

	Frequency (n = 24)	Percentage
Sex		
Male	12	50%
Female	12	50%
Age		
10 – 13 years old	20	83%
22 – 39 years old	4	17%
Grade Level		
Grade 5	13	54%
Grade 6	11	46%
Distance from School		
Less than 1 km	15	63%
More than 5 km	9	37%

Perceived Educational Challenges by Parents and Students

Table 5 provides a comprehensive overview of parents' and students' educational challenges, as indicated by their mean percentage scores and corresponding interpretations.

Access to Education

Table 5 shows the mean score of barriers to access education for Batak as moderately low level, 2.73 in mean score. Parents gave a marginally higher mean score than that of Batak, indicating 3.00, this is also at the slightly low range. This score generally means that there are considered barriers, but these are not widespread regarding access to education. Then, it will be an aspect toward a positive result toward the attainment of the intent of the Department of Education, "education for all.".

The Philippine EFA 2015 Plan is still a challenge, especially in achieving functional literacy and competency for all Filipinos by 2015. Recently, huge disparities were reported in early childhood education, and high dropout rates in all grades, while subjects like English, Mathematics, and Science scored below average. Lastly, context-sensitive inclusive education practices anchored on global perspectives are emphasized by Ainscow (2020). This method promotes research-based policies in tackling challenges and ensuring the success of uniform quality enhancement in education. More importantly, Lindner et al. (2023) discussed how the inclusion would be accepted by the teachers according to the nature of disability that should be introduced into the mainstream activities while their attitudes and academic achievements would be enhanced.

It was the view of most parents and students who participated in the study that financial constraints have a significant impact on their education with a mean of 5.00 with a strong agreement. The case seems to be the same across the board: financial constraint is the primary barrier to education and hence, there is an urgent need for scholarships or subsidy interventions that deal with time investment and resources. This makes it even clearer that the economic constraints go deep into the access to education; the interventions should be there to cushion this, such as scholarships and subsidies. This implies that differentiated obstacles would block the achievement of expanding access to quality education taking into account students' economic status. In that case, Norazlan et al. (2020) seem to suggest that, on the other hand, students with financial problems perform poorly. This could mean that financial challenges are one major impediment between a student and the prospect of performing well in academic work. However, financial assistance is a way to combat educational inequity therefore led to better academic achievement while still ensuring egalitarian principles apply in school and classroom environments. Therefore, being able to clear this barrier of finances is one crucial point within the students that can enable them to feel confidence in being able to reach their full potential and focus on studying.

On the issue of geographic isolation, parents (M: 2.67) and students (M: 2.83) hold neutral positions, suggesting mixed views on its significance as a barrier. These mixed perspectives suggest that geographic isolation cannot be decreed as unimportant because of the ways in which it dramatically affects at least some student populations. Transportation inequalities can easily become educational inequalities, as the long travel times will be detrimental to the performance of students. This is especially true for historically marginalized student groups, in whom the challenges of long commutes are added to a slew of educational disadvantages. According to Hopson et al. (2024) and Odell (2017), transportation is seen to cause prolonged absenteeism that might further increase fatigue and reduce study time, thus affecting the academic achievement of students. It thus becomes very important to reduce the isolation of people that geographical isolation causes with better transport infrastructure and services. This might actually help in leveling the playing field for all students and then support improved academic outcomes within a very diverse student population.

Regarding inadequate infrastructure, parents disagree (M: 1.58), whereas students are neutral (M: 2.50). This disparity in perception underscores the need for better communication and understanding between parents and students regarding school facilities and their conditions (Jakhongir, 2021; Lin, 2020).

Both parents (M: 2.96) and learners (M: 3.13) hold neutral views on discrimination and stereotyping as educational barriers, suggesting

a need for further exploration into how cultural sensitivity impacts learning environments (Lorenz, 2021; Wenz & Hoenig, 2020).

Parental concern is earned regarding the limited access to technology which has a mean of 3.92, as well as for learners who have a mean of 4.13, meaning that there exists an urgent digital gap in education, (Madar, 2021). The above concern makes emphasis as to how important bridging of technology gaps that seeks to ensure that all students can be able to access education. These digital divides may, in an important way, hamper the engaging, completing, and developing of 21st century skills with resources of the digital world and may subsequently promote inequalities in education. Devices, Internet and training in the use of devices are part of the tools that can help the learned gap informed Madar (2021). The role of school technology investment as a support mechanism is critical for enabling teachers to meet diverse adolescent learning needs within class settings. It is not just the issue of being incapable of bridging the digital divide, it is about being fully equipped to engage in the currently available methods of digital learning.

Parents and learners have different views on the inequitable school resources as a key issue and both agree that resources are distributed fairly (Parents: M: 1.92, Learners: M: 1.75). This suggests that there is not much disparity in the distribution of resources within the schools (Chea, 2019). In such situations, the probabilities of having a positive educational environment increase, since there would be trust placed in the system, which in turn may yield better academic results and enhanced support from the community towards the institutions. However, such agreement also raises a question as to whether these perceptions are dictated by the resources, considering that perceived equity may or may not exist in regard to actual resource allocation. The findings, therefore suggest a very high but promising level of contentment with equity of resources however such contentment must always be measured against the actual practices regarding resources allocation and their publication.

Parents (M: 1.67) and learners (M: 1.75) are quite confident about the steps taken by the educators to strengthen the educational experience (Hall, 2019), unlike ineffective parent-teacher communications that both parties consider as having minimal importance.

Language as a barrier is regarded with indifference by parents (M: 2.83) while learners (M: 3.17) think slightly more about it, emanating from the difference in opinion regarding language as a barrier to education (Henderson, 2020). This divergence means that the barrier of language may not be a major issue as per parents' perspective, but for learners the language barrier may be an issue as it will impact how learners view education and their approach towards it. This divergence therefore requires stronger focus on the language support aspects schools offer to learners, not to segregate any child in any form so that equal access to educational services can be provided, nurturing more inclusive learning environments Lee, A., & Thompson, M. (2021).

Learning Environment

The data reveals that the parents and learners consider a low level of challenge related to the learning environment; it is (parents-M:2.23, I: Low level, learners- M:2.29 I: Low Level), as shown in Table 3.

While parents seem to be neutral on the issue of overcrowded classrooms (M: 2.58, I: Neutral), the students disagree (M: 1.75, I: Disagree) that it is a major problem. This could connote some difference in perception between parents and students on how classroom overcrowding affects learning. This neutral attitude of the parents and a discrepancy by the students in disagreement with its importance indicate a clear break in understanding between these two groups over what exactly the impact of classroom size could be on learning outcomes (Carvalho, 2019). This will open lines of communication and provide for a dialogue to be developed between the parents, students, and educators in discussing concerns related to addressing the classroom overcrowding problem and searching for ways of implementing strategies that will optimize learning environments toward student achievement, as identified by James (2020).

The poor learning environment is rejected by both parents and learners, with the parent mean of 1.83 with an interpretation of Disagree, and for learners, their mean was at 1.67 with an Interpretation of Disagree, thus parents and learners were of the view that generally, the learning environment satisfactory. This may imply that there is an implication from both parents and learners of a perception of the environment as at worst being fair. What this could mean, however, is that the prevailing education setting meets simple expectations and gives an impression of a conducive atmosphere for learning. Such a highly positive judgment would necessarily have to be based on a number of factors: adequate facilities, effective teaching practices, and a supportive school culture. In this respect, it suggests that there is also convergence in perceptions, which means that common ground in the perception and appreciation of present learning conditions does exist. This shared belief provides fertile ground for improvement and growth, since both parents and learners appreciate the current environment's positives. Engagement of stakeholders in open and continuous dialogue concerning the problems in the preservation and further betterment of the learning conditions should hold the conditions of satisfaction while gaining support for further development in education (Sulthani, D. A., & Thoifah, I., 2022 and Dasgupta, N. et.al, 2022))

Moreover, data illustrate that both parents and learners agree that the lack of available technology in education is a significant challenge (parents- M: 3.71, I: Agree, learners- M: 4.29, I: Agree). This clearly shows that technology is a very critical component of learning, and therefore, its importance in modern educational sector cannot be underestimated (Hsu, 2019). The fact that both groups agree may be seen as a strong nodding to the possible gains to be reaped from using technology, such as engaging and better ways of instruction delivery, personalization of learning experiences, and the acquisition of key 21st-century digital literacy skills. There is, therefore, an urgent call for more investments in school-based educational technology infrastructure and resources. The educational establishment, therefore, should take first priority in investments targeting a more engaging, effective, and inclusive learning environment to enable students to cope with the challenges that the future has in store. In this regard, the convergence of the views of parents and learners

brings out the urgency that technological gaps in education need to be filled so that all students are afforded equal opportunities to access tools and materials central to their success academically and professionally (Loderer, 2020.)

Both groups disagree (parents- M: 1.58, I: Disagree, learners- M: 1.92, I: Disagree) that ineffective classroom management is a key challenge. The fact that the two groups share similar views testifies that classroom environments are generally well-managed, hence efforts put in place to maintain order and ensure decorum are successful. Good classroom management is an important ingredient of a good learning environment, providing for reduced time wastage and allowing more instructional time. The data would seem to suggest that, on the whole, teachers are effective at using strategies that secure positive student behaviors and engagement, hence ensuring an overall effective learning environment. The effectiveness in classroom management improves the quality of the learning environment besides supporting student success by providing stability and support. The fact that the views and opinions of the parents are in agreement with those of the learners definitely proves the case that the current management practices are satisfactory and are positively contributing towards the learning process. Such concurrence may provide the impetus for further development of classroom management techniques, with a view to consolidating for further success in establishing and maintaining optimal learning conditions (Paas, 2018).

Both parents and kids exhibit a more balanced perspective on bullying and its impact on the classroom. While students' average score of 3.13 also suggests a neutral attitude, parents' average score of 2.92 indicates a neutral position. It thus implies that bullying is not considered an important or widespread issue in the school by either party, though at the same time, there is a latent recognition of the potential problem it poses to student well-being. The neutral perception may be indicative that even while there is no rampant bullying in schools, both severely disruptive and nondisruptive in nature, the community remains aware of its possible consequences on the mental and emotional well-being of the students. In fact, this awareness shows the necessity of further vigilance and proactive remedial measures to ensure that bullying does not occur at all, or if at all it does, it can be effectively dealt with. This neutrality may further be a reflection of some current antibullying policies and interventions that must have reduced this problem to a manageable level and cannot adversely affect the learning environment. Keeping the lines of communication open between the parents, students, and educators will go a long way in monitoring and dealing with bullying incidents as soon as they arise, hence ensuring a safe and conducive environment for all learners. This balanced view creates room for strengthening and enriching anti-bullying strategies in a bid to ensure a healthy and conducive learning environment (Salmivalli, C et.al, (2021) and Le Menestrel, S. (2020).

Parents find the lack of variety in learning resources to be a neutral issue (M:2.54, I: Neutral), while the students disagree (M:2.08, I: Disagree) with the statement, suggesting the two groups differ in their perspectives about the adequacy of learning resources; the gap in viewpoint regarding the quality of learning materials suggests that not everyone knows whether there is enough good stuff in the classroom. To ensure satisfaction, everyone needs to fill a classroom with sufficient resources according to what students need. This could start happening if every member of the school community, including all teachers, all students, and all parents, begins communicating and converging together (Jafari, S., et.al., 2024).

Both parents and learners did not accept that only a few extracurricular opportunities had been accorded to the learners. Parents responded with a mean of 1.58, an interpretation index of Disagree, whereas learners responded with a mean of 1.50, an interpretation index of Disagree. Such a perception would suggest that the schools are indeed providing many extracurricular programs for a wide variety of interests and talents to complement the simple educational curriculum. Anjum, S. (2021) cited that the presence of such activities might contribute to the personal growth, social enhancement, and other skill acquisition of students outside the regular academic curriculum. Moreover, Krupp, E.A. et.al (2021), the closeness of parents' and students' responses suggests mutual satisfaction with the range and quality of extracurricular options made available. It means that the positive assessment would, in turn, call for maintenance—moreover, possible expansion—of such opportunities so that further promotion of all-round education could be undertaken. A strong extracurricular program can contribute to building character and community and enhancing young people's health in every way, all components of the whole educational environment.

Another point of disagreement between the groups is the poor lighting and ventilation in the learning environment, parents, M: 1.58; I: Disagree; and learners, M: 1.83; I: Disagree: This suggests that they have been sufficiently catered for in this aspect. In consensus, the physical setting is seen to reasonably support students in a comfortable and conducive atmosphere. Good lighting and ventilation are believed to enhance concentration, health, and well-being of the students; hence their satisfaction perhaps means that the school does very well in provision of this. This agreement from both populations reaffirms the appropriateness of maintaining standards at the physical learning environment as there are many such obstacles to student concentration and performance. Such agreement from both populations recommends good management by the school in the provision and maintenance of these facilities and so may be favorably construed in terms of providing a good physical environment within which students can engage in their learning processes. Closs et al. believe these intrinsic factors are a great consideration when considering putting in place supporting environments in schools that improve student welfare and academic performance.

Moreover, both parents and learners reject, parents, M: 1.92, I: Disagree, learners, M: 1.67, I: Disagree, the notion of unequal distribution of resources, an implication that there is a fair distribution of resources within the learning environment. The perception of being fair in terms of resource allocation would mean that students are equal in gaining materials, facilities, and opportunities that are needed; such an atmosphere creates an environment conducive to student learning. Having a fair distribution of such opportunities,

there is no group of students that is unfairly disadvantaged, enhancing participation, achievement, and engagement among students. It is expected that this coincidence between parental and learner views would underscore to the effect that the policies and practices the school puts in managing resources are quite effective. This is essential for the continuity of trust and satisfaction of all concerned. In addition, providing fairness in distribution will serve as a means of maintaining a positive attitude and helping to generate a more just and efficient learning environment, Omoeva, C., Cunha, N. M., & Moussa, W. (2021).

Support

The overall difficulty faced by both parents and learners in terms of support services is at a moderately low level, as indicated in Table 3. Parents' mean score is 2.75, interpreted as moderately low, and learners' mean score is 2.74, also indicating a moderately low level of difficulty. This assessment highlights key areas within the educational system that require additional support.

There seems to be a consensus among both the parents (M: 3.75, I: Agree) and the learners (M: 4.04, I: Agree) with respect to the inadequacy of learning support. This indicates some understanding on the part of both parents and students, thereby appreciating that such support mechanisms should be heightened to cater to a variety of learning needs (Abela, 2023). This, further, points to a need to direct investments toward resources and interventions that will provide tutoring services, academic counseling, and remediation programs that will assist particular students with academic and learning gaps (Rotar, 2022). This solution also stands to provide an equal chance for the promotion of learning and improved educational outcomes for all learners through extra resources.

Both parents and learners agree that limited assistance is available for inclusive education, and thus more has to be done to meet the student's needs, parents- M: 3.63, I: Agree, learners- M: 4.46, I: Agree. The points of such agreement on questions of limited support available for inclusive education concerning student needs freight home the imperative of prioritizing resources and training in effectively supporting students with special needs (Cummings, 2019). This means that in an inclusive and accessible educational support structure, the needs of all learners should be taken into consideration in a way that allows every student to excel in all spheres, both academics and social (Lei, 2019).

Parents and learners show neutral opinions about the provision of support in their languages, with parents' responses scoring a mean of 3.46 and interpreted as neutral, while learners scored a mean of 3.21 and were similarly deemed neutral. Thus, though it might not be on top priority, an additional service of language support would be welcomed.

The idea of uncomfortable relationships with teachers, however, is rejected by both groups as parents – M: 1.58, I: Disagree; learners respectively – M: 1.46, I: Disagree). The low mean scores show a high satisfaction and sense of trust in the relationships fostered within schools. Allen, K. A., et.al. (2021), cited that this is an important positive dynamic since it creates a footing for effective relationships, learning experiences, and feelings of safety and belonging. There are consistent, strong links to improved academic outcomes and increased student engagement and well-being. For the parents, trust in teachers gives them the assurance that their children will be successful in their academic pursuits; for the learners, this creates a sense of safety within which to grow in personal and intellectual capacities. Such findings underline the idea that creating and keeping positive teacher-student relationships is a linchpin to successful educational experiences.

In terms of parental participation majority of the respondents disagree with a parent's mean of 1.75 with the parent, while the learners have a 1.79 mean. This could mean that both parents and learners have the perception of adequate participation of parents in education. It seems that the results show that both rebellion against the relationship with teachers and little parental participation share one dimension of rejection, which assumes a positive perception of supportive relationships from all stakeholders within this educational community. Healthy relationships among teachers, learners, and parents are established and maintained as the basis for creating a supportive atmosphere within the classroom for the holistic development of the student.

Also, both parents and learners disagree with the presence of inadequate systems for peer support, parents: M: 1.96, I: Disagree and learners: M: 1.71, I: Disagree respectively, in direct contrast, they feel that there are present supportive peer networks in the learning environment.

Parents and learners are both neutral about the lack of cultural competence in teachers. Parents : M: 2.63, I: Neutral; learners: M: 2.83, I: Neutral. This implies that though this may not be a big issue, there is scope for improvement in this area.

Both groups disagree with the statement that stated that there is restricted access to outside educational materials, with parents responding with M: 1.83 and I: Disagree, and learners responding with M: 2.08 and I: Disagree, indicating that participants believe enough access exists outside the classroom.

Parents were found to agree that traditional knowledge is not fully recognized (M: 4.96, I: Strongly Agree), while students also declared generally with slightly less weight (M: 4.13, I: Agree). The result was construed as a shared view that traditional knowledge is not adequately acknowledged within the educational system itself and impact how support is offered to students. This gap speaks to the phenomenon of cultural insensitivity, thus it would be crucial to bring alternate perspectives and knowledge systems into the teaching arena, so that each child will feel valued and included in the learning process, and in doing so, there is a guarantee that such matters would be addressed for an efficient and safe, positive and culturally sensitive learning environment within school settings (Peng, 2020).

Curriculum

Based on Table 5, results indicate that both parents and students agree that the difficulty level of the curriculum is relatively low (parents: M: 2.92, I: relatively Low Level; learners: M: 3.20, I: Moderately Low Level).

Cultural context adaptation from the curriculum received very positive responses from students with a definite perception that the curriculum did not handle their cultural contexts appropriately, mean score at 3.88 while parents reacted neutrally in the sense that there were no strong opinions in both directions, mean score 2.79. This disparity may imply that while parents are unsure about the cultural relevance of the curriculum, students feel it falls short of addressing their cultural needs (Assaf, 2023). This discrepancy calls for curriculum developers and educators to embrace cultural diversity more comprehensively, ensuring inclusivity and relevance in educational materials to enhance meaningful learning experiences for all students (Brown, 2020).

Both parents and students do not believe that this curriculum does not apply the information to real life. Parents mean reported 2.17, with learners reporting a mean of 2.42 with disagreement, meaning that they indeed find the curriculum relevant and applicable for practical scenarios (Regnery, 2021). This would mean that learning content should help learners achieve skills and knowledge to be able to face challenges in reality (Hafeez, 2021). Respondents agree that the problem that is always focused on standardized testing rather than learning; parents: M: 3.50, I: Agree, learners: M: 3.88, I: Agree. The fact that both agree on the need to standardize testing instead of learning reflects the same concern in relation to what is currently given importance in the educational system regarding its emphasis on assessment-driven approaches. It thus calls for balance, where there should also be a focus on holistic learning outcomes (Mendoza, 2022).

According to Lai (2023), it had several bad effects, like test anxiety and achievement gaps, and some good ones, such as better self-assessment and self-efficacy. This is specifically useful for making sure decision-makers and educators generalize better test use and for proposing future research directions so that these effects could be rebalanced toward greater equity. Gamez, (2015), stated that indeed, the standardized test correlates negatively to both graduation rates and also SAT scores, therefore it is proved that it doesn't posit anything on the outcomes of students.

Both parents and learners are neutral regarding the representation of their cultural viewpoints in the curriculum, indicating a need for reform in this area (parents: M: 2.83, I: Neutral; learners: M: 2.79, I: Neutral). This may imply that despite being seen as a minor issue, there is significant room for improvement in cultural representation that may be an opportunity for educators to integrate perspectives and promote critical thinking within culturally relevant contexts.

Similarly, both parents and learners neutral on the curriculum's fostering of critical thinking within a cultural framework (parents: M = 2.83, Neutral; learners: M = 2.58, Neutral). These results suggest that critical thinking is something desirable in practice but suggests no strong emotions on it being integrated in the cultural context of the curriculum.

Both groups agreed on the importance of technology as a key component of quality learning. They were of the view that technology should be imbedded in the curriculum (M: 3.92, parent; M: 4.17, learners). The more stimulating the learning, the more teamwork, critical thinking, and creativity it fosters, hence enhancing learner engagement and maximizing academic success in the classroom (D'Angelo, 2018).

This process of student-center teaching is easily guided by teachers whose students and the teachers themselves maintain a positive attitude toward the role of technology in fostering learner satisfaction and classroom engagement. Similar platforms such as Edmodo do serve to achieve the set learning outcomes more effectively and to provide collaboration opportunities beyond school hours.

Adelakun (2023): ICT enhances student involvement in learning, which makes teaching and learning more efficient and enjoyable. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic pushed faster the use of digital developments in education, and studies indicate that ICT leads to better performance and productivity. Digital ICT integration into curriculum development, therefore, becomes a major necessity in addressing global and economic challenges more effectively.

On the issue of the rigidity of educational pathways, parents were more neutral (M: 2.83, I: Neutral), while students showed more bias toward neutrality (M: 3.46, I: Neutral), meaning that though some may realize its rigidity, it cannot be argued to be a widely recognized major challenge.

Both parents and learners disagree, (parents- M: 2.08, I: Disagree, learners- M: 2.38, I: Disagree), the notion that insufficient time spent on fundamental life skills in the curriculum an impression that there is enough allocated time to address the acquisitions of basic life skills within the system.

Moreover, both parents and students disagree with this notion (parents- M: 2.00, I: Disagree, learners- M: 2.00, I: Disagree) that environmental education receives too little attention, thus acknowledging the importance of environmental education in the curriculum.

The two groups strongly agree in the analysis that the curriculum is overloaded, with students agreeing more strongly (parents: M 4.21, I: Agree, learners: M 4.50, I: Agree). This indicates that the perception of the curriculum as overloaded is very high and could subsequently contribute to difficulties in comprehension and retentiveness.

As seen in the research by V. U. Eduwem and Ezeonwumelu. (2020), there is an obvious inverse relationship between the effective learning of junior secondary school pupils and an overloaded curriculum and numerous academics undertaking. Among other things, the guidelines will highlight how curriculum mapping can reduce such repetitions and result in better learning outcomes.

Education News (2022) reports that over-exertion pressure may demoralize children, cause nervousness and pressure on them, and prevent them from participating in extracurricular activities. It can result in burnout and fewer family times and more reliance on outside help. However, it can prepare for life, make one resilient, active, and hence successful at academics, and even assist in achieving a better class rank.

Table 3. *Perceived Level of Challenges Encountered*

Educational Challenges Statements	Parents		Students	
	Mean	*Interpretation*	*Mean*	*Interpretation*
Access to Education	2.73	Moderately Low	3.00	Moderately Low
1. Financial Constraints	5.00	Strongly Agree	5.00	Strongly Agree
2. Geographic Isolation	2.67	Neutral	2.83	Neutral
3. Inadequate Infrastructure	1.58	Disagree	2.50	Neutral
4. Discrimination and Stereotyping	2.96	Neutral	3.13	Neutral
5. Limited Access to Technology	3.92	Agree	4.13	Agree
6. Insensitivity to cultural differences	2.67	Neutral	2.79	Neutral
7. Inequitable School resources	1.92	Disagree	1.71	Disagree
8. Ineffective Parent-Teacher communication	1.67	Disagree	1.75	Disagree
9. Language Barriers	2.83	Neutral	3.17	Neutral
10. Lack of Educational Resources	2.04	Disagree	3.04	Neutral
Learning Environment	2.23	Low	2.29	Low
1. Overcrowded Classrooms	2.58	Neutral	1.75	Disagree
2. Poor Learning Environment	1.83	Disagree	1.67	Disagree
Educational Challenges Statements	*Parents*		*Students*	
	Mean	*Interpretation*	*Mean*	*Interpretation*
Learning Environment	2.75	Moderately Low	2.74	Moderately Low
3. No Available Technology in Education	3.71	Agree	4.29	Agree
4. Ineffective Classroom Management	1.58	Disagree	1.92	Disagree
5. Bullying	2.92	Neutral	3.13	Neutral
6. Absence of Variety in Learning Resources	2.54	Neutral	2.08	Disagree
7. Limited Extracurricular Opportunities	1.58	Disagree	1.50	Disagree
8. Poor Lighting and Ventilation	1.58	Disagree	1.83	Disagree
9. Inequitable Allocation of Resources	1.92	Disagree	1.67	Disagree
Support	2.75	Moderately Low	2.74	Moderately Low
1. Insufficient Provision of Learning Support Services	3.75	Agree	4.04	Agree
2. Limited Assistance for Inclusive Education	3.63	Agree	4.46	Agree
3. Insufficient support for our Language.	3.46	Neutral	3.21	Neutral
4. Uncomfortable Relationships Between Teachers and Students	1.58	Disagree	1.46	Strongly Disagree
5. Minimal Parental Participation	1.75	Disagree	1.79	Disagree
6. Inadequate Systems for Peer Support	1.96	Disagree	1.71	Disagree
7. Lack of Cultural Competence in Educators	2.63	Neutral	2.83	Neutral
8. Restricted Access to Educational Materials Outside of School	1.83	Disagree	2.08	Disagree
9. Traditional Knowledge Is Not Fully Recognized	4.96	Strongly Agree	4.13	Agree
Educational Challenges Statements	*Parents*		*Students*	
	Mean	*Interpretation*	*Mean*	*Interpretation*
Curriculum	2.92	Moderately Low	3.20	Moderately Low
1. Curriculum Not Adapted to Our Cultural Context	2.79	Neutral	3.88	Agree
2. Inability to Apply Knowledge to Situations in the Real World	2.17	Disagree	2.42	Disagree
3. Too Much Stress on Standardized Testing Instead of Learning	3.50	Agree	3.88	Agree
4. Insufficient representation of our cultural viewpoints	2.83	Neutral	2.79	Neutral
5. Insufficient Focus on Fostering Critical Thinking, especially within the Framework of our culture.	2.83	Neutral	2.58	Neutral
6. Limited Incorporation of technologies	3.92	Agree	4.17	Agree
7. Rigidity in Educational Pathways	2.83	Neutral	3.46	Neutral
8. Not Enough Time Spent on Fundamental Life Skills	2.08	Disagree	2.38	Disagree
9. Environmental Education Requires Too Little Attention	2.00	Disagree	2.00	Disagree
10. Overloading the Curriculum	4.21	Agree	4.50	Strongly Agree
Overall Level Of Perceived Challenge	2.69	Moderately Low	2.69	Moderately Low

Legend: 4.50–5.00 (Strongly Agree / High Level) | 3.50–4.49 (Agree / Moderately High Level) | 2.50–3.49 (Neutral / Moderately Low Level) | 1.50–2.49 (Disagree / Low Level) | 1.00–1.49 (Strongly Disagree / Very Low Level)

Aspirations of the Parents and Students

Table 6 illustrates the needs of parents and Batak learners, the parents and students suggested the same aspiration: to complete their studies; which represented a common recognition of the value of education. The students as well as the parents agreed that succeeding in the chosen field of work or studying was very important, thereby displaying an equal aspiration to succeed and be fulfilled with one's job.

Further, steady work continues to hold the highest esteem for both students and parents alike, and these are also cars driving the need for financial stability and therefore security within all endeavors of post-secondary education and professional objectives. That usually amounts to a longing for better and higher living and the capacity to earn more, which, too, is an expressed wish among equals. They have also mentioned another contributing factor, that would include the motivation to raise the younger siblings, thus helping bring forward the younger generation in the duty of acquiring money.

Furthermore, both the parents and children seem to respect setting an example for their tribe, of which leadership is recognized in addition to its positive implications on their society. They also have a willingness for their involvement more actively in the improvement and positive developments of the community, on which they agree they must even be change agents within their tribe.

Further, they agreed that handing down skills and knowledge to their future generations should be ingrained with intergenerational responsibility, cultural heritage, and identity. Both parents and students wish to become leaders for Indigenous rights and voices on issues of social justice for the advancement of Indigenous communities. Finally, both the parents and the students agree on objectives that lead one to become an autonomous individual who will not let others suppress their beliefs and practices, thus minimizing the issue of autonomy as opposed to cultural preservation within society. One of the key agreements is in aspirations such as completing education, becoming successful in the field of one's choice, and working on stable jobs—something that underlines a collective emphasis on education, career growth, and financial stability (Amida, 2020). Thus, this is a vision that speaks so clearly to a great belief in personal and family growth and in education as a channel through which anyone and any community can easily ensure lasting prosperity (Mudrey, 2019).

The aspiration agreement creating economic advancement and caring for younger siblings reveals a sense of fairness and solidarity. It tests quite solid the bearer of excellent social integration in vision where people are all about uplifting others to promote socio-economic growth and uphold very high regard for collective well-being and inter-generational prosperity (Ling, 2019). This further includes being role models, social change agents, and advocates for indigenous rights and interest; therefore, parents and students should work hard as a community dedicated to leadership, social justice, and cultural preservation (Laakso, 2020).

Parents and students have a sense of identity and purpose that drives them to make positive changes and advance the interests of their tribe. Resolves to oppose discrimination based upon beliefs and actions are made with a commitment to freedom, cultural heritage, and social justice. The fight of this group exemplifies the community's commitment towards keeping rights and dignity intact at the face of various other society concerns.

Table 6. *Aspirations of Parents and Learners*

Aspiration Statements		Parents		Students	
		Mean	*Interpretation*	*Mean*	*Interpretation*
1.	Finish studies.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
2.	Be successful in your chosen field.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
3.	Find a stable job.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
4.	Uplift our economic status.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
5.	Help younger siblings.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
6.	Be a role model in our tribe.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
7.	Be a change agent in our tribe.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
8.	Be committed to passing down knowledge and skills to future generations.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
9.	Become leaders and advocates for indigenous rights and issues.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree
10.	Be an independent individual that stands for discrimination against our beliefs and practices.	1.00	Agree	1.00	Agree

Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Level of Perceived Challenges

The table reveals no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the perceived educational challenges of parents. The correlation between parents' sex and educational challenges is -0.193 in access to education, -0.022 in the learning environment, -0.075 in support, and 0.082 in the curriculum, all indicating very weak relationships. The p-values—0.366 for access to education, 0.917 for the learning environment, 0.728 for support and 0.702 for the curriculum—are all above the conventional significance level of 0.05. This signifies, however, that both male and female parents encounter similar challenges. Although these values do not indicate statistical significance, they reveal a noteworthy pattern in the data. Because of this, one might conclude that the issues faced by parents, regardless of gender, are quite alike.

Furthermore, the relationship between parents' educational attainment and perceived educational challenges also shows very weak relationships, with Spearman's correlation values, which are -0.097 for educational access, 0.177 for the learning environment, -0.098 for support, and -0.226 for the curriculum. The p-values, then, are 0.289 for the curriculum, 0.408 for the learning environment, 0.649 for assistance, and 0.652 for access to education. None of them are statistically significant because they are all well above the $p = 0.05$, indicating that there is no significant relationship between parents' perceived educational challenges and their level of education.

The table reveals no significant relationship between parents' age and the perceived educational challenges. Spearman's correlations of –0.156 for access to education, –0.257 for the learning environment, –0.114 for support, and –0.100 for the curriculum indicate very weak relationships. The p-values are 0.465 for access to education, 0.226 for the learning environment, 0.596 for support, and 0.642 for the curriculum, none of which are statistically significant at the conventional significance level of 0.05. This suggests that both young and old parents face similar educational challenges.

Similarly, the relationship between the number of children and perceived educational challenges also shows very weak correlations: -0.191 for access to education, -0.135 for the learning environment, -0.055 for support, and -0.071 for the curriculum. The p-values are 0.371 for access to education, 0.528 for the learning environment, 0.798 for support, and 0.741 for the curriculum, none of which are statistically significant at the 0.05 level. These findings indicate no significant relationship between the number of children and educational challenges, suggesting that parents with varying numbers of children face similar issues.

Lastly, the relationship between ethnicity and perceived educational challenges shows very weak correlations. Spearman's correlations are -0.033 for access to education, -0.275 for the learning environment, 0.220 for support, and 0.044 for the curriculum. The p-values are 0.879 for access to education, 0.193 for the learning environment, 0.301 for support, and 0.838 for the curriculum, none of which are statistically significant at the conventional significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the results indicate no significant correlation between parents' ethnicity and their levels of educational challenges across all components. This suggests that individuals of both pure-blooded and mixed ethnicities face similar difficulties.

As to the relationship between students' sex and the level of educational challenges perceived by them, Spearman's correlations are -0.260 for access to education, -0.140 for the learning environment, -0.067 for support and -0.212 for the curriculum. While rather low, these correlations show the impact of sex on the student population. The p-values are 0.220 for access to education, 0.515 for the learning environment, 0.757 for support and 0.320 for the curriculum; however, none of these p-values are statistically significant, especially at the conventional significance level of 0.05. Consequently, there is no significant relationship between sex of the student and the level of educational challenges faced by the students in every component, which suggests both male and female students are subjected to the same level of difficulties.

Furthermore, the student's age and its relationship to perceived educational challenges show very weak associations: -0.138 for access to education, -0.027 for the learning environment, -0.699 for support, and -0.256 for the curriculum. The corresponding p-values are 0.519 for access to education, 0.901 for the learning environment, less than 0.001 for support, and 0.227 for the curriculum, indicating no statistical significance at the conventional level of 0.05. Thus, the results indicate no significant correlation between students' age and their levels of educational challenges across all components, suggesting that all respondents experience similar challenges.

In relation to the student's grade level and the perceived educational challenges as well as the relationship between the two Spearman's correlations show very weak associations: 0.212 for access to education, -0.275 for the learning environment, 0.128 for support and 0.219 for the curriculum. However, the p-values of 0.319 for access to education, 0.194 for support, and 0.552 for the curriculum show that these relationships are not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the results indicate that grade level is not significantly related to the levels of challenges experienced in all the aspects, this means that respondents in different grade levels face similar challenges.

Distance from school shows very weak correlations with educational challenges: 0.499 for access to education (significant at 0.05), 0.534 for learning environment (significant at 0.01), 0.400 for support, and 0.038 for curriculum. However, these correlations are not statistically significant (p-values: 0.013, 0.007, 0.053, and 0.0862 respectively). This indicates that regardless of how far or near the school is, students face similar educational challenges.

Overall, no significant correlation exists between parents' and learners' demographic profiles and their perceived educational challenges. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) that suggests no significant relationship between these variables is accepted. This implies that educational barriers are not inherently linked to specific demographic characteristics among parents, necessitating targeted interventions and support mechanisms to address the diverse challenges each parent faces.

In the same manner, when analyzing students, the use of demographic factors shows the various interactions of the students with their perceived educational challenges (Hylen, 2020). Other demographic factors such as sex and grade level of the students were not significantly related to their educational challenges. This suggests that age has a negative correlation with the level of support that is perceived. This further stresses the need to take into consideration the stages of students' development and their needs in order to effectively support the students. Thus, the close relationship between the distance from school and students' perception of educational challenges reinforces the significance of spatial factors in the accessibility of education and the learning context. Solving the transportation problems and enhancing the educational system in the remote regions is an important measure to minimize inequality in

the educational system and the environment around during the schooling period (Ramot, 2020).

Relationship Between Demographic Profile and Level of Perceived Aspirations

As all the statements on aspirations gave the same answer of "Agree", thus based on Table 7, all the covariance of the 2 variables would be 0. So, there is no significant relationship between the demographic characteristics of parents and students and the level of aspirations (p > 0.05). Their aspirations appear consistent across different parental characteristics (sex, age, educational attainment, number of children, ethnicity). Regardless of the parent's gender, age, and education level, whether or not they have many or a few children, or belong to a pure-blooded or half-blooded family, they all have high hopes for their children.

Regardless of age, sex, grade, or school location, all of the student respondents share similar aspirations for the future. Despite their diverse cultural backgrounds, it demonstrates a great deal of desire on the part of the pupils. Determining whether these ambitions are common and consistent across the population under study depends critically on the findings of the relationships between demographic traits and aspirational expectations among parents and students. There is no proof that parental objectives for their children differ depending on the demographics of the parents, such as sex, age, educational attainment, family size, race, etc. This encourages parents, regardless of personality, to be equally committed to their children's success.

Thus, the null hypothesis—that there is no significant relationship between aspirations and parent/learner demographic profiles—remains valid. This conclusion of homogeneity of ambitions depending on age, sex, grade, and distance to school is further supported by the fact that student demographic characteristics have no effect on aspiration levels (Wang, 2022). This essentially indicates that, regardless of their individual backgrounds, all batak learners in the studied schools feels inspired to aspire and accomplish and that their basic requirements are satisfied. Furthermore, it illustrates how students are generally in agreement to work toward success and turns ambitions into a comprehensive source of motivation for both academic and personal success (Toquero, 2020).

In particular, they show that aspirations move across demographic lines and hold up in various cultures. Knowledge of consistency of aspirations can then inform education policies and interventions to foster and sustain students' aspirations across backgrounds, cultivating a culture of ambition, perseverance and success in the classroom.

Relationship Between Level of Perceived Educational Challenges and Level of Perceived Aspirations

In Table 7, both parents and students consistently answer "Agree" for their aspirations. There is zero correlation, as indicated by P > 0.05, meaning that parents' and students' aspirations have no bearing on the degree of educational difficulties they encounter. Parents' goals for their children appear to be unaffected by the challenges they encounter in school, no matter how big or minor. Therefore, the null hypothesis—that there is no significant relationship between aspirations and educational challenges—is accepted.

Furthermore, there is no indication of a correlation with aspirations when the degree of scholastic difficulties is taken into account. Batak Students with varying degrees of educational challenges have aspirations that are similarly lofty.No correlations between challenge and aspiration underscore just how resilient and purposeful batak learners are in essence. And in the face of a challenging educational environment, they persevere against all odds. This highlights the importance of education stakeholders and policymakers recognizing and responding to intrinsic motivation in the service of helping individuals meet challenges and accomplish their goals.

The gap between challenges and aspirations would then suggest that both motivation and goal-setting are impelled by an intrinsic motivation which could not be explained simply by a glance at the population of external threats. This disposition innately can be the backdrop through which programs may help generate in them beliefs in purpose and self-efficacy both for students and parents. There may be a tinge of negative self-talk emanating from impossible thought that could have defeated them. All this runs perpendicular to adversity and goal setting. As what these findings present is a presentation of potential to pursue lofty goals with continued optimism in the presence of obstacles.

This could present the transformative power of education in enabling people to question and work toward a better fate, whatever the difficulties. They underline the desire to break with a tradition of hope, perseverance, and opportunity within schools, while encouraging aspirations and creating shared commitment to excellence and fulfillment (Ahn, 2020; Morales, 2021).

Table 7. *Relationships between demographic profile and level of perceived educational challenges*

	Access to Education	Learning Environment	Support	Curriculum
PARENTS				
Sex				
Spearman's rho	-0.193	-0.022	-0.075	0.082
p-value	0.366	0.917	0.728	0.702
Highest Educational Attainment				
Spearman's rho	-0.097	0.177	-0.098	-0.226
p-value	0.652	0.408	0.649	0.289
Age				
Spearman's rho	-0.156	-0.257	-0.114	-0.100
p-value	0.465	0.226	0.596	0.642

Number of Children				
Spearman's rho	-0.191	-0.135	-0.055	-0.071
p-value	0.371	0.528	0.798	0.741
Ethnicity				
Spearman's rho	-0.033	-0.275	0.220	0.044
p-value	0.879	0.193	0.301	0.838
STUDENTS				
Sex				
Spearman's rho	-0.260	-0.140	-0.067	0.212
p-value	0.220	0.515	0.757	0.320
Age				
Spearman's rho	-0.138	-0.027	***-0.699	-0.256
p-value	0.519	0.901	<0.001	0.227
Grade Level				
Spearman's rho	0.212	-0.275	0.128	0.219
p-value	0.319	0.194	0.552	0.394
Distance from School				
Spearman's rho	*0.499	**0.534	0.400	0.038
p-value	0.013	0.007	0.053	0.862

*Note: * significant at = 0.05 level; ** significant at = 0.01 level; *** significant at = 0.001 level*

Educational Challenges and Aspirations Among Batak Learners

This part of section synthesizes qualitative findings about the Batak learners' challenges and aspirations with respect to school experience. Six central challenges are evident in the data: financial constraints, few opportunities for access to technology, inadequate support toward inclusive education, valuing indigenous knowledge inadequately, overstressing standard testing, and overcrowded curriculum. Such issues, revealed through interviews and observations, will go to show the clear day-by-day obstacles that Batak learners are bound to face in pursuit of education. While these are problems, the study also explores the desire of learners to succeed academically, thereby exploring their tenacity and willingness to overcome barriers in quest of attaining their educational goals.

These are also symptomatic of a larger systemic issue, wherein cultural irrelevance within the curriculum and ineffective learning environments provides almost insurmountable obstacles to student success within an underrepresented community. Geographic isolation and financial barriers compound this inequality, yet Batak learners and their parents are optimistic in hopes that education can improve things for the future. The concern of parents and therefore the people themselves is the hope that their children will accomplish education successfully, and most importantly, find stable employment; they consider this aspect to be a crucial development in the community. This study highlights the requirement to evaluate the aspirations of Batak learners and parents, framed in Achievement Goal Theory, to come up with some insights on how educational outcomes can be changed with more inclusive and culturally sensitive educational policies.

Financial Constraints

Participant responses frequently touch on the issue of financial restrictions, highlighting the widespread prevalence of the struggle to make ends meet and how it affects access to education. It was often remarked by participants that finding steady, full-time work is challenging. This desire to take up any job in order to make money is a common issue.

Participant 1: "Yan po talaga ang problema namin, hirap po kami kumita ng pera pero gagawin po naming lahat at papasukin kahit anong trabaho para kumita" (Our problem really is making money, but we will do everything and take any job to earn.)

Participant 2: "Hirap po talaga kami, wala kaming trabaho. Magsikap kaming manguha ng almaciga para may pang gastos." We definitely find it difficult; we do not have work. We try to gather almaciga so we might pay for things.)

Participant 3: "Kulang po talaga ang pinagkakakitaan namin, magtrabaho po ng husto, kahit ano papasukin para may pambili ng pagkain." (Our income is really somewhat inadequate. We labor diligently and accept any employment to pay for food.)

24 out of the 24 participants said that the main barrier to their education was financial constraint. Because of this instability in finance, not only this would affect them in providing food, but also distances from supporting their children with their needs in school. But the participants have a strong will and resilience to raise willingness to wrest for each and every opportunity that could enhance the family situation.

The influence of financial obligations in realizing quality education, especially among the most vulnerable, is well amplified in different studies. According to studies done by UNESCO (2022), with decreasing expenditures, a large financial gap is apparently created, making families unable to pay for educational materials, hence increasingly experiencing a high dropout rate resulting in poor outcomes of education. It is therefore highly recommended to develop fair funding policies focused on the disadvantaged groups in society for inclusive education throughout the world. Similarly, Bernardo (2018) noted in the country that the financial stress faced by Filipino students and paints a picture of how financial difficulties continue to unfold to several layers at a time: from anxiety to lack of focus

on academic work, including measures of general poor well-being. He writes of the role of social support in cushioning the negative impacts.

Castleman and Meyer (2019) try to ask what financial constraints drastically alter the academic experience of college students, so generating a wave of declining enrollment and stress in a particular road map, that is, how to describe the context, the state of college, etc., in the United States of America. Academic standing is taken into consideration; in this group of students, the most severe blow is dealt with; generally, however, it is about maintaining balance between work and study responsibilities, which welcomes better financial aid and policy activities. Apart from this area of concern, one of the elements of a countries Bank study of 2023, which outlines innovative solutions to those problems, is financial restrictions and lower quality and supply of education in the underdeveloped countries.

Sabio and Sabio (2024), there is still the existence of many financial constraints to education that students encounter worldwide, greatly hindering their access to education and their success in the classroom. Students who could not afford tuition and educational materials are more likely to be school leavers and poor performers or make demands for financial aid or scholarship. Quejada and Orale (2018) also similarly assert that in the Philippines, for the most under-served areas, there are limited resources and budget constraints that severely hamper the efficiency of delivering quality education, requiring a boost in budgets to help improve the situation.

In Singapore, HR in Asia (2017) also talks of how expensive educational fees act as a major hindrance to a majority of adult learners in their desire to further their education, hence stunting career growth and personal development. It calls for cheaper education in order to achieve lifelong learning. Citing a few Asian countries" as expressed by Arias et al. (2023) finds that funding is the main determinant of inclusive education. Lack of money restricts resources, training, and backstopping in such endeavors for which further investment is needed.

[Marshall (2018) highlights the wider consequences of financial constraints for development, where insufficient funding affects the provision of infrastructure, resources, and professional development. There is an inseparability between quality and equity in education and its improvement with better planning and more financing. Specifically, Graham (2019) advocates that financial constraint constitutes a serious constraint on the potential for schools to be inclusive in the education provision, namely because schools do not have the requisite resources (and specialized staff) to do so, and calls for further investment to overcome such a constraint.

Globally, according to Schwab (2020), underfunding in education causes overcrowding of classes, inadequate materials, and unsatisfactory support services, all harmful to the realization of desirable learning outcomes. In opposition, he holds that augmenting money supplies and making appropriate resource allocation will enhance equity and effectiveness in education. On their part, UNESCO and UNICEF (2021), say that stringent budgets significantly undermine the quality of education, especially for students with special needs who, due to resources and support services, have been grossly constrained. They thus advocate for an increase in funding to improve education settings and outcomes.

Finally, Paseka and Schwab (2019) explain that low finance results in inadequate resources, very large classes, insufficient support for students and teachers, and thus affects the delivery of quality teaching and learning. They underline the fact that there is a need for increased finance so that this may provide fair and suitable learning conditions.

Limited Access to Technology

Participants voiced a concern regarding the lack of technology in the classroom, a fact which highlights the great need for teaching resources. This topic is present in every answer, suggesting a serious issue that impacts the students' ability to attend to and benefit from their learning.

The participants identified the absence of present technology as their most significant barrier to the classroom. The lack of computers and the other required technologies was raised by all participants.

Participant 1: "Kulang po talaga ang gamit nila sa school, wala po silang mga computer." (They don't have computers; they truly need tools at the school.)

Participant 3: "Kompyuter po ang kulang, maganda po sana kung meron para matuto silang gumamit." (What they lack are computers; it would be good if they had them so they can learn to use them.)

Participant 5: "Wala raw po silang mga kompyuter kaya di po sila marunong gumamait non, kailangan pa naman nila yon pag nag high school sila." (They said they don't have computers, so they don't know how to use them, even though they will need them when they get to high school.)

Participant 9: "Mga makabagong gamit po talaga ang kulang sa kanila, sa nakikita po kasi naming ay importante rin na matuto sila gumamit ng computer para di sila mahirapan pag mag high school sila." (They really lack modern equipment. From what we see, it's important for them to learn how to use computers so they won't have a hard time when they get to high school.)

The response from all twenty-four participants is unanimous: there is a critically large gap in educational technology at their level, especially in terms of the shortage of computers—a fact that continues to hamper their learning experience and motivation. Deprived

of these core tools, they are lacking the ability to engage in interactive and dynamic ways of learning, which could somehow boost their understanding and retention. Furthermore, with the development of skills centered on the use of technology that empowers them, their time is critical at the higher levels in both education and upon entering their professional life. Proficiency in digital tools will enable students to pursue not only further academic studies but also skills in the modern workforce. It is, therefore, this gaping disparity that calls for magnified investment in educational technologies to increase the propensity of the learning environment and place students in better stead for their educational and professional futures.

A common feature of literature reviews is how the digital divide affects education, especially in developing regions. In New York, Dimitriadou and Lanitis (2023), speculate that in pointless classrooms, devoid of digital tools, relevant to active learning and the development of digital skills, a learning gap is propagated, creating an uneven educational playing field for children from less advantaged backgrounds. They call for more investment in educational technologies to curtail this gap. Restricted access to technology, according to Kulshreshtha et al. (2023), reduces the interactivity and effectiveness in learning. This thus calls for increased investment in technological resources for increasing digital literacy and education equity.

According to Sharma and Mullick (2020), in the Philippines, institutions of teacher education are characterized being also faced with a poor performance of the digital infrastructure and a total absence of virtual laboratories. They identified the void and called for the improvement of planning, research, and teacher preparation. Diano Jr. et al. (2023) add that technology should be considered in the design and creation of global competence and digital skills and advocated for professional development training for the use of technology by teachers and curriculum reorientation.

Other consequences of the digital divide emerge in the work of research as, e.g., Bekithemba (2020); Peruzzo (2024). They highlight that lack of technology in the classroom results in an educational gap, with significant impact on teaching and learning. These papers offer arguments therefore further research is needed in EdTech so that the quality of education can be increased and existing disparities can be effectively addressed. Hatton (2023) demonstrates that there is a widening chasm between Philippine learners who lack any computer learning resources, and a teacher population of people who have no background to use digital technologies, which underlines the need for further digital literacy and learning for students and their teachers.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed this digital divide, just as Bustillo and Patrinos (2023) observe: "The crisis has exposed educational inequality, particularly for children from poor families without access to technology or internet connectivity"; Wiggins (2020) also mentions, "The COVID-19 crisis is very likely to exacerbate educational inequality, particularly for children from poor families without access to technology or internet connectivity". These studies clearly make a case for the need of infrastructural and equitable solutions to support remote learning and reduce disparities. It also echoes the potential of technology to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and says that unequal accesses and fast-changing technological strategies will increase the gap, hence calling for effective governance and equal access.

Finally, Ezumah (2020) lists high cost, insufficient training, lack of facilities, and poor power as some of the major factors that are preventing implementation in Africa. She advocates for holistic training, provision of facilities, and rigorous screening criteria so that the use of technologies would be effective. The crisis in education is felt across the world and specifically in developing parts of countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and rural India, where weak technological resources are associated with teaching practices that are very bad and are likely to increase the gap in education. In such events, it is necessary to reorganize teaching and learning resources to improve the performance of the education sector.

Limited Assistance for Inclusive Education

The responses from participants underscore two primary challenges in supporting education: limited assistance for inclusive education and the lack of recognition for traditional knowledge.

In this view, the participants highly criticized the support system for the inclusive education system. They had a series of other issues, such as the lack of scholarships that limit opportunities for poor students and the need for expansion in facilities and resources. Therefore, at such low levels of funding, it diverts all efforts to level the playing field for all students to strive and excel.

Participant 1: "Kulang po talagaang tulong sa aming paaralan at sa aming mga anak, wala pong nagbibigay ng scholarship." (There really is a lack of assistance in our school and for our children; no one provides scholarships.)

Participant 7: "Kailangan po talaga namin ng tulong lalo na sa pag aaral ng aming mga anak, para makatapos sila ng pag aaral." (We really need assistance, especially for the education of our children, so they can finish their studies

Participant 13 "Sana may tumulong po sa kanila, may magdonate ng mga computer para may magamit sila sap ag aaral." (I hope someone can help them, donate computers so they can use them for their studies.).

16 out of 24 participants pointed out a dire need for more support in the education of their children, especially on scholarship opportunities and provision of relevant facilities such as computers. The parents bitterly complained that their school did not receive any help, and that is very important to ensure that their children can complete the studies successfully. Help from the outside, in terms of computer donations, is what they all wish would happen to benefit their children in school.

Across many of the studies, main themes relate to the challenges of inclusive education, among which comes the demand for equality with access to resources. The Department of Education (2020), remarked on the "pressing need" for improved collaboration, adjustments in policy, and the release of grants to be approved in funding such a system of education. Cabañero (2023), however, noted that there is poor support for truly inclusive education, with specific interest in the most marginalized groups of people. The research emphasized that these initiatives are already existing but inadequate, needing more investment, better allocation of resources, and strengthened collaboration so that all learners will be successful in their education regardless of background and ability.

Muega (2019) conducted a study on Inclusive Education in Quezon City, Metro Manila. The result of the study showed that there is very minimal support and clarity to stakeholders like teachers, administrators, and parents of children with special needs. This summed up the conclusion of the study: there is a need for more guidance and resources to ensure that inclusive education works. Relating this to the Indigenous peoples, Barton (2022), emphasized the poor access to education and emphasis of Indigenous Peoples and IPs in the Philippines, stressing that education, much as possible, is a privilege rather than a basic right. The study called for sustainable educational programs that would empower the IPs, as well as transparency and accountability on how educational assistance programs were being implemented.

Fahey (2021), discussed how there has continuously been an educational gap between indigenous and non-indigenous students in Australia. According to this study, despite investments and initiatives that had been put in by government agencies, there were still very wide disparities in this sector, mostly in remote areas. These studies would then suggest that decision-makers concentrate on improving attendance, setting catch-up targets, and scaling up effective educational practices. Toulouse (2021), reiterated similar concerns that Indigenous students in Canada are met with inadequate resources, irrelevant cultural curricula, and a lack of consideration toward Indigenous languages and traditions. The paper demands Indigenization of curricula and provision of adequate resources so that the Indigenous are treated at par with others in matters of education.

Wotherspoon and Milne (2020), unveiled the educational inequalities that existed in Canada, where learners in disadvantaged areas were deprived of minimal access to technology. There is a need for targeted interventions that can assist in attaining equity concerning access to digital resources. Similarly, Shay and Lampert (2024), examined how the definition and experience of community had been conceptualized by the Indigenous communities of Australia within educational contexts and asserted that any educational policies have to align with the definition of community for the Indigenous so as to ensure that there is equity.

Robinson et al. (2019) and Lowe et al. (2020) both highlighted that the way forward would be to address the hurdles caused by inadequate infrastructure, resources, and teacher training. Targeted solutions should deal with issues related to inequity in technology provision and appropriate professional development for teachers, thus trying to increase educational outcomes in underprivileged areas.

Traditional Knowledge is not fully recognized

Another issue raised by participants was the lack of respect and acknowledgment for indigenous knowledge included into the curriculum of the institution. explained that children of their communities are generally vulnerable to disparages and taunts because of their ethnic background.

Participant 3: "Yon po talaga ng malungkot, yong aming mga tradisyon ay hindi kinikilala minsan niloloko sila ng mga kaklase nila na hindi namin ka tribo." (It's really sad that our traditions are not recognized; sometimes their classmates make fun of them because they're not from our tribe.)

Participant 8 similarly shared, "Yong mga ibang bata talaga na hindi nakakaintindi ang nang aasar sa knila pero hindi naman nila yon dinidibdib basta ang sabi namin mag aral lang sila ng mabuti." (Some other children who don't understand tease them, but they don't let it bother them; we just tell them to study hard.)

The 8 out of 24 conveyed concerns about cultural discrimination at school, no recognition for traditions or customs, which invites ridicule from peers who have no experience or understanding of a culture other than their own.

This is where the central line that most researchers have considered lies: marginalization and exclusion of the Indigenous knowledge in the school educational system, as it probes the challenges the Indigenous people go through regarding access to an inclusive and culturally relevant education. This is what the United Nations (2019) emphasizes as it recognized a wide gap in education for the Indigenous population of the world, bringing out the point that most educational systems are ill-equipped to accord respect to and assimilate different Indigenous cultures. This lack of support, specifically in regard to Indigenous language-speaking teachers and those with culturally relevant materials, is part of the reason for such poor academic performance and high drop-out rate, largely among Indigenous girls. Failure to provide education that most often seems irrelevant to the lives of the Indigenous, fragmentation of societies, economic despair, and its subsequent marginalization were also articulated in the study.

It has been widely reiterated that literature on both fronts posits for the problematic exclusion of mainstream education from traditional indigenous knowledge on global perspective. According to Zidny et al. (2020) this alienation from culture that is produced by ignoring indigenous ways of knowing causes indigenous students to feel displaced, and a recommendation for inclusivity to encompass traditional knowledge has been made to address this. Similar to this was Bishop's (2024) argument against the usual set-up of educational systems that deprioritize or undervalue the cultural practices and knowledge of the Indigenous people. She had proposed a

redefined approach by which cultural continuity could be used in enhancing the educational experiences of Indigenous students.

Thompson et al. (2020) in Canada and Geniusz (2022) in North America, stated that marginalization of such knowledge in mainstream curricula creates a situation in which education is an island separated from Indigenous cultural practices. They argue that traditional knowledge should be inculcated in mainstream 'education' as a 'compelled pedagogy' to bring about cultural continuity, a feeling of relevance, and inclusivity in extending a meaningful school-life environment to indigenous students.

Abu, Reed, & Jardine (2019) and Brondízio et al. (2021) have set out to work on this theme of the very nascent recognition of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge in environmental assessment and planning in global perspective. Based on two-eyed seeing, Abu et al. (2019) showed how the Indigenous and Western science could be merged, showing how two knowledge systems could work with one another to deliver information on a change in environment that could be lost if Western science were to work alone. However, they discovered that traditional Knowledge is still not accommodated within the broader educational and environmental systems, therefore constraining it. Similarly, Brondízio et al. (2021) say that in most instances, the Traditional Knowledge systems and practices are wholly overlooked within formal education and policy systems, therefore restricting such things from the broader environmental policies.

Dkhar Tiwari (2020), and Rice (2024) have offered critique in regard to inattention to and lack of integration of traditional ecological knowledge into formal teaching, and in particular North East India tribal communities. Its ongoing marginalization, moreover, has dire consequences, excluding in a deep and meaningful way, at the potential for use of powerful Indigenous knowledge in conservation and applied contexts in contemporary environmental management and policy. More specifically, Rice highlights the question of how settler paradigms structure the educational systems, making in most cases that it is either the Indigenous knowledge that is ignored and trivialized or a blind, tacit acceptance, and thus directly results in educational biases and marginalization of.

Reid et al. (2021) underlined that educational systems should adopt an inclusive attitude that really embraces Indigenous knowledge into them. Defined in the framework of "Two-Eyed Seeing" as coequal and complementary viewpoints, it was shown by a case study of Canada's fisheries. For Indigenous people, this is a fundamental idea towards a more inclusive and fair education.

Too much stress on Standardized Testing

The data collected from the involved participants show a number of significant questions on how the problems happening in the current education of the children are, in particular concerning the workload of the curriculum, the use of technology, and the "standardized testing.

Participants' top concern is the significant task that is put on the shoulders of the children by the standardized testing. Many respondents have repeatedly pointed out how traumatic and demanding these tests are to children.

Participant 1: "Nahihirapan po talaga sila magsagot ng exam na nanggaling sa division." (They really have a hard time answering exams that come from the division.)

Participant 2: "Yong nirereklamo po nila na mahirap daw yong exam nila. Sabi nga namin mag aral lang sila nang mabuti para makapasa." They complain that their exam is hard. We tell them to just study hard so they can pass.)

Participant 7: "Yong exam na galing sa dibisyon ang nirereklamo nila, hindi raw po nila maintindihan, pero sabi nga namin mahirap talaga ang mga exam kaya kailangan nilang mag aral ng mabuti." (They are complaining about the exam from the division, saying they don't understand it. But as we say, exams are really difficult so they need to study hard.)

20 out of 24 complaints the participants raised were on the level of difficulty presented by the division examinations. This was the universal complain: students are often unable to grasp and answer that manner of tests. It underlines the relationship with the tension that lies with students between the apparent difficulty of standardized assessments and the pushing of these same students to overcome these hurdles by using evermore effort.

Numerous studies demonstrated negative impacts of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) on Indigenous communities residing in remote areas. The impact of such standardized testing on the Indigenous and other marginalized communities is showing a complex weave of cultural, educational, and psychological challenges. Principals and teacher interview responses recognize that the language and content of NAPLAN, as well as its engagement nature, have detrimental outcomes for the students and staff. This demonstrates that SAE being a pre-requisite to meaningful participation reveals critical inequities in standardized tests.

Ryan & Whitman (2013), Ontario, Cananda, also found the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Ontario testing exacerbated existing inequities for First Nations students and called for the adoption of more equitable educational practice. Nelson-Barber & Johnson (2019) critiqued the US-based paradigm of education as a white middle-class one; cultural diversity is flattened, and Indigenous learners' achievements are suppressed. They go on to suggest the need for indigenized testing and stakeholder input as a way of more effectively meeting the individual needs of their Indigenous students.

The systematic review by Mullen (2020), Canada, entails the broader scope of impact of educational colonization on Indigenous

populations. The analysis of 85 articles led Mullen to themes of colonization through testing cultures, building Indigenous education, unsettling colonial teaching, and decolonization discourse. Particularly, the review points darkly to the negative impact of standardized testing and calls for socially and politically formed interventions to address these injustices.

Authors cited adaptation of educational programs and how schools contribute to solving systemic problems related to standardized testing. Goforth et al. (2024, in the Rocky Mountain region, USA) focus on the deliverance of culturally responsive Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs for Indigenous learners. The target is resilience and fostering cultural backgrounds together with peer support. Johnston-Goodstar & Roholt (2020, USA) investigate academic challenges for Native American youths and emphasize the necessity of targeted interventions and professional development to lay the fight with microaggressions and discrimination basing on problems in beds of schools.

Some authors assessed the effect of standardized testing on diverse students. Leaño et al. (2019, Isabela, Philippines) report that Philippine Indigenous learners have lot of difficulties with speaking problems and a huge shortcoming with English vocabulary, whereby it recommends language-targeted interventions. Pizmony-Levy and Green Saraisky (2016, USA) discussed scaling disaffection to increased stakes of opting out from the achievement test, with a call for increasing funding in schools.

Shirley et al. (2020) critique the influence of high-stakes standardized testing in Ontario on the well-being of educators and the general educational reform movement. They point out how the wide-scale testing disadvantages educators and calls for systemic changes for well-being. As can be gathered from the above summary regarding what Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM) is, Sahlberg (2016) is but one critic who implies that the movement puts into power policies that are in favor of educational qualities and equities.

Some studies attack on high-stakes standardized testing for amplifying inequality in racial terms and a big difference in educational attainment. Au (2016) has the perspective that high-stakes testing exacerbates and entrenches racialized systemic social inequalities, while Chase (2017), Heissel (2021), Tunnell (2022), & McKeon (2022) point out the resultant stress and narrowing curriculum as reasons caused by standardized testing. They do support the other alternative modes of assessment methods for helping marginalized students.

Lai (2023) has a more balanced view of standardized testing, in which he tries to point out the bad and good it does, such as more self-assessment and memory when used, although it could give practitioners stress and narrow the curricula. Pietromonaco (2021) and Tunnell (2022) offer more historical and policy perspectives on standardized testing, detailing its own evolution and looking at how this particular form of testing has had an impact on accountability, motivation, and educational equity.

Lastly, Pietromonaco (2021) and Tunnell (2022) discuss the history and policy inferences of standardized testing in the U.S. educational framework. Pietromonaco's paper traces the development of standardized testing back to times when it was helpful in accountability and motivation but not without its limitations, such as increased stress and demographics that might be missed out.

Overloading Curriculum

The very demanding of the existing program was highlighted by the participants, reinforcing concerns over most expectations of students regarding their studies. It is through this high academic standard and challenging assessments that this perception toward the program's difficulties arises. This would be an intense program that involves a large amount of effort and perseverance in terms of time management by students, putting in extra pressure on those already burdened by other responsibilities or other unfavorable external factors in their lives. In making these demands, participants indicated that, on one hand, the program really challenges students to uplift their educational outcomes, while on the other hand, it puts much pressure on the students, possibly leading to stress and an increased need for supporting mechanisms that would help them achieve success. The rigorous demands might motivate hard work or act as a barrier to achievement depending on the support systems in place and the circumstances of individual students.

Participant 4: "Nahihirapan daw po sila sa mga pinag aaralan nila lalo na

English." (They said they are having difficulty with their studies, especially in English.)

Participant 12: "Mahirap po ang kanilang pinag aaralan sa school, tapos

hirap pa po sila mag intindi ng English." (The subjects they are studying in school are difficult, and they also struggle to understand English.)

Participant 8: "Marami raw pong pinapagawa sa school ngayon, medyo nahihirapan po sila." (They say that there are many tasks being assigned at school now, and they are finding it a bit difficult.)

4 out of 24 participants pointed out prominent problems of students in their academics, which have developed because of the following: more challenging nature of schoolwork and additional complexity of understanding the English language. It is the language barrier that has underlined their difficulties in the struggling, making it harder for them to comprehend the subjects being learned. Moreover, the increasing tasks and assignments add to feeling overwhelmed, thus further complicating their education.

This is one problem identified across many educational systems with regard to curriculum overload and its impact on the effectiveness of education. Studies by Eduwem & Ezeonwumelu (2020), and Akpan & Uwem (2020), related to the Uyo Education Zone in Nigeria,

show an extremely strong negative correlation between curriculum overload and learning effectiveness among Junior Secondary School students. These studies underline that an overscheduled curriculum reduces student achievement and, inversely, emphasize the importance of curriculum mapping in eliminating duplication in the curriculum to achieve better learning outcomes. In a review of the Philippines and Indonesia, Porcalla (2021) and Ningrum (2023) call for urgent reforms in curricula. According to Porcalla (2021), there are serious literacy problems in the Philippines: only a very small proportion of students pass the threshold required by the standards of minimum proficiency, further stressed by a curriculum irreconcilable with practice and drained teachers. This has increased poverty and retarded economic development. Ningrum (2023), argued about the mismatch between curriculum content and labor market needs in Indonesia, along with the challenges of rote learning and light teacher training. The findings from both studies, therefore, call for functional skills-oriented curricula that emphasize critical thinking and dovetail with the requirements of the labor market.

Olugbenga et al. (2023), Ogba (2020), and Chen et al. (2023) examine curriculum overload within different contexts, such as Nigeria and the general educational setting. As noted by Olugbenga et al. (2023), too heavy curricular demands have negative impacts on the quality of teaching and learning processes in Nigerian junior secondary schools. They advocate for subject merging and emphasis on practical skills as a way of making the learning environment more progressive and practical. Ogba, 2020 still in Nigeria, associates Curriculum Overload with factors such as career choice and parenting style, suggesting that these elements are very influential in students' achievement. Chen et al. (2023) go ahead to mention that curriculum overload is 'battering' students, hence affecting their performance negatively, for the simple reason that new topics are included at the cost of in-depth coverage.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 2020, Schleicher 2020, and The World Bank 2022 report on global trends of curriculum overload. According to the OECD, 2020, and Schleicher, 2020, societal requirements exert pressure for the extension of curricula. It results in a "mile wide, inch deep" approach where breath is prioritized at the expense of depth. They call for deliberate choices in curriculum design with attention to student well-being. The World Bank, 2022, relates curriculum overload to difficulties that have been pointed at or made worse by the COVID-19 crisis. Mastering foundational skills is not possible when learners face overloaded curricula. The curriculum should be balanced and focused, especially in recovery efforts arising from the pandemic.

Amin & Mahabeer, 2021; Ismail, 2022; and Aboagye & Yawson, 2020, discuss the implications of curriculum overload on teaching and learning outcomes. Amin & Mahabeer, 2021, argue that an overloaded curriculum compromises the quality of teaching and learning by putting students and teachers under unnecessary stress. They, therefore, call for a curricular depth rather than a breadth one, with the learning outcomes focused on higher-order thinking and problem-solving. Ismail, 2022, echoes this by pointing out that curriculum overload reduces the rate at which students can engage and comprehend ideas due to the overloading of content in the curriculum. In the Ghanaian context, Aboagye & Yawson, 2020, show that though teachers appreciate the new curriculum, they also have issues such as excessive workload and inadequate resources that come with its implementation. They suggested the involvement of teachers in the planning of such curricula and the provision of materials and trainings necessary to their containing these issues.

Drawing on these studies, one clear consensus is the following: Curriculum overload has negative consequences in terms of education effectiveness, as it increases stress and decreases learning outcomes, which cuts off the reality from content learned at school. Powerful appeals for curriculum reform towards focusing on breadth, not depth, attaining labor market relevance, and supporting students and teachers in achieving educational goals are supported by these studies.

Aspirations of Learners

Participants' answers show their hopes for the stability and future success of the students they care about. These goals can be categorized into topics like completing school, succeeding in the workplace, and giving back to the community.

A predominant theme among the participants is the desire for the students to complete their education.

Participant 1: "Pangarap talaga naming makapagtapos sila ng pag aaral para mabago ang buhay nila at nang hindi sila magpareho sa amin na hindi nakapag aral." (We really dream that they will finish their studies so their lives can change and so they won't be like us who didn't go to school.)

Participant 2: "Gusto po talaga naming makapagtapos sila ng pag aaral para makahanap sila ng magandang trabaho." (We really want them to finish their studies so they can find good jobs.)

Participant 9: "Graduate na at nagtuturo na dito sa mga kapwa namin katutubo." (Already graduated and now teaching our fellow natives.)

24 out of 24 participants reveal that deep inside, they have that big aspiration to have their children succeed in education, mainly because they want to go out from this poor life. They dream of their children finishing school, getting a good job, being successful, uplifting—not only the economic status of the members in the family; rather, even others surrounding them in the community. This optimism usually stems from their life's experience of suffering and little education, leading to an immense drive to enable their children never to experience one bit of what they went through. This vision is not only of the success of each individual but rather resonates far into a broader impact where these educated children become community leaders, teachers, and role models in their entire community.

Much of the prior literature has also focused on the examination of Indigenous student aspirations, particularly in relation to application

into higher education and issues associated with this process. Patfield et al. (2022) did research about the construction of aspirations toward higher education among indigenous Australian students who come from middle-class families in New South Wales, Australia; this challenges many of the dominant narratives that tend to homogenize Indigenous experiences. They established that successful Indigenous stories can redefine current discourses of aspirations and shift demographic trends in participation at the university level. Relatedly, Anderson et al. (2023, Australia) reviewed the framework of "Closing the Gap" by highlighting the preparedness of the education system to respond to Indigenous learners' aspirations, recognizing gaps in teacher preparedness, curriculum, and cultural environment.

Álvarez Valencia and Miranda studied how Indigenous students at a Colombian university contest and reshape colonial legacies in higher education with respect to their lived experiences at a Colombian university. The paper performs the collective social, cultural, and political aspirations of these students in their struggle for their identity within the academic space. Stahl, McDonald, and Stokes's study (2020) contributed an example from Australia about an Aboriginal student transitioning to an urban Australian university, arguing that family engagement, peer mentoring, and tailored support can be necessary conditions in creating aspirations and improving outcomes for underrepresented students.

Looking toward indigenous students, in relation to cultural continuity and well-being, Nystad, Ingstad, and Spein (2020) carried out a qualitative study among Sami adolescents in Northern Norway, which brought forth that culture-based teaching and holding on to cultural continuity strongly predict positive health and well-being, influencing their educational aspirations. Shankar, Ip, and Khalema (2020) explored, in Western Canada, the psychosocial and institutional barriers facing Indigenous and immigrant learners within a postsecondary human services program and urged decolonizing discourses and pedagogies in support of aspirations and academic progress.

Furthermore, Matthews, in 2020, researched the aspirations of Indigenous Australian students aspiring to transition into a medium-sized university. This study builds on previous research, which has determined that while there are issues with the identity and trauma of Indigenous students, they still express very strong aspirations for themselves and their futures. An important suggestion resulting from this work was that support structures, such as peer mentoring and secure funding, are necessary for Indigenous students to have the best chance of achieving their academic aspirations. Similarly, Casas and Quiambao (2023) pointed out that the personal motivation and academic aspirations of indigenous students are high, despite experiencing pressing barriers such as poverty and discrimination. Their study called for intervention programs that could better support these students' educational outcomes.

In the broader context of Indigenous and alternative approaches to education, Waldmüller et al. (2022, Andean-Pacific region) make a case for the contribution that Indigenous epistemologies can play in the operationalization of the Sustainable Development Goals, by bottom-up processes that align global goals with diverse aspirations and practices. Staniland, Harris, and Pringle (2020) of New Zealand have indigenized the academy through the lens of the concept of 'fit.' Their research proposition established how Māori business academics navigate their careers within academic environments and brought out the real need for recruitment and retention strategies that are aligned to Indigenous values and aspirations.

Conclusions

The research has been able to view the totality of the educational challenges and aspirations of the parents and students in the Batak community. Highlighting one of the principal observations that came up is that an inadequate level of financial support for pursuing education, more specifically scholarships, had been the main obstacles toward further studies for children. The parents also indicated this need, saying that "Wala po talagang tumutulong sa amin pagdating sa pag-aaral ng aming mga anak" (No one really helps us in terms of the education of our children). The nightmare of not being able to receive education due to geographic separation emerged as another issue, and many said that schools ought to be located considerably closer together to reduce hard trips.

Another critical finding is the absence of acknowledgment and integration of traditional knowledge within the curriculum. Parents and students reported their cultural traditions as marginalized, even ridiculed by peers. This confirms the relevance of culturally relevant educational practices, since participants unanimously hold the sentiment that traditional indigenous knowledge should be respected and integrated into the school system, so that cultural heritage may be conserved within the educational framework.

The research also indicated disparities in perception regarding the learning environment and support services. Ratings of challenge were only moderately low for both groups, with respondents highlighting particular problems such as poor access to technology, insufficient educational resources, and poor communication between parents and teachers. Parents and students differed over classroom management and the quality of physical facilities, pointing to areas to be improved in both categories.

On the curriculum, there was a convergent view from parents and students regarding concerns about the overemphasis on standardized testing and a lack of adaptability to their cultural context. That suggests wanting a better balance within the curriculum and more cultural responsiveness to assure critical thinking and represent diverse cultural viewpoints. Both groups were also calling for more supportive learning services, representing cultural viewpoints, and helping with embracing technology in education.

The overall view from the research put forward by the Batak community is an aspiration to positively influence the youth, become role models, and act as agents of change within the tribe. These aspirations are harnessed within values of leadership, community

involvement, and cultural support. Goals congruence between parents and students in educational and social development seem to represent a strong communal drive to overcome extant challenges in the pursuit of a supportive and inclusive, culturally respectful school environment. It suggests that addressing the challenges will require an integrated approach to address a raft of issues: some of these include finance, better infrastructure, culturally appropriate curricula, and enhanced communication and support mechanisms within the education framework.

Based on the notable results and conclusions made, hereby are recommendations crafted:

Department of Education

1. Implement focused initiatives that are likely to increase access to education from underprivileged areas through infrastructural creation, provision of educational resources, and transport services.

2. Formulate a policy aiming to establish inclusive learning environments that respect and recognize the ethnic background of Batak students and other indigenous peoples living in the area. This practice shall, at a minimum, incorporate culturally responsive teaching methods, and knowledge systems from these indigenous peoples into the curriculum, and the integration of traditions of the Batak into instructional activities.

3. The implementation of the Last Mile Schools Program is essential so that even schools in remote areas can enjoy the digital age educationally. The Last Mile School Program focuses on providing targeted support and resources to help students overcome the final barriers that can prevent them from successfully completing their education. Increase access to quality education through infrastructural improvement in schools located in Batak communities: Improvement in classroom infrastructure, access to technology, and internet connectivity are to be taken care of. Any infrastructural development of roads/transportation can help minimize geographical difficulties in education for the Batak learners.

4. Curriculum planners need to work together with Batak community heads and teachers in developing a curriculum that is appropriate and is appealing to students bearing in mind the values, traditions, and ideals that the Batak community has. Infusion of the Batak history, language and ecological perspective may help in developing the cultural pride and identity of students in relation to education.

Teachers and School Heads

Inclusive support systems that answer the requirements of the Batak learners through culturally sensitive services for learning support, special education programs, and mentorship initiatives set up at community levels. A supportive learning environment can also be created through the active engagement of parents in decision-making processes and community leaders.

In teaching Batak learners, teachers have to be able to combine various teaching strategies and employ modern technologies so that they will become familiar with and know how to manipulate these gadgets.

A teacher must incorporate local history, customs, and traditions in teaching so that it would be easy for the Batak learners to grasp the lessons.

The teacher shall not focus on the standardized test given by the division office. He/she may edit and contextualize the question based on Batak learners' perspectives.

In the process of learning, students need to be surrounded by a conducive, optimistic, and friendly environment. Thus, holistic approaches that would mold the academic and personal aspects of learners' development must be provided by the academy.

Local Government Unit

The barangay, city government, and educational stakeholders may offer programs of mentorship, career guidance, and leadership opportunities relevant to Batak learners' aspirations, which may include exposure to successful Batak role models and community leaders that may inspire students toward higher education, entrepreneurship, and towards leadership in their community.

Educational institutions may use age-appropriate support intervention given that the needs of the Batak students are at their respective life stages. It could take the form of vocational training like in the case of the older Batak students, while for younger learners, intense support is needed to enhance literacy and numeracy skills.

In consideration of the prevailing condition of most Batak families as financially constrained, this should focus on programs with financial assistance, such as scholarships, subsidies, and livelihood programs. In this way, it will overcome one of the economic barriers to education and will eventually achieve the goal of equity in access to education among learners.

Future Researchers

Other research designs, and methods that highly influence education among the Batak, must be explored further.

Educational challenges alone cannot determine the success of a student. Therefore, it is always necessary to establish various factors that may affect their education including the impact of their culture, norms, and traditions.

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