How Indigenous People Education Programs in the Philippines Adapt in a Diverse Society?

RANDY H. HALASAN
Commissioner
Presidential Commissioner for the Urban Poor
In the Philippines, about 14–17 million of the total population are indigenous peoples belonging to 110 ethno-linguistic groups mainly concentrated in Northern Luzon (33%) and Mindanao (61%), with few groups in the Visayas area. The Philippine indigenous peoples’ struggle for land and life underlined that many of these indigenous peoples can be found in remote forested and hilly uplands. Some have also stood their ground successfully and maintained a close link with their ancestral past.
Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs)

are local knowledge developed over centuries of experimentation and are passed orally from generation to generation. It was found to be an important catalyst to sustainable development due to their direct connection to resource management and conservation.
Why Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices is important?

- To instill and preserve the Indigenous People Systems and Practices for younger Indigenous People generation.
- To help us realize that there are different ways of viewing the world, and gaining knowledge Indigenous People culture and practices.
- To protect an endangered way of life.
- To learn from Indigenous People perspective and knowledge.
Examples of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices in a Classroom Setting

- In Integrated Science teachers incorporated the traditional ways of measuring; the use of herbal, botanical plants and insects as medicine; knowing and preparing native wines / beverages as well as indigenous health practices.

- Integrated Biology teachers made use of IKSPs that concerns the naming and characterization of trees, shrubs and other plants found on land even the use of herbal, botanical plants and insects as medicine as well as maternal and childcare; making of indigenous or native recipes and knowing and preparing native wines or beverages; and naming and characterization of birds and other animals found on air and in land.
Why Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices is important?

- To instill and preserve the Indigenous People Systems and Practices for younger Indigenous People generation.
- To help us realize that there are different ways of viewing the world, and gaining knowledge Indigenous People culture and practices.
- To protect an endangered way of life.
- To learn from Indigenous People perspective and knowledge.
POLICIES AND GUIDELINES CONCERNING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE EDUCATION
ADVERTISING THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (IP) EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

To: Undersecretaries
   Assistant Secretaries
   Bureau Directors
   Directors of Services, Centers and Heads of Units
   Regional Directors
   Schools Division/City Superintendents
   Heads, Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Schools
   All Others Concerned

1. In line with the country’s commitment to achieve its Education for All (EFA) targets and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in pursuit of the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA), the Department of Education (DepEd) is adopting the enclosed National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework. It was prepared in consultation with the representatives from Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities, civil society, and other government agencies.

2. This Policy Framework is intended to be an instrument for promoting shared accountability, continuous dialogue, engagement, and partnership among government, IP communities, civil society, and other education stakeholders. Recognizing education as a necessary means to realize other human rights and fundamental freedoms, the DepEd urges the strengthening of its policy on IP education and develop and implement an IP Education Program. This Program subscribes to the rights-based approach which gives primary importance to the principles of participation, inclusion, and empowerment.

3. Many IP communities continue to lack access to decent basic social services; they have limited opportunities to engage in the mainstream economy, and suffer social, economic, and political exclusion marginalization. A major factor contributing to their disadvantaged position is the lack of access to culture-responsive basic education. Thus, the right of indigenous peoples to education is provided in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997, and the numerous international human rights instruments, especially in the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

4. Immediate dissemination of and compliance with this Order is directed.

BR. ARMIN A. EUISTRO FSC
Secretary
This policy was prepared in consultation with the representatives from Indigenous People Community, Civil Society and other government agencies.

This Policy Framework is intended to:

2.1 Be an instrument for promoting shared accountability, continuous dialogue, engagement, and partnership among government, IP communities, civil society, and other education stakeholders.

2.2 Recognize education as a necessary means to realize other human rights and fundamental freedoms,

2.3 Strengthen the DepEd of its policy on IP education and develop and implement an IP Education Program.
The policy is anchored with the Department of Education mandate “Education for all” thus the policy shall:

- Maintain an education statement that will recognize, protect, and promote the rights and welfare of ICC’s/IP’s.
- Equip the IP communities with the knowledge and skills needed to face various social realities and challenges.
- IP education interventions are to be developed and implemented in consultations and cooperation with IP’s concerned in order to address and incorporate their special needs, histories, identities, languages, knowledge and other aspects of their culture as well as their social, economic, and cultural priorities and aspirations.
- Ensure the provisions of Universal and Equitable access of all IP’s to quality and relevant basic education services towards functional literacy for all.

- Adopt appropriate basic education pedagogy, consent and assessment through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSP’s) in all learning areas and process.

- Provide adequate and culturally appropriate learning resources and environment to IP learners.

- Establish and strengthen appropriate multi level units for planning, implementing and Monitoring IP education interventions.
The DepEd Order 62 S., 2011 are focused on the major areas of the national education system:

- Access to education services;
- Pedagogy, content and assessment;
- Learning facilities and environment;
- Teachers and learning facilitators;
- Institutional support for the indigenous peoples education program;
- Linkage and partnership for indigenous peoples education; and
- Eradication of discrimination.
Pursuant to DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011 entitled *Adopting the National Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework* and DepEd Order No. 43, s. 2013 entitled *Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10533 Otherwise Known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013*, the Department of Education (DepEd) is adopting the enclosed *Indigenous Peoples Education Curriculum Framework*.

Recognizing the right of indigenous peoples to basic education that is culturally rooted and responsive, the IPEd Curriculum Framework seeks to provide guidance to schools and other education programs, both public and private, as they engage with indigenous communities in localizing, indigenizing, and enhancing the K to 12 Curriculum based on their respective educational and social contexts.

Fundamental to IPEd is establishing institutionalized partnership between indigenous communities and the respective schools/learning programs which serve them. This is to be pursued through sustainable community engagement which guarantees the meaningful participation of indigenous communities in the inclusion of their Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) and Indigenous Learning Systems (ILS) in the Basic Education Curriculum.
The continuous process of community engagement and refinement of the IPEd Curriculum at the school community level actualizes the Department’s commitment to the attainment of the abovementioned right of indigenous peoples to education. In this regard, for schools and learning programs serving indigenous learners, the aims of the K to 12 Program are realized through IPEd.

The IPEd Curriculum Framework was formulated based on inputs from a series of consultations conducted by the DepEd – Indigenous Peoples Education Office (IPsEO) with community elders, leaders, and implementers of community-based IPEd initiatives.
In line with the National Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework (DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011), particularly the policy thrusts to “implement stronger affirmative action to eradicate all forms of discrimination against IPs in the entire Philippine education system” and to “uphold and advocate the protection of the intellectual property rights of IPs”, the Department of Education (DepEd) is adopting the enclosed Guidelines on the Conduct of Activities and Use of Materials Involving Aspects of Indigenous Peoples Culture.
Aligned in the Enhance Basic Education Curriculum or K to 12 this guidelines seek to promote among learners, teaching and non-teaching staff of learning institutions the following:

2.1 Cultural sensitivity

2.2 Respect for Cultural Diversity and;

2.3 Deeper understanding of the cultural expressions of Indigenous People

These guidelines have been consolidated from a series of consultations conducted by the DepEd- Indigenous Peoples People Education (IPsEO) with community elders, leaders and implementers of community-based IPED initiatives.
Indigenous cultural communities, however have raised key concerns regarding the way their cultural expression have been projected to the public some of which are the following:
Cultural expression have been used for intentions and purposes deemed inappropriate by the community.

Cultural expressions like artifacts and symbols have been heavily commercialized without regard for symbolic and or sacred meanings.

Cultural expressions have been presented in modified forms for varied purposes and intents, without regard for it’s inherent meanings, resulting in mistaken understanding and misrepresentation of the expressions.

Indigenous knowledge is being tackled in class with interpretations and understanding not validated with the community.
Guidelines on Cultural Presentations, Festivals and similar activities

The purpose of the activity should **promote cultural sensitivity and respect for cultural diversity.**

- The activity should foster an appreciation of the performance from the standpoint and standards of the community and avoid inappropriate comparison and competition.

- The activity should not commercialize indigenous culture nor use financial incentives as undue motivation.
The activity should foster an appreciation of the performance or presentation from the standpoint and standards of the community and avoid inappropriate comparison and competition.

Presentations should be appropriate to the purpose or theme of the activity.
Guidelines on the Use of Indigenous Clothing and Related Paraphernalia

- Indigenous clothing or garments should not be referred to as costume since the cultural context of these materials is not for show.

- Indigenous clothing and related paraphernalia should not be imitated used for commercial purposes, or made fun of.

- For teachers and other DepEd personnel who do not belong to the indigenous community, the permission of the community should be sought before wearing their indigenous clothing and related paraphernalia. The clothing is to be used in accordance with the community’s practice and the meanings they associate with its use (e.g., proper occasion, context, etc.).
Guidelines on the Use of Community Artifacts

- Appropriate permission should be sought before artifacts are used for whatever purpose.
- Appropriate permission should be sought when taking pictures or videos of artifacts.
- Reproduction of artifacts should be decided upon by the community.
- Understanding the origin and proper use of the artifacts should be a prerequisite to their use.
- Sacred artifacts should not be used for presentation and other activities that the community deems to be an inappropriate context for their use.
What is a cultural diversity and why is it important?

It helps dispel negative stereotypes and personal biases about different groups. In addition, cultural diversity helps us recognize and respect “ways of being” that are not necessarily our own. So that as we interact with others we can build bridges to trust, respect, and understanding across cultures.
HOW DO YOU PROMOTE CULTURAL DIVERSITY?
- Provide positive role models for culturally diverse students;
- Introduce students to characters with similar experiences and emotions;
- Convey the richness and beauty of the diverse cultures in the Philippines;
- Reinforce a distinct cultural identity;
- Promote multilingual and literacy development;
- Inspire learning of other cultures and general cultural knowledge;
- Facilitate acceptance of cultures different from one’s own
The Importance of Diversity in Library Programs and Material Collections for Student

- Diverse, culturally authentic materials in library collections allow all students to meet people like themselves and develop an appreciation for the beauty of their culture and the cultures of others.

- By including diversity in its programs and collections, the library has the potential for helping students make cross-cultural connections and develop the skills necessary to function in a culturally pluralistic society.

- Students need a global perspective on the world in order to develop cultural competence and move beyond their immediate environment. They need to hear more than one story once a year about a particular cultural group.

- Culturally responsive library programs will introduce different cultures through quality students’ materials (print and digital) and promote cross-cultural connections by inviting students to explore topics such as social justice, equality, and cultural authenticity.

- Focus on celebrating diverse languages and cultures and provide a model for librarians interested in developing programs responsive to the needs of their local community.
"A Teacher presents the past, reveals the present, and creates the future“. – unknown-
Thank you!