

Level of Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education Framework and Practice of Indigenous Knowledge Systems Practices in a Basic Education Institution: Basis for a Capacity-Building Plan

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Abstract

This study assessed the implementation level of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework, the extent of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) integration, and the challenges encountered at Ganao National High School, Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya, as a basis for an IKSP training and capacity-building plan. Using a quantitative research design, the study gathered data from one school head and twenty-four teachers through an adopted questionnaire. Median, interquartile range, and Spearman's rho were employed for data analysis. Results revealed that the IPEd Policy Framework was successfully implemented, while IKSP was well practiced across curriculum, instruction, learning environment, and assessment. A strong positive relationship existed between IPEd implementation and IKSP integration. Challenges were generally perceived as minimal, with resource-related concerns identified as the most pressing. The study concludes that strengthening resource-based support and teacher capacity is essential to sustaining effective IPEd and IKSP implementation.

Keywords: Culturally responsive teaching, curriculum integration, policy implementation resource support, teacher capacity-building

INTRODUCTION

Education supports personal growth, cultural preservation, and social inclusion. For Indigenous Peoples (IPs), education serves as both a vehicle for knowledge acquisition and a mechanism for maintaining Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP), identity, and tradition. Culturally, many organizations worldwide advocate inclusive and culturally relevant education for Indigenous learners through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which calls for equity in the provision of quality education. Studies show that culturally responsive educational practices have improved IP learners' ability to participate, identify with, and perform academically in mainstream education (Rodriguez, 2018; Song, 2023).

However, in spite of these initiatives, Indigenous communities remain disadvantaged in accessing education due to discrimination, limited access to culturally relevant teaching resources, and a lack of properly qualified teachers. Research studies indicated that the integration of indigenous knowledge within the mainstream, formal education system remains a challenge due to inadequate resources, poor teacher preparation, and weak institutional support (Banes & Baniqued-Dela Cruz, 2021; da Silva et al., 2023).

These factors underscore the need for culturally relevant, decolonized educational practices that reflect the diversity of indigenous cultures and worldviews.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education institutionalized the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework. However, Indigenous students still face challenges due to poverty, language barriers, and lack of access to quality education (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). Additionally, teachers face challenges in integrating IKSP because of a lack of cultural knowledge, resources, and training (Tamana & Pagaddut, 2024).

Furthermore, Ganao National High School was designated a School of Living Tradition (SOLT) in 2022 and incorporates IKSP into its curriculum for Indigenous learners from the Kalanguya, Ibaloi, Kankanaey, Karao, and Bugkalot Indigenous groups. However, challenges in implementing the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework and incorporating IKSP into education may still persist at the local level in terms of teacher preparedness, resources, and curriculum implementation.

There has been previous research that looked at Indigenous education (IE) and the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP), but little focus has been put on the relationship between the application of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework and the way that IKSP is integrated into Indigenous learner-based schools.

Hence, this research uncovered the relationship between the implementation of the IPEd Policy Framework and the integration of IKSP, as well as the difficulties faced by implementers. The purpose of the study is to help improve culturally responsive educational practices while also strengthening the preservation of Indigenous culture and Identity.

Statement of the Problem

This research focused on determining the level of implementation of the IPED Policy Framework, the level of IKSP practice, and the challenges encountered in integrating Indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices (IKSP) at a basic educational institution toward the IKSP Training and Capacity Building Plan.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do the respondents evaluate the extent of implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework in terms of:
 - a. Curriculum Design, Competencies and Content;
 - b. Teaching Methodologies and Strategies;
 - c. Learning Space and Environment;
 - d. Learning Resources;
 - e. Teacher Training; and
 - e. Classroom Assessment?

2. How do the respondents evaluate the extent of practice of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices at Ganao National High School?
3. Is there a significant relationship between implementing the IPED Policy Framework and the Practice of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP)?
4. What challenges do the respondents encounter in the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Policy Framework?
5. What challenges do the respondents encounter in implementing the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) in the teaching-learning process?
6. What capacity-building plan can be proposed to enhance the implementation of the IPED Policy Framework and Practice of IKSP at Ganao National High School?

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative research design to determine the level of implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Policy Framework and to assess the level of integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) at Ganao National High School. Quantitative research methodology helps collect and analyze numerical data to identify patterns, relationships, and significant findings related to IKSP implementation.

The research locale was Ganao National High School, a School of Living Traditions located in Dupax del Sur, Nueva Vizcaya, that primarily serves Indigenous students.

The respondents of this study included one (1) school head and 24 teachers employed in GNHS and who are implementing both the IPED Policy Framework and the IKSP (Indigenous Knowledge Systems Program). Respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on their expertise and engagement in Indigenous Education Programs.

The data were collected through a modified questionnaire of Follero and Asuncion (2018) on IPed Implementation, the extent of IKSP implementation, and challenges encountered during implementation. The study used a four-point rating scale to assess the results.

Before data collection, the researcher sought and received approval and necessary certification from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Schools Division Office - Nueva Vizcaya, and the school head. The researcher personally administered and collected all questionnaires so questions could be clarified and responses could remain confidential.

The median and interquartile range were used to calculate the level of implementation and any challenges experienced; Spearman Rho was used to measure the relationship between the different variables.

The study strictly adhered to ethical principles such as voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for Indigenous communities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Extent of Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework

The Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Policy Framework was generally well implemented across all indicators, with median scores ranging from 3.57 to 3.80. Teaching Methodologies and Strategies obtained the highest median (Mdn = 3.80, IQR = 0.800), indicating that teachers effectively apply culturally responsive instructional practices.

In contrast, Teacher Training received the lowest median (Mdn = 3.57, IQR = 0.571), while Learning Space and Environment showed the greatest variation in responses (IQR = 1.000), suggesting inconsistencies in the learning environments across schools.

While teachers show initiative in incorporating Indigenous culture and traditions into teaching, institutional support through ongoing professional development and standardized learning environments remains insufficient for equitable implementation of the IPed Framework.

Follero and Asuncion's (2018) research supports these findings that the development of personal initiative and adaptive strategies has to be developed in the implementation of IPed, and Reyes (2022) cites the need for structured capability development and stable learning environments in order for IPed to thrive.

Extent of Practice of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices at Ganao National High School

The Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP) at Ganao National High School were found to be well practiced, as reflected by the high median score (Mdn = 3.86, IQR = 0.571). The limited variability in responses indicates a strong agreement among the respondents on the successful integration of Indigenous culture, language, and community values into the school's educational practices.

This indicates that the school has gone beyond merely complying with a policy regarding Indigenous education and is fulfilling its role as a "live" repository of Indigenous knowledge through the ongoing maintenance and promotion of the local culture. This provides a strong foundation for the institution to become a model for culturally responsive education, assuming ongoing community involvement and ongoing curriculum documentation.

The findings in this study are confirmed by Norberte (2024), who found that IPed has a long-term impact on strengthening the integration of Indigenous content through the provision of ongoing training for teachers, and by Banes and Baniqued-Dela Cruz (2021), who identified proactive faculty engagement as a means of increasing students' exposure to local traditions and practices.

Relationship Between Implementing the IPED Policy Framework and the Practice of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP)

The results showed that all indicators of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Policy Framework had significant strong-to-very-strong positive correlations with the practice of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP), with p-values less than .001, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Learning Resources showed the highest correlation ($p = 0.813$), followed by Teacher Training ($p = 0.794$) and Learning Space and Environment ($p = 0.785$), while Curriculum Design, Competencies, and Content obtained the lowest, though still strong, correlation ($p = 0.690$).

The results suggest that effective IKSP implementation requires more than just curriculum. These results also suggest that policy implementation becomes more effective when Indigenous knowledge is successfully integrated into the instructional process, supported by appropriate materials, professional development opportunities, and culturally based instructional settings.

Reyes (2022), and Follero and Asuncion (2018) support these findings as they highlighted that in order to successfully implement Indigenous education, there is a need for the integration of curriculum, teacher capacity building, appropriate resources, and collaboration with Indigenous peoples/communities to strengthen and support the preservation and/or promotion of Indigenous knowledge.

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework and Practicing Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP)

Respondents generally strongly disagreed that challenges exist in implementing the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework, as reflected in the overall median of 1.22. The results show that Ganao National High School has a working system for integrating community participation, learning directly from the context, and including Indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge in teaching. Although the survey item stating that "Lack of educational materials with socio-cultural relevance" had the highest median (Mdn = 2) and thus fell in the area of disagreement, respondents indicated that having few or none would not be a major barrier. In this survey, respondents were in absolute agreement that they do not ignore the difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous concepts (IQR = 0), supporting their commitment to providing an education that includes a cultural perspective. This is in contrast to the study of Balagtas and Enriquez (2018), Santos and Mateo (2019), and Dizon and Villanueva (2020), who found limited resources, inadequate training, and limited community collaboration to be common challenges to implementing IPEd in schools.

Similarly, respondents said they did not believe there were significant challenges to implementing Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) (median M=1.50), suggesting the school is creating a welcoming and supportive culture conducive to Indigenous youth learning. Nevertheless, issues with resources, such as a lack of IKSP materials, limited training/seminars for educators on the use of IKSP in the classroom/lack of access to training/seminars, limited access to culturally relevant resources, and a scarcity of written evidence of IKSP had higher median scores (Mdn=2), indicating that increased logistical/material support is needed.

The results also corroborate and build on the findings of Dizon and Villanueva (2020) and Balagtas and Enriquez (2018), who noted that inadequate resources and a lack of culturally appropriate learning materials impede the successful adoption of IKSP, especially in rural school settings.

Proposed Capacity-Building Plan to Enhance the Implementation of the IPEd Policy Framework and Practice of IKSP at Ganao National High School

The Project TIMPUYOG (Transforming Indigenous Materials, Preserving Unique Yarns of Gifted Indigenous Peoples) was developed based on the study's findings. This capacity plan aims to support the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework while also providing opportunities to enhance the use of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) at Ganao National High School. Specifically, it addresses resource-related issues identified in this study, such as the lack of IKSP materials, insufficient training/seminars for teachers, inadequate written documentation of IKSP, and insufficient culturally appropriate learning materials for students.

The program has 3 phases: (1) Retooling and Technical Training focuses on building a teacher's ability to document, contextualize, and ethically integrate indigenous knowledge into their teaching; (2) Content Generation and Material Production focuses on creating contextualized lesson plans, learning activity sheets, and digital indigenous learning resources; (3) Validation and Quality Assurance ensures all created materials will be culturally accurate, approved by the community they're intended for, & ready for use in the classroom through consultation with indigenous elders & demonstration teaching activities.

Through Project TIMPUYOG, teachers are expected to improve their competencies in implementing culturally responsive instruction, schools are expected to strengthen the integration of IKSP into classroom practices, and stronger partnerships between the school and Indigenous communities are anticipated to support the preservation and promotion of Indigenous culture and knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ganao National High School successfully implemented the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework, with strong integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) in the school's curriculum, pedagogy, learning environment, and assessments. The school consistently demonstrates culturally responsive teaching strategies to support the presence and promotion of Indigenous culture and Knowledge. The relationship between IPEd implementation and IKSP practices confirms the need for sustained Indigenous education through positive policies, appropriate resources, and ongoing teacher professional growth. While only a few minor challenges were identified regarding resources and culture-related training, the overall learning environment at Ganao National High School is inclusive, respectful, and free from discrimination for Indigenous people.

It is therefore recommended that Ganao National High School be encouraged to continue to develop as an educational center, continue to collaborate with Indigenous Elders and Community Leaders and other stakeholders, and to include Indigenous Elders and Community Leaders' input on how to best adapt the curricula and instructional strategies within the classroom to meet local needs. GNHS, SDO-Nueva Vizcaya, and other agencies will continue to work together to provide the necessary cultural learning resources, high-quality teacher training, and technical support to help teachers further develop culturally relevant learning curricula and classroom pedagogy. GNHS may also implement the comprehensive capacity-building program for the effective documentation of Indigenous Knowledge, development of instructional materials, and professional development of Indigenous Teachers. This approach may help resolve any previously identified resource issues and promote the ongoing sustainability of culturally responsive educational programs.

AI DECLARATION STATEMENT

AI-supported tools helped with grammar and structure in creating this article. No AI tools were used to collect, analyze, or interpret data; all authors are credited for their academic contributions.

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