EXPLORING THE DIFFICULTIES OF NON-INDIGENOUS TEACHERS ASSIGNED IN IP SCHOOLS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to find out the experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights of non-indigenous teachers assigned at IP schools in the West District of the Municipality of Maitum. The study utilized a qualitative research design using a multiple case study approach with five elementary non-indigenous teachers chosen through purposive sampling. The results of the interview were transcribed, translated and coded to produce themes. The study revealed three emerging themes: experiences of non-IP teachers teaching IP students, coping mechanisms, and insights learned. It was revealed that there are six (6) emergent themes on the experience of non-IP teachers teaching IP learners. These were language barriers, cultural differences, struggling to adjust, environmental dilemma, communication impediment, and extraordinary peace. Moreover, it was revealed that there are seven (7) emergent themes related to the coping mechanism of non-IP teachers teaching IP learners. These were giving incentives, classroom management, employing classroom strategies, building inclusive strategies, blending with the culture, accepting changes, and learning the IP language. It was revealed that there are six (6) emergent themes on the coping mechanism of non-IP teachers teaching IP learners. These were the teacher's epiphany, positive outcomes, be an advocate of emergence, recognize the teacher's integral role, appreciate the IP school, and value IP culture.

Keywords: educational management, difficulties and experiences, non-indigenous teachers, IP school community, Philippines

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1. Introduction

The assignment of non-indigenous teachers in Indigenous Peoples (IP) schools presents several global issues. Firstly, there is a risk of cultural insensitivity and a lack of understanding of IP communities' unique needs and perspectives. Non-indigenous teachers may struggle to effectively communicate with students who speak different languages or have different cultural practices, hindering the educational experience. Additionally, the imposition of a Western education system without integrating Indigenous knowledge and values can contribute to the erosion of indigenous cultures and traditions. Furthermore, the scarcity of indigenous role models in teaching positions can perpetuate stereotypes and undermine IP students' self-esteem and identity development (Sabzalian, 2019; Smith *et al.*, 2021; Wright & Shotton, 2019).

On the other hand, teachers teaching Indigenous Peoples (IP) students are crucial for their educational, social, and cultural development. They create inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments, tailor instruction to address specific needs, and preserve cultural heritage. Indigenous teachers serve as role models and empower students by showcasing the value of their cultural knowledge. Additionally, they bridge educational disparities, advocate for student rights, and contribute to preserving indigenous cultures. In summary, these teachers are pivotal in promoting equity, cultural diversity, and the empowerment of indigenous communities (Arteaga & Glewwe, 2019; Ismail *et al.*, 2021; Jones *et al.*, 2019).

In the Philippines, the presence of non-indigenous teachers assigned to Indigenous Peoples (IP) schools gives rise to significant concerns. One such issue is the potential lack of cultural understanding and sensitivity, as these teachers may face challenges in effectively communicating with students who speak different indigenous languages and have distinct artistic practices. This communication barrier can hinder the establishment of meaningful connections with students and address their specific educational needs. The limited representation of Indigenous role models among the teaching staff can further impact IP students' self-esteem and academic motivation (Doyle, 2023; Lambert & Scott, 2019; Situmorang *et al.*, 2019).

The study focused on the challenges non-indigenous teachers face when teaching indigenous students in the West Maitum District, highlighting the potential for misdiagnosis of classroom behavior due to their limited experience with indigenous learners and communities. A research gap exists in the absence of strategies like culturally sensitive teacher training, curriculum adaptations, and support systems that could help non-indigenous teachers integrate effectively into Indigenous Peoples (IP) schools, ultimately improving the educational experience for IP students and fostering intercultural understanding in academic settings. Further research is needed to bridge this gap and offer valuable insights for addressing the identified issues (Cote-Meek & Moeke-Pickering, 2020; Pihama & Lee-Morgan, 2019; Reid *et al.*, 2019).

Hence, conducting this study on the difficulties faced by non-indigenous teachers in Indigenous Peoples (IP) schools was of paramount urgency. Indigenous communities

around the world continue to experience educational disparities, cultural erosion, and identity challenges. The presence of non-indigenous teachers in IP schools, while often well-intentioned, can exacerbate these issues. Understanding and addressing these challenges promptly is crucial not only for the well-being and academic success of IP students but also for preserving indigenous cultures and promoting intercultural understanding. Failure to act urgently may perpetuate these problems, hindering the prospects of future generations and perpetuating historical injustices (Absolon, 2019; Stein, 2020; Windchief & San Pedro, 2019).

Thus, I conducted this study to explore and describe the experiences and challenges of non-indigenous teachers assigned to IP schools. The study's primary purpose was to examine the difficulty of non-IP teachers assigned to IP schools. It further investigated the challenges the teachers have encountered as they deliver basic education to learners.

2. Material and Methods

In this qualitative study conducted at selected IP schools of the West District of Maitum, Sarangani Province, during the 2022-2023 school year, the researchers strategically employed purposive sampling to select five public school non-indigenous teachers assigned in IP schools. The participants of this study were the five (5) selected public non-indigenous teachers assigned to the Indigenous community of the West District of Maitum, Sarangani Division. This study is delimited to exploring the various experiences of five elementary non-indigenous teachers amidst indigenous schools of the West District of Maitum, Sarangani Province. They were selected based on the following criteria: They were non-indigenous permanent teachers in elementary schools of the Department of Education, teaching in recognized IP schools in the West District of Maitum Sarangani Province, and teaching in indigenous schools for over three years. Teachers handling administrative or non-teaching positions are excluded (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

The materials for this qualitative multiple case study primarily consisted of a validated interview guide/questionnaire designed to elicit the lived experiences of public school non-indigenous teachers. Data collection methods involved individual in-depth interviews with five purposefully selected non-indigenous teachers from selected IP schools of the West District of Maitum. The researcher personally conducted these interviews and discussions, and recorded the conversations to ensure accuracy, later engaging an independent reader analyst to verify transcriptions and a professional data analyst for subsequent analysis.

2.1 Design and Procedure
The procedure for data collection began with securing the necessary approvals from the School Division Superintendent, Public School District Supervisor and the school principals. Subsequently, the researcher provided informed consent forms to the selected

teachers and ensuring ethical considerations were paramount. Five participants engaged in individual in-depth interviews. A validated interview guide served as the primary instrument to guide the researcher in eliciting rich and detailed narratives from the participants.

Prior to the interviews and discussions, the researcher conducted a preliminary meeting to orient the participants on the study's purpose, the topics to be discussed, and the types of questions they would encounter. The researcher emphasized the confidentiality and truthfulness of their responses, striving to create a comfortable and trusting environment conducive to open and honest communication. Recognizing the importance of cultural sensitivity, the researcher remained mindful of the participants' social context and cultural background to ensure respectful interaction. Participants were informed that the sessions would be audio-recorded, and they would have access to the recordings.

The analysis of the collected data used Adams *et al.*'s (2022) multiple case study analysis. Using a field notes folder, transcribing, coding, developing themes, and using the case method. The researcher then engaged in a comprehensive reading of all the data to gain a holistic understanding of the participants' experiences, noting initial impressions and overarching thoughts in the margins of the transcripts.

After all of the research interviews had been transcribed and approved, the next step was coding. The term "coding" refers to identifying subjects, difficulties similarities, and differences disclosed by the participants' responses, which I interpreted subjectively. Coding was done by hand on a paper copy of the transcript, using margin notes, highlighting and marking text portions. As a researcher, I considered individual case data on each instance, followed by coding to find similarities and differences across cases to provide a complete understanding of the individual cases when viewed collectively. Field notes, which I compiled throughout an interview, were a significant information source to help with this procedure. This strategy assisted me in the beginning to see the world through the eyes of each.

The themes were established after coding to develop the main emergent themes. The term "theming" refers to collecting codes from one or more transcripts to portray qualitative analysis results in a coherent and intelligible manner. In the process of gathering the data, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis. Data were sorted and categorized to come up with the said theme analysis. The importance of employing this method was that the information acquired from the interviews was interpreted at the end, using quotes from the individual transcripts to illustrate the basis of judgments. As a result, each subject became the title of a part of the research when the findings were organized for presentation.

To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of this qualitative multiple case study, the researcher prioritized establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. The researcher addressed credibility through deep engagement with participants and the study's context, potentially employing member checking and triangulation (Adler, 2022). To enhance transferability, the researcher

provided a detailed and comprehensive description of the study's procedures, participants, setting, and assumptions (Stahl & King, 2020), enabling readers to assess the findings' applicability to similar settings. The researcher ensured dependability by meticulously documenting all research processes, including data collection and analysis techniques, and by maintaining a detailed audit trail. Finally, the researcher focused on confirmability by grounding the findings in the data rather than personal bias, strengthening this through clear explanations and a comprehensive audit trail (Adler, 2022).

Throughout this study, the researcher maintained paramount ethical considerations. The researcher ensured voluntary participation by explicitly informing participants of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The researcher rigorously protected privacy and confidentiality by guaranteeing data security and anonymizing information. Following a thorough informed consent process, the researcher provided participants with comprehensive information before obtaining their signed consent. The researcher ethically conducted participant recruitment using purposive sampling and clearly explained the study's potential benefits. To mitigate potential risks, the researcher consistently reminded participants of their right to withdraw and prioritized their well-being. The researcher also upheld academic integrity by preventing plagiarism, fabrication, and falsification, using detection software and properly attributing sources. Maintaining transparency and honesty, the researcher provided accurate information during the consent process and diligently obtained formal permission from relevant authorities to conduct the study.

3. Results and Discussion

This part presents the categorization of data of the participants lived experiences in teaching IP students. Specially, to describe their difficulties, coping mechanisms and insights affect their lives as teacher.

Table 1: Experiences of the Non-Indigenous Teachers Teaching IP Learners

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
I experienced language differences. I needed to translate a Tagalog or English word into B'laan. There are also learners who cannot understand English. For me, the language barrier has been a challenge. I need to adjust and learn their language. It is hard to deliver the lesson. Daily communication with learners is still in the adjustment period. I feel challenged about expressing my opinion.	Language Barriers
I need to practice the dos and don'ts. I face lifestyle differences. I encountered cultural adjustments.	Cultural Differences
For me, it is very difficult to adjust. I need to adjust to the IP community. I find it hard to understand the learners.	Struggling to Adjust

I find it very difficult to adjust environment. I am culturally shocked. I considered the place because it was a far-flung area. I encountered no electricity.	Environment Dilemma
I am having trouble communicating with them. For me, communication is the most challenging. I don't know how to ask the child why he is crying or absent from class.	Communication Impediment
I don't think I struggle too much. I'm just happy for them, I don't take it as a challenge seriously because I feel sorry for them. I want to make them feel the life that exists in the world. I really tried my best to make our hearts close to each other.	Extraordinary Peace

Table 1 describes the experiences of non-indigenous teachers teaching IP learners. There are six emergent themes from this category. Non-Indigenous teachers struggle because of language barriers, cultural differences, struggle to adjust, environmental dilemmas, communication impediments, and an extraordinary peace.

Teaching Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners as a non-Indigenous teacher involves significant language and cultural barriers. Beyond linguistic differences, there are challenges in understanding cultural nuances and worldviews. Non-Indigenous educators may struggle with differences in language proficiency and dialects, and incorporating Indigenous languages into teaching. Cultural gaps can hinder full student engagement, as approaches may not align with Indigenous values and learning styles. Bridging these barriers is crucial for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for Indigenous students.

Cultural differences emphasize that language differences can create communication barriers, affecting the ability of individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds to understand and interact with one another. Lifestyle differences encompass variations in daily routines, values, and priorities, which can lead to contrasting ways of approaching work, leisure, and relationships.

Adjusting to teaching Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners as non-Indigenous teachers can be challenging. It often involves a steep learning curve as you navigate unfamiliar linguistic and cultural landscapes. Recognizing and acknowledging this struggle is the first step toward effective adjustment. Seeking support from colleagues, community elders, or cultural liaisons can provide valuable insights and resources to bridge the gap. Embracing a cultural humility, openness, and continuous learning mindset is essential. Engaging in professional development opportunities focused on Indigenous cultures and languages can also enhance your teaching effectiveness and foster deeper connections with your IP students.

The environmental dilemma represents a critical juncture in human history, where the imperative of economic growth clashes with the urgent need for ecological sustainability. As the global population expands and economies strive to meet the demands of modern society, pressures on Earth's ecosystems escalate. Fueled by greenhouse gas emissions from human activities, climate change threatens to disrupt

weather patterns, exacerbate natural disasters, and jeopardize food and water security. Deforestation, driven by agricultural expansion and urbanization, destroys vital habitats and diminishes biodiversity, while pollution from industrial, agricultural, and household sources contaminates air, water, and soil. These interconnected challenges highlight the intricate web of environmental issues that require comprehensive and coordinated responses.

Addressing the environmental dilemma demands collective action on a global scale, encompassing governments, businesses, communities, and individuals. Innovative solutions prioritizing sustainability and resilience are essential, from transitioning to renewable energy sources and implementing sustainable land management practices to promoting circular economies and reducing waste

Communication impediments can arise from various factors, such as language barriers, cultural differences, technological limitations, or personal communication styles. These barriers can hinder the effective exchange of information, ideas, and emotions between individuals or groups. Overcoming communication impediments often requires patience, empathy, and active listening to understand and adapt to the needs and preferences of all parties involved. Strategies like using precise language, seeking clarification when needed, and being open to alternative communication methods can help mitigate these barriers and foster more meaningful and productive interactions

Extraordinary peace signifies a state of exceptional tranquillity, harmony, and absence of conflict. It goes beyond the mere absence of war or tension to encompass a profound sense of serenity and unity among individuals or communities. Achieving extraordinary peace often involves concerted efforts towards reconciliation, understanding, and mutual respect. It can result from effective diplomacy, conflict resolution, and promoting human rights and social justice. Cultivating extraordinary peace requires nurturing relationships built on trust, empathy, and cooperation, ultimately leading to a more peaceful and sustainable world.

Table 2: Coping Mechanisms of Non-Indigenous Teachers Teaching IP Learners

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
I give rewards. I provide food. I share blessings. I appreciate and praise them always. I give a simple reward which gives them great happiness.	Giving Incentives
I treat them equally. I enjoy learning with them. I understand them individually. I need to be open-minded.	Classroom Management
I teach at their own pace. I used localized materials. I vary teaching strategies. I allow them to use television. I employ learning by doing.	Employ Instructional Strategies

I establish interactive learning. I expose learners in learning new things.	
I make learners feel a sense of belongingness. I allow them to be accepted, appreciated and respected. I treat your pupils equally.	Build Inclusive Space
I adapt to the IP culture. I have an open-minded heart to accept the culture. I serve as their light and guide.	Blend with the Culture
I show my interest to learn their language. I teach them basic language. I get my students' interest. I adjust to their attitude because they are sensitive.	Adjust with the Learners
I realize that I need to accept changes. I am ready to learn new things. I am a channel of change. I am becoming a flexible teacher. I'm getting out of my own comfort zone. I change helps me to adapt to life in the IP community.	Accept Changes
I teach them their language. I believe our communication will be better. I study their language.	Learn IP Language

Table 2 describes the coping mechanism of non-indigenous teachers teaching IP learners. Seven emergent themes from this category were when non-indigenous teachers cope by giving incentives, classroom management, employing instructional strategies, building an inclusive space, blending with the culture, accepting changes, adjusting with the learners, and learning the IP language.

Incentives emphasize giving rewards, which involve recognizing and incentivizing individuals for their efforts and accomplishments, which can motivate and reinforce positive behavior or performance. Providing food can encompass offering sustenance, nutrition, and nourishment, which is essential for the well-being and health of individuals, particularly in contexts where access to food may be limited. Sharing their blessings suggests a willingness to distribute one's resources or good fortune to others, fostering a sense of community and altruism. Appreciating and praising them always entails expressing gratitude and admiration, which can boost individuals' self-esteem and morale, encouraging them to continue their positive actions or behaviors.

Treating individuals equally involves providing fair and just treatment to all, regardless of their background, identity, or characteristics, ensuring everyone has the same opportunities and access to resources. Enjoying learning with them suggests finding pleasure and enthusiasm in acquiring knowledge and skills together, promoting a collaborative and engaging learning environment. Understanding them individually entails recognizing and appreciating each person's unique strengths, weaknesses, and needs, allowing for tailored support and guidance. Being open-minded implies a willingness to consider different perspectives, ideas, and experiences, which fosters inclusivity, empathy, and the ability to adapt to diverse viewpoints and circumstances.

Teaching at their own pace involves customizing the learning experience to match each individual's speed and comprehension, ensuring that students can grasp concepts and skills at a rate that suits their unique abilities and needs. Using localized materials means incorporating resources and content that are relevant and relatable to the students' cultural and geographical context, enhancing their understanding and engagement with the subject matter. Varying teaching strategies employ various instructional methods, such as visual aids, interactive activities, and group discussions, to accommodate diverse learning styles and preferences. Allowing them to use television acknowledges the role of technology as an educational tool. It permits students to leverage this medium for learning when appropriate, potentially enhancing their access to information and interactive educational content.

Building an inclusive space entails creating environments where everyone is valued, respected, and empowered to participate and contribute actively. Achieving this involves fostering a deep sense of belonging and equity by championing diversity, embracing differences, and dismantling barriers to access and engagement. Inclusive policies, practices, and behaviors are essential tools in this endeavor, prioritizing the needs and perspectives of marginalized or underrepresented groups. By acknowledging and celebrating the richness of diversity, encouraging open dialogue, and ensuring equal opportunities for all, inclusive spaces foster social cohesion and collaboration and fuel innovation and collective growth. In essence, building inclusive spaces is not just about creating environments where everyone feels welcome—it is about harnessing the power of diversity to create stronger, more resilient communities where every voice is heard and valued.

Blending with the culture involves seamlessly integrating oneself or an organization into a specific community or environment's social norms, values, and practices. It entails respecting and embracing the traditions, customs, and beliefs of the culture while also contributing positively to its preservation and evolution. This process often requires active engagement, empathy, and a willingness to learn and adapt to different cultural contexts. By aligning with the culture, individuals and organizations can build trust, foster meaningful relationships, and effectively collaborate with community members to achieve common goals. This approach facilitates integration and acceptance and promotes mutual understanding and appreciation across diverse cultural landscapes.

Accepting changes involves acknowledging and embracing transitions, alterations, or developments in various aspects of life or circumstances. It entails adopting a mindset of flexibility resilience, and openness to new possibilities, even in uncertainty or discomfort. By recognizing that change is a natural and inevitable part of life, individuals can cultivate adaptability and growth, enabling them to navigate transitions more effectively and make the most of emerging opportunities.

Adjusting to the learners involves tailoring teaching methods, approaches, and interactions to meet students' diverse needs, preferences, and abilities. Educators must be flexible, empathetic, and responsive to each learner's unique characteristics and

circumstances. This process may involve adapting instructional strategies, pacing, or content delivery to accommodate different learning styles, backgrounds, or skill levels. Additionally, adjusting to the learners entails creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and empowered to engage actively in the learning process. By recognizing and addressing individual strengths and challenges, educators can foster meaningful connections with their students and facilitate optimal learning outcomes for all.

Table 3: Insights Learned by Non-Indigenous Teachers Teaching IP Learners

Cluster Themes	Emergent Themes
I self-fulfill as a non-IP teacher. I keep motivated to teach. I deepened my understanding of their culture. I learned to appreciate their way of life. I act as a role model to the teachers. I learn to become a better person as well. It is very important for an IP teacher. I am flexible always, and just enjoy the journey of being a teacher. I put myself in their show.	Teacher's Epiphany
I gradually improved their reading skills. I improved my academic performance. I engaged with the people of the community. I learned to understand their behaviors.	Positive Outcomes
I believe teachers are the light for the learners. I always immerse myself in the culture. I address their needs.	Be An Advocate of Emergence
I see the world from another perspective. I know being a teacher in an IP community is very important. I know teachers play an integral role in society. I felt fulfilled being a teacher in an IP. I feel the passion for teaching, and what you showed them will return to you. I never teach for the sake of a salary. I teach because you care about them. I embrace the IP culture. I am a model teacher for the IP learner. I believe teachers are the guides or key to reaching students' dreams.	Recognize Teacher's Integral Role
I feel it is heartwarming to teach in an IP school. I challenge them that if they ever get placed in an IP school, they should not reject it. I have fallen in love with the IP community.	Appreciate IP school
I need to learn to love their culture. I respect them. I always remember we are just the same people. I know it is a blessing that I went to IP school.	Value IP Culture

Table three describes the insights learned by non-indigenous teachers teaching IP learners. The six emergent themes that emerged from this category are namely: the

teacher's epiphany, positive outcomes, being an advocate of emergence, recognizing the teacher's integral role, appreciating the IP school, and valuing IP culture.

By acting as a role model to other teachers, you can inspire them to approach their work with dedication and empathy, fostering a supportive and collaborative educational environment. Flexibility is crucial as it enables you to adapt to the dynamic needs and circumstances of the community and the students you serve, potentially changing your perspectives and expanding your horizons. By doing so, you can become a channel of change, working to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous students while contributing to the broader goals of cultural understanding and inclusive education.

Over time, as educators gradually improved their students' reading skills, this positive development cascaded into their academic performance, empowering them with the foundational skills necessary for success in various subjects. During this process, teachers learned to apply diverse teaching strategies tailored to their students' unique needs and learning styles. As a result, they boosted academic achievements and fostered a stronger connection with the community, becoming more engaged with the people and culture. In teaching and interacting with their students and community members, these educators also better understood the community's behaviors, values, and traditions, enhancing cultural competence and mutual respect.

Advocating emergence involves recognizing and championing the power of new ideas, patterns, or phenomena that arise from complex systems. It entails embracing uncertainty, creativity, and adaptability, as emergence often denies prediction or control. Advocating for emergence means fostering environments that encourage experimentation, collaboration, and diverse perspectives, allowing novel solutions and insights to emerge organically. By cultivating a mindset of openness and curiosity, individuals can harness the potential of emergence to address complex challenges and catalyze positive change.

Recognizing the teacher's integral role acknowledges their profound impact on shaping individuals and society. Teachers serve as mentors, facilitators, and inspirations, guiding students through their educational journeys and imparting knowledge, critical thinking skills, values, and life lessons. They are pivotal in nurturing students' intellectual curiosity, creativity, and self-confidence, fostering a lifelong love for learning. Moreover, teachers often serve as advocates, champions, and even role models, advocating for students' needs and rights while instilling empathy, resilience, and social responsibility.

Appreciating Indigenous Peoples (IP), schools recognize their vital role in preserving cultural heritage, promoting linguistic diversity, and empowering Indigenous communities. These schools often incorporate traditional knowledge, values, and practices into their curriculum, providing a culturally relevant and holistic education for Indigenous students. By celebrating Indigenous languages, histories, and ways of knowing, IP schools foster a sense of pride and identity among students and contribute to preserving and revitalizing Indigenous cultures. Moreover, IP schools serve as a

community. Empowerment centers, promoting self-determination, resilience, and socio-economic development within Indigenous communities.

Valuing Indigenous Peoples (IP) culture entails recognizing and honoring Indigenous communities' rich heritage, traditions, and knowledge systems. It involves acknowledging Indigenous cultures' unique perspectives, practices, and contributions to the collective tapestry of human diversity. Valuing IP culture requires fostering respect, appreciation, and understanding of Indigenous languages, arts, spirituality, governance systems, and ecological wisdom. It also entails advocating for Indigenous communities' rights, self-determination, and well-being, ensuring their voices are heard and their cultural heritage is preserved and celebrated. By embracing and valuing IP culture, societies can promote social justice, cultural diversity, and reconciliation, fostering a more inclusive and equitable world for all.

4. Implications for Practice and Future Research

When non-indigenous teachers are assigned to work in an Indigenous school, they should consider several implications for practice. It is essential to approach this role with cultural sensitivity, respect, and a willingness to learn from and collaborate with the local indigenous community. Here are some implications for practice:

Implementing language immersion programs and bilingual education initiatives can help bridge communication gaps between non-indigenous teachers and Indigenous Peoples (IP) students, fostering greater understanding and collaboration in the classroom.

Promoting cultural competency training for educators and integrating culturally relevant content into the curriculum can facilitate cross-cultural understanding and respect, creating inclusive learning environments that honor diverse perspectives and traditions.

Ongoing professional development opportunities and mentorship programs that support non-Indigenous teachers in navigating the complexities of teaching IP students, fostering resilience and adaptability in educational settings.

Incorporating Indigenous perspectives on environmental stewardship and sustainability into the curriculum can deepen students' understanding of ecological issues and empower them to become active agents of change in addressing environmental challenges.

Implementing inclusive communication strategies, such as visual aids, collaborative learning activities, and opportunities for students to express themselves in their preferred language or dialect, fosters effective communication and engagement in the classroom.

Promoting dialogue, empathy, and conflict resolution skills among students, educators, and community members, creating a culture of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation that transcends differences and promotes harmony within educational settings and beyond.

Offer rewards such as praise, recognition, or small incentives to motivate students to engage in learning tasks actively, participate in class discussions, or achieve academic goals, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment.

Establish clear expectations, routines, and procedures to promote a structured and orderly classroom environment. Use positive behavior reinforcement techniques, such as praise and rewards, to encourage desired behaviors while addressing disruptive behavior promptly and consistently.

Use various teaching strategies and instructional methods, such as cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, and hands-on activities, to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities and promote student engagement and understanding.

Incorporate inclusive practices, such as providing multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement, to ensure that all students feel valued, respected, and empowered to participate fully in the learning process, regardless of background or ability.

Immerse yourself in your community's cultural practices, traditions, and values, fostering trust, rapport, and mutual respect with students and their families. Incorporate culturally relevant content, examples, and perspectives into the curriculum to make learning meaningful and relevant to students' lived experiences.

Embrace a growth mindset and adapt to educational practices, technology, and student needs changes. Be open to new ideas, perspectives, and approaches, and continuously seek professional development and self-improvement opportunities to enhance your effectiveness as an educator.

Take proactive steps to learn the Indigenous language your students speak, such as enrolling in language courses, participating in language immersion programs, or seeking guidance from Indigenous language speakers and elders. By acquiring proficiency in the IP language, you can better connect with students, gain deeper insights into their cultural perspectives, and create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment.

Encourage teachers to regularly reflect on their teaching practices and experiences, fostering moments of insight and self-discovery that lead to personal growth and professional development. Provide opportunities for teachers to engage in reflective practices, such as journaling, peer observations, or professional learning communities, where they can share insights, challenges, and successes with colleagues.

Celebrate and recognize teachers' achievements and contributions to student learning, fostering a culture of positivity, appreciation, and support within the school community. Highlight success stories, showcase student accomplishments, and allow teachers to share their innovative practices and strategies with colleagues.

Encourage teachers to embrace emergent approaches, promoting creativity, flexibility, and collaboration in the classroom. Provide professional development opportunities that explore emergent pedagogies and empower teachers to experiment with new ideas, integrate student voice and choice, and adapt instructional strategies based on students' evolving needs and interests.

Acknowledge and celebrate teachers' indispensable role in shaping students' lives and fostering their academic, social, and emotional development. Provide support and resources to help teachers fulfill their responsibilities effectively, including access to professional development, mentoring programs, and opportunities for leadership and growth.

Recognize their unique contributions and achievements in promoting Indigenous culture, language, and academic excellence. Showcase their success stories and innovative practices and advocate for increased support and recognition within the broader education system.

Foster a school culture that honors and respects Indigenous culture, traditions, and perspectives, creating inclusive learning environments where all students feel affirmed, respected, and empowered. Provide opportunities for students to learn about and engage with Indigenous culture through curriculum integration, guest speakers, cultural events, and partnerships with local Indigenous communities.

5. Concluding Remarks

The right of Indigenous Peoples to have access to education has often been mistakenly interpreted as meaning that Indigenous Peoples only want access to non-indigenous education. However, Indigenous peoples worldwide are demanding educational provisions that are both linguistically and culturally appropriate to their needs while not excluding them from broader access to national education systems. At the same time, education must be empowering and draw from indigenous culture and wisdom. The reasons behind this, of course, are complicated. However, one of the key causes of this persistent disadvantage and marginalization is the lack of quality education that does not align with their rights as Indigenous peoples: education that is well-resourced, culturally sensitive, aligned with their learning needs, languages, priorities and aspirations, delivered through culturally appropriate teaching strategies and in culturally appropriate settings.

One of the significant issues is the lack of culturally sensitive education materials and teaching methods. Indigenous students may not be able to fully engage with and understand a curriculum that does not reflect their own cultural experiences and perspectives, which can lead to a sense of disconnection and disinterest in school, which can negatively impact academic performance. Another obstacle to education for indigenous people in the Philippines is the lack of adequate infrastructure and resources in their communities. Many Indigenous communities are located in remote or disadvantaged areas, making it difficult to access quality education. This can include a lack of schools, teachers, and educational materials.

In addition to the issues of cultural sensitivity and inadequate resources, Indigenous peoples in the Philippines also face linguistic barriers in education. Many indigenous communities speak languages other than Tagalog or English, the dominant

languages used in schools. This can make it difficult for Indigenous students to participate in and understand classroom instruction fully.

In light of the deployment of the Department of Education in IP schools of newly hired teachers who are mostly fresh graduates, training them on how to be prepared is crucial to their success as teachers of IP students. Moreover, teacher education institutions may consider the suggestions of teachers with firsthand experience in teaching IP students and reviewing and revising the existing pre-service teacher education curriculum. Lastly, this study may be replicated to include more respondents or consider other Indigenous communities.

To address these issues and improve education for Indigenous people in the Philippines, it is essential to adopt culturally responsive teaching practices and materials and provide language support and accommodations for Indigenous students. Hence, addressing and combating discrimination and stigma within the education system is also necessary.

One of the solutions that the Philippine government has implemented to address these challenges and improve the education for Indigenous people in the Philippines is the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997; this is to recognize the rights of Indigenous communities to their ancestral lands and the preservation of their cultural heritage. This included the right to education in their languages and in a manner that recognizes their cultural distinctiveness. However, the implementation of the IPRA and other initiatives has been inconsistent and limited, and there is still a need for more comprehensive and effective policies and programs to support the education of indigenous people in the Philippines.

In addition, the Department of Education has also implemented programs such as the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) program, which aims to provide culturally appropriate education to indigenous communities. However, more needs to be done to ensure that Indigenous students have equal access to education and the opportunity to succeed academically. Hence, if future teachers are given education on cultural awareness and sensitivity, information about the needs of Indigenous students, and techniques or strategies on how to teach IP students, they would be able to guide the Indigenous students toward improved performance achievement and self-determination.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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