International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research (IJAMR)
ISSN: 2643-9670
Vol. 10 Issue 2 February - 2026, Pages: 32-34

Teaching Across Cultures: Teachers' Assessment Of Culturally Responsive Practices For Indigenous Filipino Learners

MARY NANCY GADIAN, LPT, Phd1, JUZY LAYGO-SAGUIL, LPT, Phd2

1Emilio Aguinaldo College, Manila
marynancy.gadian@eac.edu.ph
2Emilio Aguinaldo College- Manila
juzy.laygo-saguil@eac.edu.ph
ORCID: 0000-0001-6756-7667

ABSTRACT: *This study examined teachers' assessment of their culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Indigenous Filipino learners, specifically Blaan students, in terms of innovative teaching methodology, instructional materials, teaching strategies, student engagement, and culturally responsive assessment. Using a descriptive quantitative design supported by qualitative data, a validated survey questionnaire (Cronbach's α = 0.797) was administered to 50 teachers from selected schools in South Cotabato and General Santos City during the first semester of Academic Year 2024–2025. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were utilized for data analysis. Results revealed that all five parameters were generally rated as Slightly True, indicating limited implementation of culturally responsive practices. Innovative teaching methodology and student engagement obtained slightly higher mean scores, while culturally responsive assessment yielded the lowest rating, reflecting minimal integration of learners' cultural backgrounds, languages, and experiences into assessment practices. Overall, the findings suggest that teachers demonstrate basic awareness of culturally responsive teaching; however, its consistent and systematic application remains insufficient. The study underscores the need for enhanced teacher training and institutional support to strengthen culturally responsive practices for Indigenous learners.*

Keywords: Teaching Across Cultures, culturally responsive teaching practices, Indigenous Filipino Learners, teachers' assessment

INTRODUCTION

The growing recognition of cultural diversity in Philippine education underscores the need for teaching practices that are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to learners' cultural contexts. Among the Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines, the Blaan community represents a culturally distinct group with rich traditions, language, and knowledge systems that significantly shape learners' identities and ways of learning. However, formal education often reflects dominant cultural norms that may not fully align with the lived experiences of Blaan learners, resulting in challenges related to cultural disconnect, language barriers, and limited integration of Indigenous knowledge in classroom instruction.

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) offers a pedagogical framework that addresses these challenges by valuing learners' cultural backgrounds as essential components of the learning process. CRT emphasizes the use of culturally relevant instructional strategies, respectful classroom interactions, and assessment practices that acknowledge students' cultural identities. In the context of Blaan learners, culturally responsive teaching supports the preservation of Indigenous identity while promoting meaningful learning and academic engagement within formal school settings.

Teachers play a crucial role in implementing culturally responsive practices, as their pedagogical choices directly influence how Indigenous learners experience education. Teachers' awareness of Blaan culture, traditions, communication styles, and learning preferences is particularly important in creating learning environments that are respectful, inclusive, and supportive. Despite the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, limited empirical studies have examined how teachers assess their own culturally responsive teaching practices when handling Blaan learners.

This study seeks to examine teachers' assessment of their culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Indigenous Filipino learners from the Blaan community. Specifically, it aims to explore how teachers evaluate their practices in terms of innovative teaching methodology, instructional materials, teaching strategies, student engagement, and culturally responsive assessment. By focusing on teachers' self-assessment, this research provides insights into existing practices and identifies areas for professional growth, thereby contributing to the improvement of culturally responsive education for Blaan learners. The findings of this study may serve as a basis for enhancing teacher education programs, designing targeted professional development initiatives, and strengthening the implementation of culturally responsive policies in Indigenous

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Culturally responsive teaching emphasizes the use of learners' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives as integral components of effective instruction. Ladson-Billings (1995) described culturally relevant pedagogy as a means of empowering learners academically and socially by connecting learning to their cultural identity. Similarly, Gay (2018) stressed that culturally responsive teaching improves student engagement and understanding by making instruction meaningful and relevant to diverse learners. The use of culturally appropriate instructional materials and innovative teaching methodologies supports inclusivity in multicultural classrooms. Banks (2016) highlighted that integrating diverse cultural content into instructional resources promotes equity and representation, particularly for Indigenous learners. Teaching strategies that consider learners' readiness, interests, and cultural context, such as differentiated instruction, further enhance learning outcomes (Tomlinson, 2014). Student engagement is strengthened when Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural experiences are acknowledged in classroom interactions. Dei (2000) emphasized that recognizing Indigenous ways of knowing fosters participation and a sense of belonging among learners. Moreover, assessment practices should also reflect cultural sensitivity. UNESCO (2017) advocated for inclusive assessment approaches that respect learners' cultural and linguistic diversity, ensuring fair evaluation of learning. These studies support the present inquiry into teachers' culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Blaan students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the respondents' assessment of their culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Indigenous Filipino learners, specifically Blaan students. It examines the extent to which teachers integrate cultural relevance and inclusivity through innovative teaching methodology, instructional materials, teaching strategies, student engagement, and culturally responsive assessment in the teaching–learning process.

Table 1. Respondents' Assessment of Their Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices in Handling Indigenous Filipino Learners as in the Case of the Blaan Students

Teaching Practices	Mean	Standard Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Innovative Teaching Methodology	2.44	0.44	Slightly True
Instructional Materials	2.31	0.39	Slightly True
Teaching Strategies	2.20	0.47	Slightly True
Student Engagement	2.32	0.49	Slightly True
Cultural Responsive Assessment	2.036	0.43	Slightly True
Overall	**2.261**	**0.44**	**Slightly True**

Legend: *4.3-5.0 Completely True, 3.5-4.2 Mostly True, 2.7-3.4 Moderately True, 1.9-2.6 Slightly True, 1.0-1.8 Not True at All*

The table presents the summary of teachers' culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Indigenous Filipino learners, specifically Blaan students. The results show that innovative teaching methodology obtained a mean of 2.44 with a standard deviation of 0.44, which can be deduced that teachers sometimes employ innovative and culturally relevant teaching approaches, although these practices are not consistently applied in the teaching–learning process (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In terms of instructional materials, the mean score of 2.31 and standard deviation of 0.39 indicate that culturally appropriate materials are occasionally used, suggesting that indigenous contexts are integrated only to a limited extent (Banks, 2016). Similarly, teaching strategies yielded a mean of 2.20 and a standard deviation of 0.47, implying that teachers sometimes adapt their strategies to suit the cultural background of Blaan learners, but such adaptations remain minimal (Tomlinson, 2014). Moreover, student engagement recorded a mean of 2.32 with a standard deviation of 0.49, which can be inferred that learner are moderately engaged during classroom activities, reflecting partial inclusivity of culturally responsive practices and limited integration of indigenous knowledge systems (Dei, 2000). Meanwhile, culturally responsive assessment obtained the lowest mean of 2.036 and a standard deviation of 0.43, indicating that assessment practices seldom consider the cultural context of Indigenous learners, making this area the least emphasized among the indicators, despite calls for inclusive and culturally sensitive assessment (UNESCO, 2017). Overall, the composite mean of 2.26 with a standard deviation of 0.44, verbally interpreted as slightly true, suggests that teachers demonstrate limited implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study examined teachers' assessment of their culturally responsive teaching practices in handling Indigenous Filipino learners from the Blaan community. The findings highlight the extent to which teachers perceive their instructional practices as responsive to the cultural identities, learning needs, and lived experiences of Blaan learners. Overall, the results underscore the important role of teachers' cultural awareness, instructional strategies, classroom management, communication, and assessment practices in fostering inclusive and meaningful learning environments for Indigenous students.

The findings indicate that college teachers' culturally responsive teaching practices with Blaan students are applied inconsistently. Innovative teaching methods and the use of instructional materials showed moderate to slight application, while teaching strategies, student engagement, and culturally responsive assessment were generally implemented at a "slightly true" level. Teachers moderately provide differentiated instruction and limited use of ICT, yet the incorporation of cultural elements in assessments and collaborative activities is minimal. These results suggest that while teachers recognize the importance of culturally responsive practices, actual implementation remains partial, particularly in promoting cultural inclusion, student-led activities, and community engagement.

Implications

The limited integration of culturally responsive practices may affect the engagement and learning outcomes of Indigenous learners. Teachers need to deepen their understanding of culturally inclusive methods and align instructional materials, teaching strategies, and assessments with students' cultural contexts. Strengthened teacher capacity in this area can foster a more inclusive, participatory, and meaningful learning environment for Blaan learners.

The study opens opportunities for further research on culturally responsive teaching in Indigenous contexts. Future studies may incorporate classroom observations, student and community perspectives, or comparative analyses across different Indigenous groups. Longitudinal research may also provide deeper insights into how teachers' culturally responsive practices evolve over time and impact the educational experiences of Blaan learners.

Recommendations

Teachers should consistently integrate culturally responsive strategies across instruction, assessment, and student engagement activities. School administrators and educational authorities are encouraged to provide targeted professional development, workshops, and seminars to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in culturally responsive pedagogy. Teachers should be supported in developing assessment strategies that are culturally sensitive and reflective of Blaan learners' ways of knowing and learning.

Moreover, monitoring mechanisms and curriculum alignment should be strengthened to ensure the systematic inclusion of Indigenous learners' cultural perspectives in teaching and assessment practices.

Future researchers may conduct studies involving classroom observations, student perspectives, or longitudinal designs to complement teachers' self-assessments. Further research focusing on specific Blaan communities or comparing different Indigenous groups may provide deeper insights into effective culturally responsive teaching practices.

REFERENCES

Banks, J. A. (2016). Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching (6th ed.). Routledge.

Dei, G. J. S. (2000). Rethinking the role of culture in learning: Indigenous knowledge systems and education for a sustainable future. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Gay, G. (2018). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice (3rd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. American Educational Research Journal, 32(3), 465–491. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312032003465

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners (2nd ed.). ASCD.

UNESCO. (2017). Education for sustainable development goals: Learning objectives. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.