The Influence Of Teachers Practices, Strategies And Use Of Instructional Materials Towards Learners' Perception On Inclusion

Charmie L. Intes,

Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Major in Social Studies, Valencia Colleges (Bukidnon), Inc. Valencia City, Bukidnon. April (2025).

Abstract: Inclusive education is essential in addressing the educational disparities among Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners in the Philippines. However, there is limited empirical evidence on how these innovative strategies impact the inclusion and cultural identity preservation of Indigenous Peoples (IP) in the Philippines. This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between teachers' practices, strategies, and instructional materials and learners' perceptions of inclusion. The study involved 160 elementary IP learners from Miaray Elementary School, Sawebseb Te Untong Te Katablaran, and Anaranan Te Saluringan in District II, Cabanglasan, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2024-2025. Findings revealed that teachers implement culturally responsive innovations, including contextualized teaching strategies, interactive activities, and customized instructional materials, significantly influencing learners' perceptions of inclusion. Learners viewed these innovations as supportive and engaging, fostering a sense of belonging and improving participation. A significant difference was observed in learners' perceptions of inclusion based on teaching strategies, practices, and instructional materials. Correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between teachers' innovations and learners' perception of inclusion, highlighting the importance of culturally responsive teaching methods. The study concludes that teacher-driven innovations enhance learners' academic engagement and cultural identity, reinforcing the need for continuous adaptation in inclusive education. Recommendations include developing culturally aligned instructional materials, teachers' training on inclusive education, and ongoing assessment of teaching strategies to improve IP learners' educational experiences.

Keywords: Inclusion, Indigenous Learners, Instructional Materials, Strategies, Teaching Practices

1. Thesis Statement

Inclusive education has emerged as a critical context in addressing the educational disparities faced by marginalized communities, particularly Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners in the Philippines. At its core, inclusive education seeks to provide equitable opportunities for all learners, fostering a sense of belonging, respect, and empowerment. For IP communities, achieving inclusion requires deliberate efforts to innovate teaching strategies and instructional materials that respond to their unique cultural, linguistic, and educational needs.

Innovative strategies in education refer to creative, adaptive approaches that enhance learning by integrating technology, fostering cultural relevance, and promoting active participation. For IP learners, these innovations include practices such as integrating indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSPs) into the curriculum, employing project-based learning (PBL), using bilingual education models, and incorporating digital tools tailored to their contexts. These approaches not only address learning disparities but also preserve and celebrate the cultural identity of IP learners, a crucial aspect of their inclusion. Similarly, bilingual education strategies that use the mother tongue alongside Filipino enable learners to bridge home and school environments effectively.

Moreover, the theoretical significance lies in how these strategies transform education from a system of assimilation into one of inclusion and empowerment. Grounded in social inclusion theories, this study explores how innovative teaching practices and instructional materials promote a sense of belonging, reduce marginalization, and foster equitable learning outcomes. By adapting educational practices to the cultural contexts of IP learners, educators can help them feel valued, respected, and integral to the classroom community. This shift enhances not only academic performance but also learners' self-identity and agency, aligning with broader goals of equity and social justice in education.

In the Philippine context, innovations such as project-based learning, community-integrated curriculum design, and technology-driven education bring something new and transformative to IP learners. These strategies are not merely modern tools but bridges to inclusion, empowering IP learners to engage actively in their learning, connect with their cultural heritage, and develop critical 21st-century skills. For instance, technology use, while increasingly prevalent, remains novel in many IP communities. Integrating digital tools like e-learning platforms, culturally relevant multimedia, and interactive applications enhances engagement and accessibility, creating a participatory learning experience that traditional methods often lack.

The Department of Education's Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program has underscored the importance of these innovations, aiming to make education more relevant, inclusive, and empowering for IP learners. Research supports this direction: Castor and Romero (2017) highlighted the value of IKSPs in improving student engagement and cultural pride, while Maligalig et al. (2018) demonstrated the efficacy of bilingual education in fostering linguistic and cognitive growth. Bautista and Marin (2019) showed how technology could transform classroom dynamics, while de la Cruz et al. (2020) emphasized the role of community-based learning in enhancing cultural and academic outcomes.

By examining the influence of teacher practices, strategies, and instructional materials on perceptions of inclusion, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding of how innovative approaches can address educational inequities and foster a sense of belonging among IP learners. The findings will provide critical insights into creating inclusive, culturally relevant, and equitable educational environments that empower learners to thrive academically and socially.

2. Review of the Literature and Theoretical Framework

This study examines the relationship between teacher innovations and inclusion in the context of Indigenous Peoples (IP) education. The framework is grounded in the Constructivist Learning Theory by Piaget (1969) and Vygotsky (1978), and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) by Geneva Gay (2000). These theories emphasize the importance of active, contextualized learning and culturally relevant teaching practices in creating equitable and inclusive educational experiences.

According to Piaget's (1969) and Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist learning theory, learners actively create knowledge through social interactions, experiences, and scaffolding from teachers or more experienced peers. In the meantime, Geneva Gay's Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) from 2000 emphasizes how crucial it is to incorporate students' cultural backgrounds into instructional strategies to promote learning equity and participation. These theories encourage learner-centered methods that acknowledge indigenous knowledge systems and foster meaningful learning experiences catered to the sociocultural contexts of learners in the framework of inclusive Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPED). Rasmitadila et al. (2020) show how blended learning can improve inclusive education by meeting a variety of learning demands, whereas Paseka and Schwab (2020) highlight the importance of parental attitudes and inclusive teaching materials in promoting inclusive education. Teachers can establish inclusive IPED settings that empower indigenous learners and validate their cultural identities within the curriculum by combining constructivist and culturally responsive techniques.

DepEd Order No. 44, s. 2021 places a strong emphasis on establishing an inclusive classroom where all learners—disabled or not—can work together and succeed in regular classes. The same is true of DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011 reaffirms the Department's dedication to using culturally responsive education to acknowledge, defend, and advance the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs). Because they emphasize the need for inclusive pedagogical approaches, these principles provide the framework for research on how instructors' behaviors, techniques, and instructional materials affect learners' views of inclusion.

In line with the goals of these DepEd directives, Moon (2023) emphasizes that the preparedness and performance of instructors greatly impact the effectiveness of inclusive education initiatives. Bastida et al. (2025) reinforce the usefulness of culturally relevant teaching materials and stress the significance of schools that adopt Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) in advancing localized sustainable development goals. Teachers can improve learners' engagement and sense of inclusion by incorporating inclusive teaching practices and culturally appropriate teaching materials, which will help to effectively meet the different learning requirements of their learners.

The independent variable of this study is teacher innovations, which consist of three components: practices, strategies, and instructional materials, which are supported by the theories and policies in education. Teacher practices refer to the methods employed by educators to engage learners actively and foster meaningful participation in the classroom. Strategies involve adaptive approaches such as project-based learning, scaffolding, and interactive activities designed to address the unique learning needs of IP learners. Instructional materials include culturally relevant resources, such as indigenous knowledge systems, bilingual education materials, and technology-driven tools that enhance engagement and representation in the learning process.

The dependent variable, inclusion, represents the degree to which IP learners experience a sense of belonging, active participation, and equitable access to education. Inclusion also encompasses the development of academic success, cultural identity, and engagement within the learning environment.

This framework highlights how teacher innovations directly influence inclusion by aligning teaching practices, strategies and materials with the cultural and educational needs of IP learners. By focusing on innovative, culturally responsive approaches, this study aims to contribute to the promotion of inclusive and equitable education, fostering both academic and social development among Indigenous peoples.

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational approach within a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between teacher innovations and the perception of inclusion among elementary Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners. The descriptive component identified and categorized the types of teacher innovations used, focusing on practices, strategies, and instructional materials. Data was collected through surveys, targeting teachers to gather detailed information on the specific innovative methods they employ in their classrooms. The correlational component examined the strength and direction of the relationship between these teacher innovations and learners' perceptions of inclusion. This included assessing the influence of innovative practices, strategies, and instructional materials on learner engagement, participation, and their overall sense of belonging in the classroom.

The study was conducted at Miaray Elementary School, Sawebseb Te Untong Te Katablaran, and Anaranan Te Saluringan, all situated in District II, Cabanglasan, Division of Bukidnon. These schools were selected due to their unique demographic composition, which includes a significant population of Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners. The respondents of this study consisted of 160 learners from Miaray Elementary School, Sawebseb Te Untong Te Katablaran, and Anaranan Te Saluringan, located in District II, Cabanglasan, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2024-2025. This sample size was carefully selected to ensure a representative cross-section of the learner population. The study ensures that all perspectives are considered, with particular attention to Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners who form a significant portion of the demographic. This comprehensive approach aims to capture a diverse range of perceptions regarding the influence of teacher practices, strategies, and instructional materials on fostering inclusion.

The survey questionnaire used in this study, titled "The Influence of Teachers Practices, Strategies, and Use of Instructional Materials Towards Learners' Perception on Inclusion," consists of three main parts. Part I focuses on teacher innovations, specifically examining the practices, strategies, and instructional materials teachers use to foster inclusion in the classroom. Part II explores learners' perceptions of these teaching practices and strategies, assessing how learners experience and respond to inclusive education efforts. Part III evaluates the influence of teacher innovations on learners, analyzing how instructional practices impact learner engagement, learning, and sense of belonging within the educational environment.

The scoring procedure for this study, which utilized an adopted survey questionnaire, drawing from validated instruments utilized in prior studies by Francisco and Nuqui (2020), Anitha and Sree (2021), and Igbokwe (2019) involved assigning numerical values to respondents' answers to quantify their perceptions of teachers' innovations and their influence on elementary IP learners. The survey used a Likert scale, where respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements related to teachers' practices, strategies, and instructional materials.

Descriptive Statistics, such as frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data regarding the types of innovations teachers use in their practices, strategies, and instructional materials.

To analyze the learners' perception of the teaching practices and strategies used in fostering inclusion and the influence of the teacher's innovation on the elementary IP learners, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated to determine the learners' perceptions of the impact of these innovations. Descriptive statistics helped show the general level of influence that teachers' innovations have on the learners.

To test whether there are significant differences between the types of teacher innovations (practices, strategies, and instructional materials) and their influence on learners, the Chi-Square Test of Independence was used since the researcher compared frequencies or distributions across groups.

To test whether there is a significant relationship between the learners' perceptions of inclusion and the influence of teacher innovation on the elementary IP learners, Pearson's Correlation (r) was used since both variables are continuous (interval/ratio data) and normally distributed. It measures the strength and direction of the relationship between learners' perceptions and teachers' innovations.

4. Limitations

The respondents of this study consisted of 160 learners from Miaray Elementary School, Sawebseb Te Untong Te Katablaran, and Anaranan Te Saluringan, located in District II, Cabanglasan, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2024-2025. This sample size was carefully selected to ensure a representative cross-section of the learner population. The study ensures that all perspectives are considered, with particular attention to Indigenous Peoples (IP)

learners who form a significant portion of the demographic. This comprehensive approach aims to capture a diverse range of perceptions regarding the influence of teacher practices, strategies, and instructional materials on fostering inclusion.

5. Results

The following results were revealed in this study:

Teachers' Innovation used in Elementary IP Learners in terms of Practices, Strategies, and Instructional Materials.

The study found that teachers implementing innovations for Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners in elementary schools utilize culturally responsive practices, such as integrating local traditions, language, and community involvement in lessons. Effective strategies include contextualized teaching approaches, storytelling, and interactive activities that align with IP learners' backgrounds and experiences. Additionally, teachers develop and use customized instructional materials like mother tongue-based books, visual aids featuring indigenous culture, and hands-on learning tools to enhance engagement and comprehension.

Learners' Perception of the Teaching Practices and Strategies used in Fostering Inclusion

Learners perceived the teaching practices and strategies used to foster inclusion as supportive and culturally relevant, helping them feel valued and understood in the classroom. They appreciate interactive and contextualized approaches, such as collaborative learning, storytelling, and real-life applications, which make lessons more engaging and relatable. Overall, learners feel that inclusive teaching strategies create a positive learning environment that respects diversity and enhances their participation and academic growth.

Influence of the Teacher's Innovation on the Elementary IP Learners

Teachers' innovations, including culturally relevant instructional materials, interactive strategies, and inclusive practices, positively influenced learners by making lessons more engaging and meaningful. These innovations enhance students' participation, comprehension, and connection to their cultural identity, fostering a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. As a result, learners develop a stronger sense of belonging and motivation, leading to improved academic performance and overall learning experiences.

Significant Difference in the Learners' Perceptions of Inclusion according to the Teaching Practices, Strategies, and Instructional Materials

The findings revealed a significant difference in learners' perceptions of inclusion based on the teaching practices, strategies, and instructional materials used by teachers. Learners respond more positively to interactive and culturally relevant teaching approaches, which enhance their engagement and sense of belonging in the classroom. This suggests that the effectiveness of fostering inclusion depends on the alignment of teaching methods with learners' cultural backgrounds, learning preferences, and the accessibility of instructional materials.

Significant Relationship Between the Learners' Perceptions of Inclusion and the Influence of Teachers' Innovation on the Elementary IP Learners

The correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between learners' perceptions of inclusion and the influence of teachers' innovations in teaching Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners. When teachers implement culturally responsive practices, innovative strategies, and appropriate instructional materials, learners feel more included and engaged in the learning process. This finding highlights the crucial role of teacher-driven innovations in fostering an inclusive learning environment, emphasizing the need for continuous adaptation to meet the diverse needs of IP learners.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

Teachers' innovations in elementary IP education imply that culturally responsive practices, interactive strategies, and customized instructional materials significantly enhance learners' engagement and comprehension by integrating their traditions and language into the learning process. This implies that teachers' innovations contributed much to the learners' perception of inclusion.

Learners perceive inclusive teaching practices and strategies as supportive and culturally relevant, which means that these foster a sense of belonging and improve participation, engagement, and academic growth.

Furthermore, the implementation of teacher-driven innovations positively influences learners by creating meaningful, engaging, and culturally connected learning experiences, which strengthen their motivation, identity, and academic performance.

In addition, learners' perceptions of inclusion differ significantly based on the teaching practices, strategies, and instructional materials used, highlighting the importance of culturally aligned teaching approaches in fostering an inclusive learning environment.

The strong correlation between learners' perceptions of inclusion and the influence of teachers' innovations implies the necessity of continuous adaptation and culturally responsive teaching to effectively meet the diverse needs of IP learners.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are offered.

Teachers. They may continue developing and implementing culturally responsive teaching practices, strategies, and instructional materials that integrate Indigenous Peoples' (IP) traditions, language, and community knowledge to enhance learner engagement and comprehension. They may also share their best practices, strategies, and instructional materials used during the LAC sessions and trainings. This will help other teachers enhance their instructional practices, develop new strategies for effective teaching, and improve learner outcomes.

Parents can continue to support their children's education by actively participating in school activities. They can do this by understanding the curriculum, creating a conducive study environment, and encouraging inquiry-based learning for their children. Staying involved in school activities may encourage their children to strive hard in their education.

Educators. They may offer training to assist educators in appreciating and comprehending the languages, customs, and cultural backgrounds of IP learners. Additionally, they might carry out initiatives and programs that will empower educators, improve their capacity to instruct, and establish a more welcoming and productive learning environment for IP learners.

School Heads. They may encourage the creation and use of innovative, culturally aligned instructional materials, such as mother tongue-based books, visual aids, and hands-on learning tools, to improve learners' motivation, participation, and academic performance.

Future researchers. They may explore the long-term effects of teacher-driven innovations on IP learners' academic achievement and social development to further enhance culturally responsive education policies and practices.

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