

Influences of Ayta Parenting Practices to Preschool Education

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Abstract: Maintaining parenting practices while adapting to the modernization of education is what indigenous parents are experiencing at present. Indigenous parents respond to the modern education influences on their child's education. The study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate the Ayta's parenting practices and how they adapted and influenced to fit their children's needs into modern preschool education. The data in this study was collected through an interview with five (5) Ayta parents from Tarik, Porac, Pampanga. The data collected were analyzed through Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2018), where three (3) themes emerged from the transcribed data. Findings in this study highlight that Ayta parents prioritize teaching core skills – reading, writing, and practical life skills alongside nurturing respect and community values. However, challenges were identified such as economic hardship, health concerns and systematic barriers to education. To address these challenges, it requires providing financial support to address the socioeconomic disparities and developing a curriculum framework that incorporates indigenous heritage. This study contributes to the development of an inclusive educational framework that respects the indigenous cultural heritage while equipping Ayta children to succeed in modernization, while effectively integrating traditional parenting practices and values with contemporary educational demands.

Keywords—Ayta parents, indigenous education, parenting practices, preschool education, modernization

1. INTRODUCTION

Keeping Ayta cultural practices and adapting to the demands of modern educational needs is of utmost importance. It ensures that important cultural traditions will continue to exist. It enhances the learning environment for young students which results in a better comprehension of how traditional practices can be successfully integrated into preschool instruction which benefits the Ayta community as well as a whole educational system.

In defining a child's early education and establishing the foundation for values and ideals, cultural traditions and customs are essential according to Rodriguez (2024). This study on the traditional parenting practices of the Ayta an indigenous tribe and one of the oldest populations in the Philippines, emphasizes the value of integrating cultural practices into modern preschool education (Supan & Mendoza 2023). As demonstrated by the early childhood education system literacy programs are an essential part of community activities unlike non-formal education (Voyager et al. 2023) which promotes young Indigenous peoples' participation in education and consequently the growth of empowered individuals, a changing community and the preservation of Ayta culture. Investigating the Aytas traditional parenting practices and how they have been adapted for use in preschool education today is the primary objective of this study. With the help of the right paperwork and careful thought the study seeks to understand how these practices are integrated into the current educational framework, evaluate the impact on children's learning and development and offer feasible plans for home-school integration.

In the Philippines, the Aeta is also known as the Agta or Ayta and are among the earliest indigenous groups. Their distinctive physical characteristics such as their dark complexion, curly hair and diminutive stature have led them being dubbed as Negritos. According to estimates, their ancestry dates from between 20,000 and 30,000 years ago when they first migrated into Southeast Asia. As a result, they were among the first people to settle in the Philippines, arriving well before Malay groups and other colonists (Jinam et al., 2017; Baruah, 2000). Historically, the Ayta were nomadic hunter-gatherers who relied on the forest's rich natural resources for food and shelter. They have long engaged in shifting agriculture, or kaingin, and traded forest products with communities living in the lowlands. The arrival of various colonists (Spanish, Americans, and later, other settlers) had a major effect on their way of life, causing them to retreat further into the mountains. In contrast, lowland people took the rich plains (Minter & Scott, 2010). The Ayta were initially dispersed over the mountainous parts of Pampanga province, a province in Central Luzon, especially in the Zambales and Bataan Mountain chains (Minter, 2010). However, their numbers have fallen due to displacement and natural disasters, like the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991. This incident uprooted numerous groups of Ayta away from their native grounds and destroyed their homes and means of survival (Seitz, 1998). Since then, many Aytas have lived in government-provided resettlement homes, where they have had to adapt to a more sedentary lifestyle (Espiritu, 2018; Shimizu, 1992).

Traditional parenting practices regularly range throughout cultures and are handed down via generations. They emphasize institutional ideals, appreciation for elders, and the reputation of set-up norms. In research performed on a few of

the Ayta networks in the Philippines, it was found that parents tended to educate their youngsters via imitation, bodily studying, and instances in preference to verbal rationalization and reasoning. casual coaching—studying of practices were customary, with both parents demonstrating obligations for their youngsters to mimic. For example, a father may "educate" his child on a way to acquire meals by doing the task himself, with the expectation that the child would examine through words and imitation without specific training (Kirk, 2011).

Different cultures define adolescence and socialize children according to their norms (OpenLearn, n.d.). For the Ayta of the Philippines, childrearing practices are closely influenced by their traditional ideals and environmental situations. Ayta mothers frequently emphasize self-reliance, similar to different indigenous cultures. Research has shown that Ayta toddlers are typically cared for through traditional techniques passed down via generations, which include minimum immediate interest in crying toddlers, especially while the mother is involved in physical exertions (Leabres et al., 2019). That is akin to the practices seen within the 1950s, wherein children in useful resource-scarce environments had to expand behaviors, including irritability, to secure interest in survival (Mittal & Griskevicius, 2021; Stringaris et al., 2018). Modern-day procedures emphasize greater emotional connection and attentiveness to children's wishes (Van Schaik, Behrendt & Feldman, 2018).

Maharani et al., (2023) defined strict parents as folks who place a sturdy emphasis on discipline and the need for their children to acquire perfection. To illustrate this, children are often reprimanded or bodily punished if they hesitate to conform. This strict upbringing leads children to grow up tense and unable to control emotions or make sound selections. In extreme circumstances, they may be afflicted by strain and different psychological illnesses. The feeling of restriction imposed using their surroundings can diminish their motivation for education and achievement. Furthermore, the approach of parental discipline among Ayta parents is influenced by their cultural values, which highlights the importance of respecting the elders and complying to societal norms. Conversely, the study indicates that even though there are Ayta parents that might still employ physical punishment, there is an increasing influence of the need to balance discipline with love and empathy. Therefore, some Ayta parents are shifting into more positive discipline which upholds values without relying on punitive methods (Ramiro et al., 2022).

Another common thing that affects Aytas' parenting practices is poverty. This forces children to prioritize survival needs over their education—financial constraints hinder their capacity to afford school needs, clothing, and transportation. Economic and social difficulties such as limited access to education, territories prone to disaster, and healthcare services were also commonly faced by the indigenous people. Dizon et al., (2021) emphasized that because of these concerns, the

indigenous people suffer from low productivity and low income. Further, Revilla (2022) stated that some Aytas need to work and support their families resulting in them being unmotivated to study. Moreover, Ancheta et al., (2017) underscored that financial constraints results in students skipping their classes.

Sheridan (2009) highlighted that it is often emphasized in a modern preschool education the significance of parental involvement through school events, regular communication, group projects. Nevertheless, in meeting these expectations, Ayta parents encounter difficulties. Formal educational practices and digital communication may have limited capability among Ayta families; to fill the gap, schools must implement culturally sensitive strategies. In promoting inclusivity, the school stakeholders are essential through aligning their methods with Ayta practices. For example, to reflect their lifestyle, parents must be persuaded to participate in nature-based activities. Heinrichs (2018) suggested events like "Coffee with the Principal" to make parents feel comfortable. Schools can assist Ayta parents in addressing their needs in modern education, despite the absence of technology, through enabling them to join in the outdoor learning activities and other educational activities of their children. Rodriguez et al., (2014) pinpointed that the general objective of inclusive education is through collaborative efforts in which it could increase the engagement significantly.

Due to a serious lack of resources, capable educators, and culturally appropriate learning materials—Ayta communities that are often located in isolated areas – face educational difficulties. Gonowon (2024) enumerated that socioeconomic difficulties, unqualified teachers, and lack of educational resources are factors to the lack of access to quality education. Likewise, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a change to online and modular education that caused difficulty among Ayta communities, particularly in the remote areas because of limited access to technology. Revilla (2022) discovered that many Ayta parents found these initiatives ineffective because of them being illiterate, they struggle to assist their children with modular learning. Indigenous children had trouble in an unjust system because of these challenges which deepened the educational gap. Addressing these circumstances, demands for targeted interventions, providing educational resources while ensuring that they are accessible and appropriate for their culture and community.

Some Aytas speak their native dialects which are not frequently taught or promoted in official educational settings despite the fact that English and Filipino are the community's official languages. Because of this language barrier, it could be challenging to follow along and take part in class activities. The language used in the classroom is inconsistent and irrelevant which teachers and students must deal with, as claimed by Asistio and Bueno (2019). Reyes et al., (2021) as well as others found that a large number of students struggle

with language especially in English. In spite of this, the Philippine government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working to raise the educational status of Ayta villages through the implementation of scholarships and alternative learning systems.

Ayta children frequently speak their native tongues as their first language when they enter preschool where Filipino or English is the main language of instruction creating a significant language barrier (Rogayan, 2019). They might find it challenging to understand lessons due to this language barrier which would make learning more challenging overall. The problem is more widespread among other Indigenous Peoples (IPs). Among the many obstacles they face in their educational journey are socioeconomic disadvantages, language barriers discrimination and remoteness. These factors together limit their educational opportunities, even though education is essential for fostering social justice and equality across all cultural backgrounds (Motitswe, 2014). To tackle these challenges, it is important to implement a culturally responsive curriculum that helps Indigenous learners maintain their language and heritage while progressing in contemporary educational environments.

Developmentally appropriate environments that support young children's holistic growth are the main focus of modern preschool education practices. Play has long been considered crucial for children's learning and development. Pyle and Danniels (2017) accentuated that educators must incorporate planned and unplanned play activities to foster curiosity, innovation, and the growth of social skills. Play is a crucial part of early childhood development, particularly in preschool and kindergarten, when kids' social and emotional abilities are growing quickly (Kangas et al., 2015; Kroll, 2017). With the increasing relevance of play in the curriculum, prior studies and research have addressed the whys and advantages of play and whether play has allowed children to acquire self-regulation skills necessary for following school and life success.

Modern preschool education also places a strong emphasis on individualized learning programs that addresses each child's strengths and areas for growth since it recognizes that every child learns at their own rate (Riley-Ayers, Frede, Barnett, & Brenneman, 2019). In response to the varied learning expectations of their learners, an increasing number of states, districts, and educational institutions have been looking for comprehensive approaches in recent years (Levin et al., 2014; Netcoh, 2017). Teachers reflect on their observations of each child and then plan the most effective ways to support their learning and development.

In the Philippines, cutting-edge preschool applications, which include the MATATAG Kindergarten Curriculum, prioritize the holistic development of younger children. These applications are designed to foster cognitive and physical abilities and emphasize social and emotional growth. The curriculum integrates play—primarily based on studying; focusing on crucial 21st-century abilities like

important questioning, collaboration, and emotional development. The curriculum is also designed to promote children to discover their identities and feelings and establish sound social relationships. This is consistent with international trends that acknowledge the value of socio-emotional skills for long-term achievement (DepEd, 2023; UNICEF, 2023).

Aside from the play-based and Matatag curriculum, modern-day preschool settings, also include screen time and technology as instructional gear to enhance pupil engagement and studying (Blackwell et al., 2016). However, this is not the case for Ayta preschoolers, who often lack exposure to such modern-day teaching techniques because of the restrained right to access technology in schools. Monteiro et al., (2022) pointed out that despite the worldwide shift closer to digital studying, many Indigenous and rural communities, like the Aytas, nonetheless face challenges in adopting those gear, resulting in a digital divide in schooling. This publicity loss can affect children's familiarity with technology and restrict their possibilities for tech-driven studying. These disparities draw attention to the necessity of targeted interventions to bridge the divide and provide Ayta children with access to modern educational materials.

Ayta preschoolers have a close bond with nature which enhances their practical skills through vital outdoor learning experiences. The three main pillars of Ayta children's education, physical activity, environmental awareness, and hands-on exploration are all promoted by this nature-based approach. Even though they might not be as engrossed in technology their intimate connection to nature aids in their acquisition of useful knowledge that is just as crucial to their development (Brussoni et al., 2017). Because it offers a variety of surface levels and natural elements such as climbable trees and bushes to explore, outdoor learning arouses the senses and inspires wonder. Parents may restrict activities for reasons like bad weather or safety concerns but teachers rely on their support because of the possibility of injuries (Cevher-Kalburan, 2014; Yılmaz, 2016). It is essential to comprehend how parents feel about these activities in order to support their children's participation in outdoor education (Elliott, 2015).

Due to historical and socioeconomic factors, the Ayta communities in the Philippines have faced significant educational challenges. Many Ayta settlements are located in remote hilly areas making it difficult to get to school. Attendance is frequently hampered by physical distance especially for younger kids. Dela Cruz (2020) underlined that Ayta communities found in Pampanga, uphill in the municipalities of Angeles City, Porac and Mabalacat. Aytas have to deal with the danger posed by Mount Pinatubo's eruption in Zambales in 1991, which caused them to be physically, socioculturally, and economically displaced. Furthermore, as per Gonowon (2024), the Ayta community has encountered difficulties obtaining high-quality education as well. These difficulties include inadequate school facilities

and resources, an absence of trained educators who are aware of their cultural background, and socioeconomic restrictions that prevent children from the Ayta community from attending school.

Filipino mainstream culture, which frequently disregards the indigenous knowledge and customs of the Ayta, serves as the main basis for the official schooling curriculum. As a result, the children have been traumatized and subjected to culture shock. David (2014) indicated that children from different cultural backgrounds, with different levels of socialization and worldviews, attend the same class, which is the primary source of difficulty. Rogayan (2019) found that the Aytas in Bataan are forced to integrate into the regular educational system because they have no other option. Throughout the process, they encountered circumstances that either facilitate or limit their involvement, performance, and survival in the system. In addition to the teachers, parents, school, and supporters, these variables also include students themselves. Furthermore, academic texts are written in both Filipino and Kapampangan (Abiog & David, 2020). Because there are no written tales in Mag-Antsi (Ayta dialect) that pupils may use, its preservation is unlikely to be sustainable.

Many Ayta families rely on their children to assist with livelihood activities, often leading to financial constraints that prevent them from prioritizing preschool education. As a result, school attendance tends to be low. Ocampo (2014) notes that these indigenous communities prioritize meeting their basic needs, such as food, over formal education, which diminishes its perceived value. Furthermore, IPs encounter discrimination in healthcare settings due to challenges in understanding instructions, limited access to resources, and a lack of formal education (Domingo & Manejar, 2020).

The preschool curriculum is being adapted to include Ayta culture, language, and customs. Educational management aims to value Aboriginal students' positive feedback regarding their course experiences, similar to how schools prioritize the well-being of mainstream students (Payad, 2024). Notano (2023) argues that localizing education enhances its relevance and benefits for students. Additionally, Mercado (2021) defined that students' cultural backgrounds are considered when introducing new topics. Conversely, certain aspects of lesson plans are designed to reflect ancestral domains.

To assist Indigenous students who may lack access to conventional formal education, the Philippine government, along with various non-governmental organizations, has set up Alternative Learning Schools (ALS). These institutions offer flexible educational options that cater to the specific socioeconomic circumstances of Ayta communities. As outlined in RA 11510 (2020), the government is responsible for promoting collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve educational opportunities for marginalized groups. However, ALS encounters challenges, especially

regarding the availability of essential learning resources needed for effective teaching (Bantugan, 2015). For this educational model to succeed, universities must not only provide necessary learning materials and training but also assist volunteer teachers in delivering culturally relevant education from Kindergarten through Grade 6. As mandated by the Department of Education, this thorough method guarantees that Ayta children receive the functional knowledge whilst recognizing their cultural identity.

Community-based preschools and mobile schools are initiatives offered to preschool education in Ayta communities that provide culturally appropriate instruction in a comfortable setting that reduces the transportation difficulties. Ferrer (2022) stated that the University of Makati's community development initiative in Barangay Camias, Porac, Pampanga resulted in successfully addressing the needs of the community. To continuously support the community, the study emphasized the significance of incorporating all institutions, centers, administrative units, and the students in a regular involvement and extension programs. Moreover, it is essential for these programs to conduct a periodic assessment. Addressing educational difficulties encountered by indigenous people is crucial in fostering equality in academic success. UNESCO (2014) focused that the key goal for indigenous children is providing a specialized educational program that is both linguistically and culturally appropriate. These initiatives also enable Ayta children to foster a sense of belonging and be proud of their culture.

Training in culturally responsive instruction methods that respects the Ayta people's culture is the objective of the present initiatives mandated to the educators. The training fosters an inclusive classroom environment and benefits the educators to comprehend further the learning needs of the Ayta students. Hynds et al., (2015) pointed that to successfully connect with students, educators are required to have a thorough training along with cultural understanding. Perso (2020) added that deep comprehension of their cultures, traditions and lifestyle is essential in teaching indigenous students because it can compromise their educational process if these elements are neglected. Further, educators should use all available resources to help the students apply what they learn to real-world situations (Paz, 2021). Ayta children can benefit from a more engaging learning environment when educators utilize and incorporate culturally appropriate teaching strategies.

The Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 is remarkably significant where scholarship programs and financial assistance to increase preschool enrollment are granted for Ayta families to participate. Learning materials and nutritious meals are provided by committed government and non-government organizations. The IPRA highlights that the state's responsibility is to support the Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Cultural Communities' (IP/ICC) distinct cultural representation through guaranteeing their active

participation in services like health, education and other community services (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). Additionally, programs such as Education for All (EFA 2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) benefited the education of the Indigenous students, through Quality Education (SDG 4), where it promotes inclusivity and equal access to education (United Nations, 2015).

Moralista and Delariate (2014) argued that educational studies should include both the first and second generations of Ayta to ensure a well-rounded representation across different ages and genders. Nevertheless, there was a lack of studies regarding the connection between traditional and modern preschool settings. Earlier studies on Aytas focused primarily on adults, including high school and college students, leaving a significant gap in understanding the views and challenges that young children and their families face (Abebe et al., 2022).

Aytas are well-known for their powerful oral traditions highlighting community-oriented instruction and their capacity to deal with challenges in the modern preschool setting that often go against cultural norms. Therefore, it is more challenging for Ayta children to stay focused in class and connect with the subject matter. Vecaldo et al., (2020), stated that research has shown that Indigenous People (IPs), such as the Aytas, commonly experience discrimination in schools since the majority of cultural beliefs are often given priority in the curriculum ideals over native traditions. This situation risks the culture of Ayta children, who might feel uncomfortable in certain educational settings. Lattao and Martin (2020) revealed that the lack of culturally appropriate teaching resources, such as native-language textbooks and visual aids, makes their educational experience even more challenging. In short, to foster a more welcoming learning environment, educators and administrators must concentrate on creating materials and methods that respect and acknowledge the cultural legacy of Ayta communities.

Posing the literature derived from previous research about Aytas, the researchers were motivated to explore the influences of Ayta parenting practices to preschool education. The results of the study will bring about the current status and needs of Ayta preschoolers in the modern preschool education.

2. AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aimed is to explore the influences of Ayta parenting practices to preschool education. The results of the study will bring about the current status and needs of Ayta preschoolers in the modern preschool education.

In particular, it examined the following questions:

1. How do the participants define their traditional parenting practices that lead to the early development of the children?
2. In general, what do the participants expect to gain from modern preschool education? How do

participants' traditional parenting practices differ from or fit into modern preschool education expectations?

3. What challenges and difficulties do the participants face while integrating traditional practices with modern educational standards?
4. What coping strategies do the participants employ to adapt traditional practices to modern educational expectations?

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study utilized an instrumental case study design to gain a deeper understanding of a broader issue, concept or phenomenon (Stake, 1995). The study explored on how Aytas' parenting practices influence preschool education which will bring about the current status and needs of Ayta preschoolers in the modern preschool education.

A validated interview guide was used by the researchers for the in-depth interviews. Sparkes and Smith (2014) stated that a qualitative interview is a form of action in which two or more people actively participate in actual conversation, collaboratively creating knowledge about themselves and the social world as they interact with each other throughout the moment, in a specific location, and through a variety of senses.

A case study investigation entails an extensive and in-depth investigation of a specific event, circumstance, institution, or social group. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) stress that a case usually has a defined space and time frame: a phenomenon of some sort in bounded context. The study's scope is an in-depth investigation of a current issue in the context of actual-world events. The case study design depends on a variety of data sources to provide evidence because it might be difficult to draw boundaries between a phenomenon and its setting (Yin, 2018).

3.2 Participants

Five (5) parents from Barangay Tarik, Villa Maria, Porac, Pampanga were the participants who experienced both parenting practices and currently adapting to the modern preschool education of their children. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of the participants.

As stated by Rai and Thapa (2015), purposive sampling is a collection of various non-probability sampling methods. It is sometimes referred to as judging, selective, or subjective sampling, depends on the judgment on the part of the researcher in choosing the units (people, cases (organizations, incidents, or data points) that need to be examined. Inclusion criteria were as follows: 1) parent of a preschooler enrolled this school year 2024-2025; 2) lives in places where there is access to both community settings and modern preschool institutions; 3) with varying age group if applicable; and 4) willingness to participate in the study.

3.3 Instrument

The primary tool for data collection was a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions. According to Kallio et al., (2016), often used in qualitative research, this method permits a more in-depth examination of the participants' experiences and allows for greater flexibility in the questions posed.

The interview guide was validated by three (3) experts to check the face and content validity of the instrument.

3.4 Data Collection

The collection of data followed an organized approach to ensured the integrity and the accuracy of the results. The researchers mainly seek official permission from the Dean of the College of Education, including their research instructor and adviser, all who attested to this approval. All letters formally signed by these authorities were handed over to the Head of Ayta Community, the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP), and the Ayta parents who participated in the study. The letters include the list of the participants, stated the purpose of the study and requested permission to conduct the research.

After the approval, the researchers reviewed and revised the interview questions ensuring the alignment of the study's objectives. The interviews were conducted in person with the participants that followed a semi-structured manner to encourage open communication.

To make sure that participants were informed ahead of time, the researchers utilized recorded interviews using mobile phones along with handwritten notes. Open-ended questions gave both the interviewer and the participants more freedom to explore a wide range of topics in depth. The interview went smoothly due to its flexible structure which also allowed the interviewer to asked follow-up questions in response to the participants responses. The participants' experiences, thoughts and perceptions of Ayta parenting practices as well as how these practices relate to modern preschool education were the primary subjects of discussion.

Through active interaction, this method not only helped to establish rapport but also prompted the interviewee to provide more sincere and detailed responses. The interviewer was able to use this technique to let the interviewees elaborate on various issues and follow up on exciting developments, as suggested by Hamza (2014), to produce more accurate and nuanced results.

3.5 Data Analysis

The thematic analysis as defined by Braun and Clarke's (2018) framework was utilized in the study to identified, investigate, and show patterns in the data. The versatility of this approach in examining complex, rich, and varied qualitative data led to its selection.

The six-phase were the following: a) the first phase, familiarization with the data, involved a detailed review and transcription of interviews with Ayta parents, allowing the researchers to engage with the content and identify initial patterns deeply; b) the second phase, generating initial codes, the data were systematically coded to highlight recurring elements related to how traditional parenting practices were adapted for preschool education and how home and school practices were integrated; c) the third phase, searching for themes, involved organizing the codes into broader themes that illustrated how traditional practices were maintained, adapted, or transformed within the context of modern preschool education; d) the fourth phase focused on defining and naming themes, where each theme was clearly articulated, and subthemes were identified to provide in-depth explanations of the adaptation process and its effects on children's learning and development; e) the fifth phase was determining the significance of the themes, ensuring their relevance to the research questions, and incorporating direct quotes from participants to showcase the Aytas' experiences in adapting traditional parenting practices; and f) the sixth phase is producing the report which entails compiling a comprehensive presentation of the themes. This structured approach to thematic analysis facilitates a thorough understanding of the complexities surrounding Ayta parenting in today's educational landscape (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019).

3.6 Ethical Consideration

With regards to ethical concerns, the researchers ensured that the participants fully understood the context of the study, that includes its purpose, processes, potential risks, and advantages, before deciding to participate in the study.

Confidentiality was ensured in the study. The researchers took a great responsibility in protecting participant's identity and data privacy, keeping the information secure to avoid unauthorized access within the researchers' control.

Furthermore, the interactions were regarded as an important consideration for qualitative research, particularly when working with marginalized or vulnerable individuals. With this, the researchers and participants built a respectful and comfortable environment in which individuals felt free to discuss their experiences without worry of being judged.

Cultural sensitivity was significantly important whereas researchers embraced and valued the participants' various life backgrounds in adapting and adjusting to their methods to accommodate their cultural norms and values.

The procedures followed were also aligned with the Philippines' Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), particularly emphasizing the concepts of informed consent, confidentiality, and secured data handling.

When ethical factors are prioritized, the researchers' integrity is upheld, creating a more ethical research

atmosphere that respects and protects the rights and well-being of all participants.

3.7 Trustworthiness and Rigor of the Data

The study followed the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria for qualitative research established by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to guarantee the reliability and rigor of the data.

The researchers followed the following procedures: a) Credibility: To gain a complete understanding of Ayta's parenting methods, regular observation and extensive interaction with the participants were performed. Member checking was performed to allow participants to look over and confirm the reliability of the data and interpretations; b) Transferability: Comprehensive descriptions of the research framework subjects and surroundings were provided to help other researchers assess the findings' application to similar contexts. The study's extensive contextualized data was developed to be helpful in more general discussions regarding Indigenous parenting and their education. c) Dependability: To ensure that the study's technique is open and predictable, an audit trail documenting each phase of the research procedure, from data collection to analysis—was kept updated. Researchers convened for peer debriefings to go over the data and make sure interpretations were consistent; and d) Confirmability: Throughout the investigation, reflexivity was used to reduce researcher bias. This required the researchers to maintain a reflective notebook in which they record any potential biases and presumptions. This allowed them to ensure that the conclusions come from the data rather than their opinions.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study anchors support for the data gathered from qualitative research, including the findings, and discussions acquired by investigating and interviewing participants for the study.

This qualitative study involved interviews with five (5) Ayta parents from Tarik, Porac, Pampanga. The research instruments included interviews, field notes, and participant observation, with the interview being the primary instrument. The researchers conducted personal interviews with each participant, and the recordings facilitated easy transcription. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using a cellphone and laptop. The transcriptions were completed within a few days after the interviews. The interview time varied and were organized to accommodate both the participants and the researchers. The researchers had field notes throughout each interview. Three (3) themes with two (2) subthemes have emerged from the data analysis.

Upholding Cultural Values and Tradition.

The abovementioned theme was developed in response to the study's problem description. The participants shared their experiences with cultural values and traditions. The study identified two (2) subthemes: cultural transmission

and preservation, and nurturing values and traditions. Below is a discussion of each subtheme to achieve the goal of the current study.

Cultural Transmission and Preservation. This investigates the methods used by Ayta parents. The parents give their children ceremonial blessings highlighting how they manage to maintain their traditional identity in an increasingly modernized world. The viewpoints of the participants show how committed they are to keeping their culture alive for upcoming generations.

The tribal elders are leading the charge in educating the next generation in any way they can according to Paguio and Dela Rosa (2019) and the Ayta parents try to preserve their oral tradition. This shows that the Ayta are actively attempting to preserve their identity while fending off the assault of contemporary influences on their culture. The Aytas ethnicity is still visible in their everyday lives as evidenced by their knowledge of and adherence to their indigenous culture particularly their customs, values, and beliefs (David 2020).

Nurturing Values and Traditions. This subtheme examines how Ayta parents combine nurturing to promote emotional health and a strong sense of values with discipline to guide behavior.

Ayta parents instilled in their children the value of social cohesion and cultivating positive relationships with others. Boñon (2024) emphasized the importance of social unity and fostering positive relationships with others (*pamakyabe o pakikisama*) as a crucial cultural pillar in the Filipino culture.

Expectations and Effectiveness of Modern Education

According to the problem statement, the aforementioned theme emerged. This theme focused on participants' expectations on the effectiveness of modern education. Following an analysis of the informants' responses, two (2) significant subthemes were identified: focus on core skills and cultural integration in school. Each subtheme is discussed below for the realization of the objectives in this study.

Focus on Core Skills. In this subtheme, it was identified that one of the roles of the Ayta parents in modern education while preserving their culture is through focusing on the core skills of their children. These core skills are essential as they help people aim for success.

According to Keltly and Wakabayashi (2020), parental involvement is significant for the development of basic skills—literacy and numeracy. This is supported by the research of Mertens et al., (2020) revealing that parental engagement in teaching literacy is an important aspect that promotes children's literacy development, especially when educational resources are insufficient. Parents who actively engage themselves with the education of their child are more likely to contribute to enhancing the academic success of the child.

Cultural Integration in School. Amid the need for formal learning, this theme demonstrates how Ayta traditions are performed and practiced in school through the engagement and presence of some Ayta teachers who serve as a bridge between traditional and modern education.

Challenges and Coping Strategies

This theme was designed to be consistent with the problem statements. The theme focused on the participants' challenges and coping strategies for adapting to modern education. After the analysis, two (2) meaningful subthemes emerged: health and well-being issues and parental guidance and support. Each subtheme is discussed for better understanding.

Health and Well-Being Issues. In this subtheme, Ayta parents often faced challenges regarding the health and well-being of their children. Generally, access to health care services in Indigenous communities is greatly hindered by several factors, especially financial constraints.

Several studies have shown that the poor health outcomes in such communities are due to a lack of access to care (George et al., 2020; Leader et al., 2023). The indigenous people living in rural areas of the Philippines are usually exposed to poor health outcomes because of the lack of access to necessary medical care. While healthcare services are available, obstacles to access make it difficult for families to obtain sufficient support in managing health issues (Poitras et al., 2022).

Parental Guidance and Support. In this subtheme, guidance and support for children were defined. Parents play an important role in shaping their children's values, beliefs, and behaviors, which create the groundwork for their future well-being.

According to Luna (2023), Ayta parents see their children as the source of their joy, and they work hard to meet their children's basic needs. In terms of parental support, they just let their children to continue experiencing things that they did not enjoy as children.

4.1 Synthesis of Interpretation

Based on the gathered data, it was highlighted that the role of education in an Ayta community is multifaceted. The role of education is not only an instrument for academic success but also a relevant manner of upholding and preserving cultural identity. The integration of the Ayta parenting practices into preschool education can be explored through the theory of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, as mentioned in the Theoretical Framework of this study, which underscores the interrelated systems that influence the child and its development.

At the microsystem level, the Ayta parents still educate traditional practices - prayers, rituals, and cultural activities and games - to foster a sense of heritage and belonging in their children. Respect, discipline, and social

values are fostered through positive guidance that aligns traditional parenting with modern educational approaches.

The mesosystem is reflected in interaction between the home and school environment where it includes cultural integration and division of role in the education of the child.

The significant challenges faced by Ayta parents include economic hardships and health issues are encompassed in the exosystem level where they often encounter difficulty in providing basic needs while prioritizing the education of their children as a way to discontinue the cycle of poverty. Ayta parents show resilience despite the circumstances through the integration of traditional practices like farming and cooking to modern education.

The macrosystem level, in the broader context of culture and society, highlights the significance of preservation of traditional values, rituals and practices while adapting to the demands of modern education.

This combined approach is reflected at chronosystem levels shows the effort of the parents to balance cultural preservation while adapting to the demands of contemporary living.

Ultimately, there is a need for culturally responsive educational systems because they connect between traditional and modern practices. Targeted interventions that address economic and health challenges are essential while nurturing educational equity and cultural pride are key to long-term success and support for Indigenous communities.

Figure 1. Influence of Ayta Parenting Practices to Preschool Education (Research-Made)

The figure highlights the influences of Ayta parenting practices on preschool education where it emphasizes the interconnectedness of traditional and modern approaches.



5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the overall findings of the analyzed interview data from the Ayta participants, resulting in conclusions, limitations, and recommendations that answer the problem statements of the study.

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the issues outlined in the problem statements, the following conclusions were established:

1. The spiritual practices and faith life of the Ayta people reflect their cultural traditions and values in ritual expressions of worship. Their parents still offer thanksgiving as well as offerings, just like their ancestors. In addition, the *dururu* or *pag-aanito*, a type of ritual prayer, is a way of seeking blessings and gratitude that are meaningful to the community. Cultural and traditional values are important which are also reinforced during practical skills training. For example, Ayta parents ensure that their children learn how to excel in traditional livelihood practices while training them. These activities are useful in maintaining their identity and for the protection of the community's future.
2. Parents are useful in influencing the values, behavior, and religious practices of their children and therefore should be involved in the child's adjustment process. However, they also play a big role in shaping their children's character by encouraging children to respect good manners and get along with other people. For parents of children, instead of physical punishment, use open communication and constructive dialogue as an effective method of discipline. Encourage other parents to do the same so they can make a positive contribution to their children's development.
3. The study shows that there is a strong commitment of Ayta parents to their children's education, in the form of constant encouragement and support for academic success. However, they prioritize teaching basic skills and, in addition, teaching children practical and moral guidance to ensure children's success. Their focus on homeschooling is reflected in their dedication of their time to both meeting the needs of the school and the positive development of their children.
4. From the study, it was found that the character of Ayta children is greatly influenced by parental guidance in raising them to respect their peers and behave well. It is noteworthy that these skills are also important for their socialization and overall character development, especially in early childhood. Moreover, they agree that their child's participation in sports and physical activities at school is good for the child's personal growth, which is beneficial to the child's social and physical development.
5. It concludes that the roles of home and school in the education of children are separate but equal. Where schools specialize in teaching literacy skills such as reading and writing, the home environment is more likely to involve teaching practical life skills such as cooking and cleaning. This dual approach ensures that children are well-rounded, gaining both academic knowledge and essential domestic skills. The combination of formal education and household training contributes to the child's overall development, preparing them for both social interactions and independent living.
6. Significantly, Ayta parents stated and observed that their traditions, practices and unique dances are being represented in school, they answered that the engagement of Ayta teachers helps bridge traditional and modern education that is advantageous to them. They added that some of their performances are acknowledged for tourism.
7. Several challenges faced by the family, such as poverty and the negative impact of technology on the child's attendance, have not hindered the parents' determination to support their child's education. Despite financial struggles and occasional hardships, the parents remain committed to providing for their child's needs, including food and basic necessities. Besides, they emphasize the importance of perseverance, even during difficult times, such as when the child had to go to school without proper footwear. The parents continue to balance their limited resources, prioritizing their child's education and well-being. They encourage their child to study diligently to succeed and adapt to the modern world, demonstrating resilience and unwavering dedication to their child's future.
8. This study states that there have been no significant issues if any issues and problems arise, they can be resolved through open discussions. In addition, teachers have been very approachable and professional in dealings with the Ayta parents.
9. This study emphasizes the dedication of Ayta parents to their children's education, linked with the integration of cultural traditions into the learning process, plays a significant role in the child's academic progress. By combining school instruction with home support, they ensure that their children are not only receiving a quality education but also maintaining a strong connection to their cultural heritage.
10. The study highlights that children have greatly improved in reading, and the parents are grateful for the guidance provided by someone from the lowlands. In their view, the results have been positive, as the Ayta community is now able to keep up with modern education, especially with the knowledge gained in using technology. The Ayta people and their culture are becoming more recognized, and the parents are working hard to ensure their child's education and children have also learned to adapt to various situations while maintaining their cultural heritage. Moreover, they are now able to keep up with modern education, such as having a television in each classroom, which has greatly contributed to the children's learning

5.2 Limitations

In spite of the rich conclusions gathered from the analyzed data, there are limitations that must be considered in this study. Thus, future researchers in this topic may resolve these limitations which are as follows:

1. The study has a limited number of participants, particularly focusing on a small Ayta community. This resulted in difficulty to generalize the findings in all Indigenous communities and to reflect diverse perspectives within the group.
2. The data obtained from the interviews was limited to the perspective of the mothers leading to an incomplete parental perspective and the understanding of how parents jointly influence their children and development.
3. A series of in-depth interviews could have provided a richer data from the participants but due to time constraint and financial resources, the researchers had been limited to a two-time visit in the community.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions that were formulated, the following statements are hereby recommended:

1. School personnel in the community should gather feedback from Ayta communities to ensure that the educational system continues to be fulfilling their changing needs. Communication with community leaders, parents, and children is important so that they would learn more about their particular cultural and educational goals.
2. Ayta community must be encouraged to involve themselves in child-rearing methods that can help Ayta youngsters to develop social and emotional skills. Local leaders or community members could organize seminars or group discussions centered on polite communication, conflict resolution, and mutual support.
3. The study demonstrates a strong commitment of Ayta parents to their children's education, evident in their consistent encouragement and support for academic achievement. To ensure their children's success they place a high priority on teaching fundamental skills and offering guidance in both practical and moral areas. Their commitment to fulfilling the requirements of school and encouraging their kids well-rounded development is demonstrated by their emphasis on enhancing learning at home. Participating in extracurricular activities should be encouraged in schools.
4. Schools should provide more chances for Ayta students to engage in physical education and sports. In addition to promoting healthier development such involvement can enhance their physical health, social skills and teamwork.
5. Schools and parents ought to cultivate an environment where students feel motivated to utilize what they learned in both practical and academic abilities. This involves recognizing their achievements as well as bringing forth

opportunities for them to showcase what they have in different settings, among others are family projects and school-based presentations.

6. Ayta practices and traditional dances could be promoted through the schools partnering with local tourist agencies in order to increase tourism. They will also benefit from this in their community economically, who will have more appreciation for them, and they will be able to better introduce their cultural wealth not only to the locals but to others.
7. However, those in need should seek help with government financial assistance. Furthermore, the government should advocate a project that will help those in need of financial hardship. Financial assistance can come in many forms including direct cash transfers, food subsidies, health insurance and housing assistance. These measures should cover immediate needs and serve as a safety net for people in need
8. Cultural sensitivity is a major responsibility for the teachers to be able to understand and relate to the Ayta community's needs and views. Training and seminars promoting this topic should be integrated into the environment they belong to. Through such practices, communication effectiveness and inclusivity to the society, where both young and old, men and women feel valued, respected, and understood.
9. Schools should be willing to integrate Ayta traditions such as cultural dances, traditional games, principles and beliefs into the curriculum. This integration enhances students' educational experience and helps connect cultural divisions, generating a more inclusive and diverse learning community.
10. Presence of a government or non-profit-led system that supports the indigenous schools by equipping them with modern instructional technologies should be encouraged. This covers the use of finances expressly for the purpose of providing classroom televisions, laptop computers, tablets, interactive whiteboards, and educational software to reinforce the modern educational system.

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