Readiness in the Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) in Ozamis Integrated School in Aloran, Misamis Occidental

Jefferson Clark T. Sanchez
Department of Education-Conat Integrated School- SDO Misamis Occidental
Northwestern Mindanao State College of Science and Technology
E-mail: jeffersonclark.sanchez@nmsc.edu.ph ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2974-3988

Liezl Marie B. Dagondon
Northwestern Mindanao State College of Science and Technology
E-mail: liezlmarie.dagondon@nmsc.edu.ph ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0009-0003-6724-4632

Abstract

Background and Aim: The Implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) is important because it ensures that the educational system respects and integrates the culture, traditions, and knowledge systems of Indigenous communities. It also promotes inclusive and equitable learning opportunities, empowering Indigenous learners while preserving their heritage and identity. This study addresses the critical gap in understanding how teachers in indigenous communities perceive and implement the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program in the Philippines, particularly in Ozamis Integrated School.

Materials and Methods: Grounded in constructivist learning principles and frameworks of cultural competence, this research employs a phenomenological qualitative design to explore the core focus areas of teacher readiness, instructional materials, and support systems.

Results: Findings reveal that approximately 75% of teachers exhibited limited knowledge of indigenous cultures, and the scarcity of culturally relevant teaching resources emerged as a significant barrier. The analysis further identified three main competency gaps: cultural awareness, pedagogical adaptation, and resource accessibility. These results contribute to the growing literature on indigenous education by offering nuanced insights into practical challenges and opportunities for policy and teacher training improvements.

Conclusion: Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of enhancing culturally responsive practices to foster equitable education, with implications extending beyond the local context to inform national strategies for indigenous inclusion.

Keywords: Indigenous Education, Implementation of IPED, Curriculum in IPED

Introduction

Globally, indigenous communities continue to face systemic barriers in accessing quality education that respects their unique cultural identities. In the Philippines, the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program, initiated in 2013, aims to bridge the achievement gap by integrating indigenous knowledge, practices, and languages into the curriculum. Despite policy commitments, scholars have identified persistent challenges in implementation, such as insufficient teacher training, lack of culturally adapted instructional materials, and limited community engagement (Calderon & Gonzales, 2012; Rocha & Latapí, 2016).

At a local level, Ozamis Integrated School in Misamis Occidental has embarked on implementing IPEd, yet little is known about its stages of readiness or the practical hurdles faced by teachers and administrators. While legislation emphasizes indigenous self-determination and culturally responsive teaching, the actual classroom experiences and support mechanisms remain under-explored (Cosentino, 2016; Sarmiento & Tudy, 2020).

This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the dimensions of teacher competence, instructional resource availability, and institutional support, using a constructivist framework that emphasizes the active building of knowledge through cultural interaction. By critically analyzing how

these factors influence program effectiveness, the research contributes to the broader discourse on indigenous education reform—shifting the focus from policy to practice.

Statement of the Problem

This study employs a qualitative case study approach, focusing on Ozamis Integrated School's experience in implementing IPEd. While providing rich, contextual insights, reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability bias; to mitigate this, data triangulation was employed through interviews and document analysis.

Although findings highlight specific challenges and best practices within this context, their transferability to other Filipino indigenous communities may be limited due to differing local socio-cultural dynamics. Nonetheless, the insights gained contribute to a broader understanding of indigenous education implementation in similar settings, informing policy and practice at the national level.

Objectives

This study aims to assess the Readiness of the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program particularly in implementing school of Ozamis Integrated School in Aloran, Misamis Occidental

To assess the Readiness of the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program as to:

1. Teacher Level of Competence in Teaching IPEd
2. Availability of Instructional Materials for Teaching IPEd
3. Support System present in the Implementation of IPEd in terms of:
   a. School Level
   b. Division Level
   c. Local Government Unit

Literature review

Recent studies underscore that effective indigenous education requires more than policy mandates; it demands a comprehensive understanding of contextual challenges. Baxter and Jack (2008) highlight the importance of methodological rigor in exploring complex social phenomena, which supports the qualitative phenomenological approach employed here. In the realm of teacher preparedness, research indicates that culturally responsive pedagogy improves engagement and learning outcomes (Piazza et al., 2015), yet many teachers lack adequate training in this area (Rocha & Latapí, 2016).

Organizational and community engagement literature suggests that the development and dissemination of culturally relevant instructional materials are critical for program success (Calderon & Gonzales, 2012). Conversely, scarcity of such resources often perpetuates cultural disconnects, as seen in Philippine indigenous communities where existing materials fail to reflect local languages and traditions (Rhaiti, 2016).

Furthermore, studies on policy implementation reveal that institutional support—both at the school and division levels—significantly influences program sustainability (Sarmiento & Tudy, 2020). However, research remains limited on how these support mechanisms are operationalized at the grassroots level, particularly in remote communities. This study aims to synthesize these insights and identify specific gaps, such as the need for targeted teacher training and culturally adapted resources, that hinder effective IPEd implementation locally.

Theoretical Framework

This study integrates three interconnected theories to analyze the components influencing IPEd implementation: the Constructivist Learning Theory posits that learners actively build knowledge through cultural interactions; the Cultural Competence Model emphasizes the importance of educators' awareness and skills in engaging with diverse cultural backgrounds; and the Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how new educational practices spread within institutions.

By operationalizing these theories, the research examines how constructivist pedagogies foster indigenous students' engagement, how teachers' cultural competence enhances instructional relevance, and how innovative practices are adopted across the school. For example, fostering a constructivist environment aligns with cultivating teachers' cultural competence, which in turn influences how effectively they disseminate culturally responsive innovations throughout their classrooms and colleagues. These frameworks collectively guide the analysis of teacher preparedness and resource utilization, ensuring a holistic understanding of the factors driving successful IPEd practices.

Methodology

This research utilized a phenomenological qualitative design to deeply explore teachers' lived experiences with IPEd in Ozamis Integrated School. Purposive sampling was employed to select 12 key informants—teachers involved in the program—based on their direct engagement and expertise, aligning with methodological standards emphasizing purposeful participant selection for rich, relevant data (Calderon & Gonzales, 2012).

Data collection comprised semi-structured interviews and document analysis, with interview guides piloted beforehand to ensure clarity and relevance. To ensure credibility, peer debriefing and member checking were conducted, and ethical approval was secured from the institutional review board, affirming adherence to research ethics standards.

Research Setting

The research was carried out within the confines of Ozamis Integrated School, situated in the Aloran District of Misamis Occidental. This particular school was chosen because it has been actively involved in the IPEd program since its inception in 2013. The school's environment—including its curriculum, community engagement, teacher training efforts, and support mechanisms—serves as the primary context for examining the implementation process. The local community's involvement and the school's support systems significantly influence the effectiveness of the program and were considered vital elements of this study.

Data Sources, Respondents and Participants

The primary data sources for this study consist of questionnaire-surveys and unstructured interviews conducted with the twelve teachers directly involved in the IPEd program at Ozamis Integrated School. These instruments provided valuable insights into the teachers' perceptions, understanding, and challenges regarding the program's implementation. Aside from the teachers, other stakeholders such as school administrators, community elders, and local government officials may have contributed through additional interviews or review of relevant documents, although the core focus remains on the teachers' perspectives.

Sampling Method

The study employed a purposive sampling method to select its participants, focusing specifically on teachers directly involved in the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program at Ozamis Integrated School. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allows researchers to intentionally select individuals who have firsthand experience and significant involvement with the program, thereby ensuring that the data collected is relevant and insightful to the specific objectives of the study.

In this context, the twelve teachers who were actively teaching indigenous students, possessing varying levels of knowledge and experience in delivering culturally responsive education, served as the key informants. These teachers were deemed appropriate participants because their perspectives could provide a rich, detailed understanding of the program's readiness, challenges, and areas for improvement. The selection prioritized teachers who had been part of the retooling and training efforts, ensuring that their insights reflected both their professional preparation and practical experience in implementing IPEd.

Research Instruments

To gather in-depth and qualitative data from the selected participants, the study utilized a combination of survey questionnaires and unstructured interviews. The survey questionnaires served as a structured tool to collect initial data on teachers' perceptions, competencies, and resource availability

related to IPEd. These questionnaires were carefully designed to elicit specific information aligned with the research objectives, such as teachers' familiarity with indigenous cultures, their training needs, and the accessibility of instructional materials.

Complementing the surveys, unstructured interviews provided a flexible platform for participants to elaborate on their experiences, challenges, and suggestions in their own words. This approach allowed the researcher to probe deeper into responses, clarify ambiguities, and explore nuances that structured questionnaires might not capture. During the interviews, open-ended questions facilitated a conversational environment, encouraging participants to share insights freely, thus enriching the qualitative data collection process.

Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitive nature of research involving indigenous communities and educational practices, strict ethical considerations were upheld throughout the study. The researcher ensured that all participants were fully informed about the purpose, scope, and nature of the research before participation. An informed consent process was conducted, during which each teacher was briefed about their voluntary participation, their right to decline or withdraw at any point without any repercussions, and the confidentiality of their responses.

To protect the identities of the participants, the researcher employed pseudonyms—anonymous identifiers that replaced their real names—during data collection, transcription, and reporting. This measure was crucial in maintaining participant privacy and minimizing any potential bias or repercussions that might arise from the publication of their insights. Moreover, the researcher guaranteed that all data collected would be used solely for academic purposes and stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

The research design also prioritized cultural sensitivity, especially when discussing indigenous knowledge and practices. The researcher made efforts to establish trust and rapport with the participants, respecting their insights and cultural perspectives. This involved being conscious of cultural protocols and actively listening to the participants' concerns and suggestions, thereby fostering an environment of mutual respect and ethical integrity.

In summary, the sampling method focused on purposively selecting knowledgeable teachers to ensure relevant data; the sampling instruments combined structured questionnaires and unstructured interviews for thorough qualitative insights; and all ethical protocols centered on informed consent, confidentiality, cultural sensitivity, and participant well-being, aligning with ethical research standards and promoting respect for the indigenous communities involved.

Results and Discussion

The study aimed to assess the readiness in the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program at Ozamis Integrated School in Aloran, Misamis Occidental. In particular, it focused on three key aspects: teachers' competence in teaching IPEd, the availability of instructional materials, and the support systems at school, division, and local government levels.

Teacher Competence in Teaching IPEd

The findings suggest that teachers possess a foundational level of competence in delivering Indigenous Education, yet there remain gaps that must be addressed to fully meet the pedagogical and cultural demands of indigenous students. Quotes from the respondents hinted at an ongoing effort to develop instructional strategies that are culturally appropriate. Teachers are aware of the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems and epistemologies into their teaching practices. However, many educators expressed the need for additional training and capacity-building programs that enhance their understanding not only of indigenous cultures but also of effective pedagogical approaches tailored for indigenous learners.

The data indicates that teachers generally acknowledge the significance of culturally responsive pedagogy, aligning with the recommendations of Piazza et al. (2015), which advocate for dialogue, collaboration, visual representation, explicit instruction, and inquiry as core practices to foster an

inclusive learning environment. Nevertheless, the variability in teachers' competence levels suggests a need for continuous professional development, particularly in culturally responsive teaching methods tailored to indigenous contexts.

Availability of Instructional Materials

The availability and relevance of instructional materials emerged as a crucial factor impacting the effective delivery of IPEd. Teachers expressed concerns about the limited supply of culturally appropriate instructional resources that reflect indigenous perspectives and knowledge. There was an emphasis on the need for materials that are not only linguistically and culturally relevant but also capable of rejecting harmful stereotypes or oversimplified representations of indigenous peoples.

This aligns with the insight from Page 8, which highlights the importance of access to instructional materials that are culturally contextualized and free from stereotypes. The current situation indicates that instructional materials are still in development or are insufficient in number and diversity, which hampers full implementation of the program. This deficiency underscores the necessity for collaborative efforts between educators, indigenous communities, and policymakers to create, revise, and disseminate culturally sensitive educational resources, thus promoting a more authentic and empowering indigenous education experience.

Support Systems in Implementation

Support systems at various levels—school, division, and local government—play a pivotal role in the success of the IPEd program. The study's findings reveal a mixed picture. At the school level, some teachers reported adequate administrative support for IPEd initiatives. However, there were notable concerns regarding the consistency and sustainability of assistance, particularly at the division and local government levels.

Specifically, the support from the Division of Misamis Occidental and local government units showed promise but lacked the structured and well-funded programs necessary to sustain and scale Indigenous Education initiatives effectively. This finding echoes the discussion in Page 4 and Page 5, emphasizing that responsive and culturally appropriate support systems are essential to address the unique needs of indigenous learners.

Furthermore, the presence of community stakeholders, indigenous leaders, and local government units was recognized as beneficial in fostering a supportive environment. However, the need for a more integrated and strategic approach was apparent. Effective implementation of IPEd requires a cohesive support system that involves continuous training for teachers, resource provision, and policy backing that recognizes indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, as stipulated by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN, 2008).

Broader Context and Implications

The findings underscore a crucial aspect of indigenous education: the necessity to approach it from a holistic perspective that respects indigenous sovereignty, cultural identity, and epistemologies. The challenges faced in the current implementation reflect wider issues of systemic support, resource allocation, and capacity building. In view of the Philippine law, such as Republic Act No. 10533 of Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic of the Philippines. (2013)), and international frameworks, it is evident that indigenous peoples' rights to culturally relevant and quality education must be prioritized.

It is imperative for educators and policymakers to foster an environment where indigenous students feel represented, valued, and empowered. As suggested by Wa-Mbaleka (2013), ensuring quality education for native Filipinos involves not only adapting curriculum and materials but also cultivating an inclusive support system that recognizes indigenous learners' unique cultural and educational needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while Ozamis Integrated School demonstrates a committed start towards implementing IPEd, significant work remains. The success of the program hinges on enhancing teachers' cultural competence, providing suitable instructional resources, and strengthening multi-level support systems rooted in genuine community engagement. Addressing these areas will not only

improve the educational experiences of indigenous learners but also advance broader goals of equity, inclusion, and respect for indigenous rights within the Philippine educational landscape.

Knowledge Contribution

Base the new concepts directly on the *Results and Discussion* section of your study, here is the synthesis of new concepts emerging from the findings:

1. Layered Teacher Competence

• Your results show teachers have basic awareness of IPEd but with gaps in cultural knowledge and pedagogy.

• This introduces the concept of "Layered Teacher Competence" – readiness is not binary (ready vs. not ready), but exists on layers:

- o Foundational competence (awareness and intent).
- o Cultural competence (deep knowledge of indigenous worldviews).
- o Pedagogical competence (ability to translate culture into practice).

2. Authentic Resource Gap

• Findings reveal a lack of culturally appropriate instructional materials.

• This can be framed as the "Authentic Resource Gap" – a mismatch between indigenous students' cultural realities and the instructional tools available.

• The concept emphasizes that availability ≠ authenticity: materials must be representative, stereotype-free, and community co-created to truly support IPEd.

3. Multi-Level Support Disparity

• The study shows uneven support: schools show effort, but division and LGU support lack consistency and sustainability.

• This gap crystallizes into the concept of "Multi-Level Support Disparity" – where the strength of implementation depends on the weakest link in the tri-level (school–division–LGU) system.

• It underscores the interdependence of these levels: readiness cannot be fully achieved unless all three are aligned.

4. Cultural Integration Readiness

• Teachers recognize the importance of integrating indigenous epistemologies but feel underprepared.

• This leads to the concept of "Cultural Integration Readiness" – teachers' ability (or lack thereof) to embed indigenous ways of knowing into everyday classroom practices.

• It is both a psychological readiness (confidence) and a structural readiness (tools and training).

5. Holistic Implementation Gaps

• Overall, your findings reveal readiness challenges across competence, resources, and support systems.

• This allows the synthesis of the "Holistic Implementation Gaps" concept – readiness cannot be reduced to a single factor, but emerges from the interaction of teacher competence, resource authenticity, and systemic support.

• This concept reframes IPEd implementation as ecological rather than isolated.

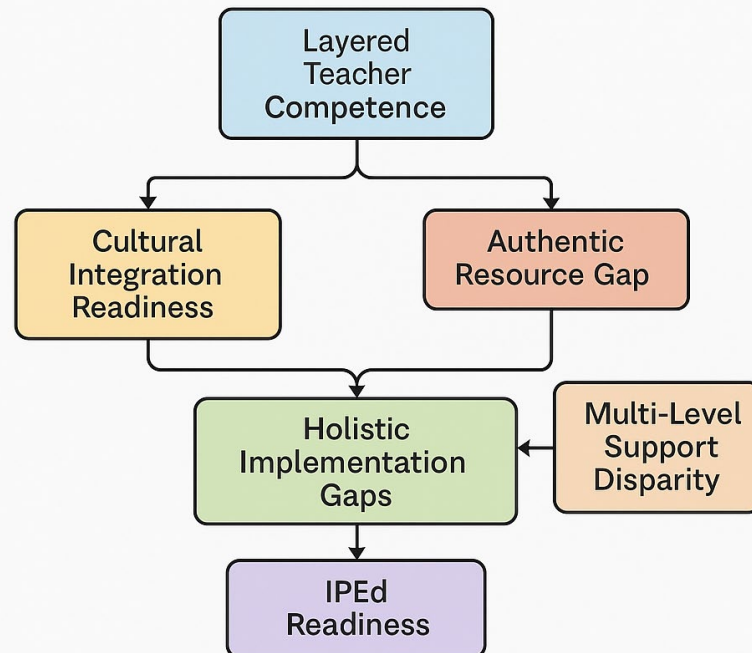# Conceptual Paradigm Model

Figure 1 Conceptual Paradigm Model interact to shape IPEd Readiness

The Conceptual Paradigm Model (Figure 1). The Model is a pictorial depiction of factors that mediate Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Readiness and which evolved from the findings presented in the previous section. In the center is Layered Teacher Competence which shows that teacher readiness is a matter of degree or layering – from awareness of the indigenous culture, to the deeper understanding and cultural competence, to the most advanced pedagogical competence to truly integrate indigenous epistemologies in learning and instruction. Teacher competence also directly affects Cultural Integration Readiness (teachers' readiness to integrate indigenous culture in their instruction and practice in the classroom) and Accessibility of Instruction Resources and Authentic Resource Gap (teachers' struggle in accessing not only the lack of availability of instructional materials that reflect indigenous culture but the lack of genuineness as well in terms of the materials' cultural authenticity). Enveloping these three factors is the Multi-Level Support Disparity, which conceptually frames the disproportionate support from different levels within the school, division office, and local government units, and which indicates that the sustainability of IPEd in the Philippines is contingent on support from all levels. The three factors from the inner most circle are important players but on their own, they only partially affect IPEd Readiness. The potential gains that can be made from, say, increased teacher cultural competence, or resource availability, or support from one of the three governance levels may not result to systemic or even significant readiness without the simultaneous need to address the other two. It is for this reason that they all feed into the concept of Holistic Implementation Gaps or the need to look at IPEd Readiness from an ecological standpoint with a delicate balance among the triad of teacher competence, resource authenticity, and support. The gap between IPEd Readiness and this holistic implementation of the important mediating factors ultimately determine IPEd Readiness where indigenous learners can be meaningfully served in an inclusive, culturally respectful, and empowering manner.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the IPEd program. First, it is essential to continuously improve and develop teachers' competencies through regular training centered on indigenous cultures, pedagogical strategies, and culturally responsive teaching practices. Creating curricula and instructional materials that genuinely reflect the indigenous communities' traditions and knowledge is equally important, which requires collaboration with community leaders and cultural experts.

Furthermore, efforts to improve access to culturally appropriate instructional materials should be prioritized. Establishing resource centers within schools that house indigenous learning tools can facilitate this. Strengthening support systems is also crucial; fostering stronger partnerships between schools, local government units, and indigenous organizations will build a more sustainable and responsive framework for the program.

In addition, it is recommended that policies be institutionalized to promote indigenous rights and culturally responsive education, with periodic evaluations to monitor progress and address emerging challenges. Lastly, ongoing community engagement is vital—ensuring continuous dialogue with indigenous communities will help uphold their traditions and knowledge in the educational process, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective implementation of the IPEd program.

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