

Status and Challenges of Indigenous Peoples' Education Implementation in Alfonso Castañeda District, SDO Nueva Vizcaya

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Abstract

*This study examined the status and challenges of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPEd) implementation in all IPEd-implementing schools in the Alfonso Castañeda District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. Specifically, it assessed the level of implementation in terms of curriculum and instruction, learning resources, teacher preparedness, and community involvement. It also identified the challenges encountered by teachers and determined the relationship between selected variables and the level of implementation. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving thirty (30) teacher-respondents. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire that included demographic variables and a five-point Likert scale to measure the extent of implementation and the challenges encountered. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, Pearson's *r*, *t*-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and thematic analysis. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for enhancing culturally responsive education and strengthening the implementation of Indigenous Peoples' Education programs in the district.*

Keywords: Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPEd), Culturally Responsive Education, Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), Teacher Preparedness, Community Involvement

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in promoting social equity and cultural sustainability, particularly among Indigenous Peoples (IPs) who have historically experienced marginalization within formal education systems. Across different countries, indigenous communities continue to experience educational disparities resulting from geographical isolation, poverty, language differences, and educational programs that inadequately reflect their culture and knowledge systems. Scholars have emphasized that culturally responsive education is essential in preserving indigenous identities, languages, and traditional knowledge while simultaneously improving educational outcomes. Without culturally grounded educational approaches, formal schooling may contribute to cultural erosion rather than empowerment (Battiste, 2013; UNESCO, 2019).

In the Philippine context, Indigenous Peoples remain among the most educationally disadvantaged sectors of society. Although the country recognizes the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities and Indigenous Peoples through various national policies, many indigenous learners continue to face barriers related to limited educational resources, culturally incongruent curricula, inadequate teacher preparation, and restricted access to

quality education (Department of Education [DepEd], 2011). To address these concerns, the Department of Education institutionalized the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program through the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework and the Indigenous Peoples Education Curriculum Framework. These policies promote a rights-based, culture-responsive, and community-centered approach to education by encouraging the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), localization of learning content, and active participation of indigenous communities in educational processes (DepEd, 2011; DepEd, 2015).

The implementation of culturally responsive and culturally sustaining educational practices has been widely recognized as an effective strategy for improving indigenous learners' educational experiences. Aronson and Laughter (2016) emphasized that culturally relevant education enhances learner engagement, academic achievement, and inclusivity by connecting classroom instruction to students' cultural experiences. Similarly, Paris and Alim (2017) argued that culturally sustaining pedagogies go beyond cultural recognition by actively supporting the maintenance and revitalization of learners' cultural identities and practices. These perspectives reinforce the goals of Indigenous Peoples Education, which seek not only to improve access to education but also to ensure that indigenous cultures, languages, and knowledge systems are valued and sustained within the school environment.

Several studies have underscored the importance of Indigenous Peoples Education in fostering cultural preservation and improving learning outcomes. Tañedo and Eulatic (2025) found that curriculum indigenization significantly contributes to culture preservation and learner engagement in schools implementing the IPEd Program. Likewise, Asuncion and Follero (2024) reported that effective implementation of the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework is associated with improved learning experiences and increased practice of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices. International studies support these findings, indicating that culturally responsive schooling promotes stronger learner participation, academic success, and cultural identity development among indigenous students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; McCarty & Lee, 2014).

Despite these positive developments, the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education continues to encounter several challenges. Previous studies have identified inadequate learning materials, insufficient funding, language barriers, limited teacher training opportunities, and uneven program implementation as persistent concerns affecting the delivery of indigenous education programs (Asuncion & Follero, 2024; Esperanza, 2025; Nantin & Morales, 2025). Similar issues have been documented internationally, where indigenous education initiatives often struggle with shortages of culturally relevant resources and limited institutional support (Bishop & Vass, 2021; Lewthwaite et al., 2015). These challenges may hinder teachers' ability to effectively implement culturally responsive instruction and may limit the program's capacity to achieve its intended outcomes.

Teacher preparedness has also been identified as a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of Indigenous Peoples Education. Research suggests that culturally responsive teaching requires specialized competencies, including an understanding of indigenous cultures, languages, histories, and learning preferences. Bishop and Vass (2021) highlighted the importance of teacher professional learning in supporting culturally responsive practices among Indigenous learners. Similarly, Khalifa et al. (2016) emphasized that supportive school leadership and professional development opportunities are essential for creating inclusive educational environments. Without adequate training and preparation, teachers may find it difficult to effectively integrate indigenous knowledge and culture into classroom instruction.

Another important component of Indigenous Peoples Education is community involvement. Indigenous education programs are most effective when schools establish

meaningful partnerships with indigenous elders, parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders. According to Calibara (2025), active community participation strengthens culturally responsive education by making learning more relevant and authentic to indigenous learners. Similarly, Miole (2025) noted that the successful implementation of the Philippine IPed policy relies on continuous dialogue and collaboration between schools and indigenous communities. Such partnerships facilitate the preservation of indigenous knowledge and contribute to the sustainability of educational initiatives.

While a growing body of literature has examined Indigenous Peoples Education from national and international perspectives, there remains a limited number of district-level studies that comprehensively investigate both the status and challenges of IPed implementation. Moreover, relatively few studies have explored how teachers' socio-demographic characteristics relate to the implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education programs. Understanding the profiles of teachers, including their sex, age, ethnicity, position, years in service, years handling indigenous learners, number of IPed trainings attended, and highest educational attainment, may provide valuable insights into factors associated with program implementation and effectiveness.

In Alfonso Castañeda District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya, where several schools serve indigenous communities, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the extent of IPed implementation and the challenges encountered by teachers. Examining the implementation status of the program within this context is important in identifying strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement. Findings from such an inquiry may provide evidence-based information that can guide policy enhancement, resource allocation, teacher development initiatives, and community engagement efforts.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. sex;
 - b. age;
 - c. ethnicity;
 - d. position;
 - e. years in service;
 - f. years handling IP learners;
 - g. number of IPed trainings attended; and
 - h. highest educational attainment?
2. What is the level of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPed) implementation in terms of:
 - a. curriculum and instruction;
 - b. learning resources;
 - c. teacher preparedness; and
 - d. community involvement?
3. What challenges do teachers encounter in implementing the IPed program?
4. Is there a significant difference in the level of IPed implementation when respondents are grouped according to their selected socio-demographic characteristics?
5. Is there a significant relationship between selected variables and the level of IPed implementation?
6. What strategies and support mechanisms may be proposed to strengthen the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education program?

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on Indigenous Peoples Education and provide valuable insights for teachers,

school administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders in strengthening culturally responsive, inclusive, and sustainable educational programs for indigenous learners.

METHODS

Research design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the status and challenges of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPEd) implementation in all the IPEd implementing schools in the District of Alfonso Castañeda. The descriptive method was used to determine the level of implementation in terms of curriculum and instruction, learning resources, teacher preparedness, and community involvement, while the correlational approach was utilized to determine the relationships between selected teacher profile variables, challenges encountered, and the level of IPEd implementation. In addition, inferential statistical analyses were employed to determine significant differences and relationships among variables.

Participants and Sampling

The participants of the study were 30 teachers from elementary and secondary schools implementing the Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPEd) program in the district. A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents who met the following inclusion criteria: (1) currently assigned in an IPEd-implementing school, (2) regular or permanent teachers, and (3) actively teaching indigenous learners. Teachers who were not assigned in IPEd-implementing schools or were not regular or permanent employees were excluded from the study. The sample size consisted of all qualified teachers who met the inclusion criteria, thereby ensuring that respondents possessed direct experience in implementing the IPEd program.

Instrument

Data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire designed to assess the level of IPEd implementation and the challenges encountered by teachers. The instrument consisted of four domains of implementation: curriculum and instruction, learning resources, teacher preparedness, and community involvement, as well as a section on challenges encountered in implementing IPEd. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire also included demographic information such as age, sex, ethnicity, position, years in service, years handling indigenous learners, number of IPEd trainings attended, and highest educational attainment. Prior to administration, the instrument underwent content validation by experts in education and research to ensure clarity and relevance of items.

Data collection

After securing the necessary permissions from the concerned authorities, the researcher administered the survey questionnaire to the identified teacher-respondents through Google Forms, allowing respondents to answer the instrument electronically at their convenience. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw from participation at any stage without penalty. The online responses were monitored and retrieved from Google Forms, checked for completeness, and organized for data analysis. In addition, open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to gather qualitative data regarding the challenges experienced, strategies for improvement, and support needed for the effective implementation of the Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPEd) program.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means were used to describe the profile of respondents and determine the level of IPed implementation and challenges encountered. The t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to determine significant differences in implementation when respondents were grouped according to selected profile variables. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was used to examine relationships among selected variables and the level of implementation. Furthermore, responses to open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis, wherein responses were coded, categorized, and grouped into emerging themes to provide a deeper understanding of teachers' experiences in implementing the IPed program.

RESULTS

The study examined the profile of teachers based on key demographic variables, including age, sex, ethnicity, position, years in service, years handling IPed learners, number of IPed trainings attended, and highest educational attainment. These characteristics provided essential context in understanding the level of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPed) implementation and the challenges encountered by teachers in delivering culturally responsive instruction to indigenous learners.

PART 1: DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents
n=30

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	2	6.7
	Female	28	93.3
Total		30	100.0
Age	20-35 years old	17	56.7
	36 – 50 years old	12	40.0
	51 – 65 years old	1	3.3
Total		30	100.0
	Teacher I	12	40.0
	Teacher II	3	10.0
	Teacher III	15	50.0
	Teacher IV	0	0.0
	Teacher V	0	0.0

Position	Teacher VI	0	0.0
	Teacher VII	0	0.0
	Master Teacher I	0	0.0
	Master Teacher II	0	0.0
	Master Teacher III	0	0.0
Total		30	100.0
Years in Service	5 years and below	13	43.3
	6 – 10 years	10	33.3
	11 – 20 years	5	16.7
	21 – 30 years	2	6.7
	31 and above	0	0.00
Total		30	100.0
Ethnicity	Bugkalot	10	33.3
	Ibaloi	8	26.7
	Kankanaey	4	13.3
	Iwak	0	0.0
	Isinai	1	3.3
	Tuwali	1	3.3
	Ayangan	1	3.3
	Kalanguya	2	6.7
	Gaddang	0	0.0
	Not an IP Teacher	3	10.0
Total		30	100.0
Years in Handling IP Learners	5 years and below	13	43.3
	6 – 10 years	10	33.3
	11 – 20 years	6	20.0
	21 – 30 years	1	3.3
	31 and above	0	0.0

Total		30	100.0
Number of IPed Trainings Attended (school, district, division, region, national & international level)	None	17	56.7
	1 – 4 Trainings	12	40.0
	5 – 9 Trainings	1	3.3
	10 and above	0	0.0
Total		30	100.0
Highest Educational Attainment	BS Graduate	9	30.0
	BS Graduate w/ MA units	13	43.3
	Masteral Graduate	8	26.7
	Masteral Graduate w/ Doctoral units	0	0.0
	Doctoral Graduate	0	0.0
Total		30	100.0

The respondents were predominantly female and relatively young teachers. Most had limited teaching experience, limited exposure to IPed training, and were pursuing graduate studies. These characteristics suggest that IPed implementation is primarily being carried out by early-career teachers who may require additional professional development and support.

Table 2. Level of IPed Implementation by domain

Domain	Mean	Description
1. Curriculum & Instruction	4.1467	Agree
2. Learning Resources	3.3933	Moderate Agree
3. Teacher Preparedness	3.39	Moderate Agree
4. Community Involvement	3.7667	Moderately Agree
Overall Mean	3.67	Moderately Agree

Scale: 5 - Strongly Agree | 4 - Agree | 3 - Moderately Agree | 2 - Disagree | 1 - Strongly Disagree

The overall implementation of IPed was moderately high. Curriculum and instruction emerged as the strongest domain, indicating teachers' active integration of culturally responsive practices. Lower ratings in learning resources and teacher preparedness indicate continuing needs for instructional materials and capacity-building initiatives.

Table 3. Challenges Encountered in IPed Implementation

Item Statement	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Description
1. I experience difficulty integrating IKSPs into my lessons.	1 (3.3%)	5 (16.7%)	19 (63.3)	5 (16.7%)	0	3.07	Moderate
2. I encounter language barriers when teaching indigenous learners.	0	11 (36.7%)	11 (36.7%)	7 (23.3%)	1 (3.3%)	3.07	Moderate
3. I lack sufficient culturally relevant teaching strategies.	1 (3.3%)	6 (20.0%)	17 (56.7%)	6 (20.0%)	0	3.07	Moderate
4. I experience a shortage of IPed learning materials.	1 (3.3%)	15 (50.0%)	11 (36.7%)	2 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)	3.43	Moderate
5. I have limited access to ICT resources for IPed.	0	14 (46.7%)	11 (36.7%)	4 (13.3%)	1 (3.3%)	3.27	Moderate
6. I experience inadequacy in classroom facilities.	0	5 (16.7%)	18 (60.0%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (6.7%)	2.87	Slight
7. I lack sufficient training related to IPed.	5 (16.7%)	10 (33.3%)	8 (26.7%)	5 (16.7%)	2 (6.7%)	3.37	Moderate
8. I have limited expertise in IPed implementation.	2 (6.7%)	8 (26.7%)	12 (40.0)	7 (23.3%)	1 (3.3%)	3.10	Moderate
9. I observe a shortage of qualified IPed teachers.	1 (3.3%)	9 (30.0%)	13 (43.3%)	4 (13.3%)	3 (10.0%)	3.03	Moderate
10. I experience limited funding support for IPed programs.	2 (6.7%)	13 (43.3%)	13 (43.3%)	2 (6.7%)	0	3.50	Moderate
11. I experience weak community or stakeholder support.	1 (3.3%)	7 (23.3%)	14 (46.7%)	7 (23.3%)	1 (3.3%)	3.00	Moderate
12. I observe limited monitoring and supervision of IPed implementation.	2 (6.7%)	4 (13.3%)	19 (63.3%)	3 (10.0%)	2 (6.7%)	3.03	Moderate
Overall Rating						3.1500	Moderate

Scale: 5 - Very Serious | 4 - Serious | 3 - Moderate | 2 - Slight | 1 - Not a Problem

Teachers experienced a moderate level of challenges across all areas. Resource-related concerns, particularly shortages of learning materials, limited funding, and insufficient access to ICT, emerged as the most prominent issues affecting program implementation.

Table 4. Test of Differences in IPed Implementation by Profile Variables

Profile Variable	Statistical Test	Test Value	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	t-test	-0.299	0.961	Not Significant
Age	ANOVA	1.620	0.216	Not Significant
Ethnicity	ANOVA	2.413	0.054	Not Significant

$\alpha = 0.05$

No significant differences were found in the implementation of IPed when teachers were grouped according to sex, age, and ethnicity. This indicates that implementation practices were generally consistent across respondent groups.

Table 5. Relationship Between Selected Variables and IPed Implementation

Variable	r-value	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Trainings Attended	0.436	0.160	Low Positive Correlation	Not Significant
Years of Service	0.120	0.949	Negligible Positive Correlation	Not Significant
Challenges Encountered	-0.347	0.600	Low Negative Correlation	Not Significant

$\alpha = 0.05$

The examined variables showed no significant relationship with IPed implementation. Although training attendance exhibited a positive relationship with implementation, the correlation was not statistically significant, suggesting that other institutional and contextual factors may influence implementation more strongly.

Table 6. Summary of Qualitative Themes

Category	Major Themes
Challenges	Language barriers; lack of learning materials and resources; lack of training and knowledge; financial constraints; limited stakeholder support
Suggested Strategies	Provision of training and seminars; development of localized materials; strengthening community partnerships; LAC sessions and collaboration; involvement of elders
Support Needed	Financial support; capacity-building programs; provision of learning materials; institutional support and monitoring; stakeholder participation

Qualitative findings corroborated the quantitative results, highlighting resource insufficiency, limited training opportunities, and funding constraints as major concerns. Respondents emphasized the need for sustained professional development, culturally relevant instructional materials, stronger community engagement, and increased support from DepEd and stakeholders to improve IPed implementation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that the overall implementation of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPed) in Alfonso Castañeda District was moderately high, suggesting that teachers generally demonstrate commitment to providing culturally responsive educational experiences for indigenous learners. The favorable level of implementation indicates that the principles of the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework are gradually being translated into classroom practice. This finding affirms the goal of the Department of Education to promote inclusive, culture-based, and rights-responsive education for indigenous communities. It further demonstrates that schools recognize the importance of integrating indigenous cultures, knowledge systems, and learning needs into formal education.

Among the identified domains, curriculum and instruction obtained the highest level of implementation. This finding suggests that teachers are actively integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), contextualizing lessons, localizing content, and adapting instructional strategies to suit indigenous learners. The result supports the findings of Tañedo and Eulatic (2025), who reported that curriculum indigenization contributes significantly to cultural preservation and learner engagement in IPed schools. Similarly, Asuncion and Follero (2024) found that effective implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education framework enhances learners' educational experiences and strengthens the

practice of indigenous knowledge systems. International literature likewise emphasizes the value of culturally responsive pedagogy in promoting equitable and meaningful learning experiences. Aronson and Laughter (2016) argued that culturally relevant education increases student engagement and achievement by connecting learning experiences to learners' cultural backgrounds. Likewise, D'Aiitti et al. (2021) reported that culturally responsive instructional practices contribute to more effective learning experiences among indigenous students by aligning teaching approaches with their cultural realities.

The relatively high implementation of curriculum and instruction may also indicate that teachers recognize the importance of culture as a foundation for learning. Rahaman (2024) emphasized that culturally responsive teaching promotes active learner participation and increases student engagement by establishing connections between school learning and students' lived experiences. The present finding therefore suggests that teachers in the district are making conscious efforts to deliver instruction that is relevant, inclusive, and responsive to indigenous learners' cultural contexts.

Despite the positive results in curriculum and instruction, the domains of learning resources and teacher preparedness received comparatively lower ratings. These findings suggest that teachers continue to face challenges related to the availability of culturally appropriate instructional materials and access to professional development opportunities. Although teachers appear committed to implementing the program, resource limitations may hinder the consistency and effectiveness of implementation. This result confirms the findings of Esperanza (2025), who identified insufficient instructional materials as a major concern in teaching indigenous learners. Similarly, Nantin and Morales (2025) reported that inadequate resources and limited teacher preparation remain significant barriers to effective IPed implementation.

International literature further supports these findings. Bishop and Vass (2021) emphasized that teacher professional learning is critical in strengthening culturally responsive educational practices among Indigenous learners. Likewise, Sleeter (2012) argued that insufficient preparation and limited support often constrain teachers' ability to effectively implement culturally responsive pedagogy. Khalifa et al. (2016) likewise highlighted the importance of institutional support and educational leadership in sustaining culturally responsive educational practices. These studies suggest that successful implementation requires not only teacher commitment but also continued investment in capacity-building and resource development.

Community involvement obtained a moderately high rating, indicating that teachers maintain collaborative relationships with indigenous communities, elders, and stakeholders. This finding demonstrates the recognition of indigenous communities as valuable partners in the implementation of IPed. The result supports Calibara (2025), who found that community participation increases the relevance and sustainability of culturally responsive educational programs. Similarly, Miole (2025) emphasized that effective implementation of the Philippine IPed policy depends on continuous dialogue and partnership between schools and indigenous communities.

The finding is likewise consistent with international studies emphasizing the importance of community engagement in indigenous education. Castagno and Brayboy (2008) argued that culturally responsive schooling becomes more effective when indigenous communities actively participate in educational processes. Indigenous elders and cultural experts serve as important sources of cultural knowledge, helping schools preserve traditional practices and strengthen learners' cultural identities. However, the moderate rating suggests that opportunities remain for further strengthening collaboration and increasing the involvement of indigenous stakeholders in curriculum planning, resource development, and school activities.

The study further revealed that teachers experienced a moderate level of challenges in implementing IPed. The most prominent concerns involved shortages of learning materials, limited funding support, inadequate ICT resources, and insufficient training opportunities. These findings indicate that resource-related barriers continue to affect the implementation of culturally responsive education. Similar findings were reported by Asuncion and Follero (2024), Esperanza (2025), and Nantin and Morales (2025), all of whom identified inadequate resources and limited support systems as persistent concerns in Indigenous Peoples Education programs.

The qualitative findings reinforced these observations by highlighting language barriers, financial constraints, lack of culturally relevant resources, and limited stakeholder support as common challenges encountered by teachers. These findings are also evident in international indigenous education contexts. UNESCO (2019) reported that indigenous education programs frequently experience challenges related to funding, teacher preparation, educational resources, and accessibility, particularly in geographically isolated communities. Consequently, addressing resource-related concerns remains essential for improving the effectiveness and sustainability of IPed implementation.

The results further showed that no significant differences existed in the level of IPed implementation when teachers were grouped according to sex, age, and ethnicity. This finding suggests that implementation practices are generally consistent among teachers regardless of their demographic characteristics. The result implies that demographic factors do not significantly influence teachers' ability to implement culturally responsive instructional practices. Instead, implementation appears to be shaped more by professional responsibilities, school expectations, and institutional support mechanisms.

This finding supports the perspective of Gay (2010), who argued that culturally responsive teaching is a professional competency that can be developed through training, reflection, and experience rather than through personal characteristics. Similarly, Darling-Hammond (2010) emphasized that teaching effectiveness depends more on professional preparation and continuing development than on demographic variables such as age and gender. The absence of significant differences across groups suggests that schools have established relatively consistent implementation practices among teachers.

Similarly, the correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between the level of IPed implementation and the number of trainings attended, years of service, and challenges encountered. Although trainings attended exhibited a low positive relationship with implementation, the relationship was not statistically significant. This finding suggests that training participation alone may not guarantee effective implementation. Rather, the quality, relevance, frequency, and practical application of training may be more important than the number of trainings attended.

The finding contrasts with the assertions of Samuels (2017), who highlighted the positive influence of professional development on culturally responsive teaching practices. However, it supports the observation of Nantin and Morales (2025) that organizational support, leadership, policy implementation, and availability of resources may exert greater influence on implementation than individual teacher characteristics. Likewise, the lack of a significant relationship between years of service and implementation indicates that teaching experience alone does not necessarily result in stronger implementation of IPed practices. Both novice and experienced teachers appear capable of implementing culturally responsive educational approaches when provided with appropriate support.

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into teachers' experiences and needs. Respondents consistently emphasized the need for additional training, development of localized instructional materials, increased funding, stronger community partnerships, and greater involvement of indigenous elders. These recommendations are consistent with both

local and international literature advocating for sustained capacity-building initiatives, enhanced resource provision, and stronger stakeholder collaboration. The findings suggest that improving IPed implementation requires a holistic approach that addresses teacher competencies, resource availability, institutional support, and community engagement simultaneously.

Overall, the findings indicate that while Indigenous Peoples' Education implementation in Alfonso Castañeda District is progressing positively, particularly in curriculum and instructional practices, several systemic challenges remain. Strengthening teacher development programs, expanding access to culturally responsive educational resources, improving financial and institutional support, and enhancing partnerships with indigenous communities are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study involved only thirty teacher-respondents from IPed-implementing schools within one district, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other districts or regions. Second, the study relied primarily on self-reported data collected through questionnaires, making the findings vulnerable to response bias and subjective perceptions. Third, only selected teacher-related variables were included in the analysis, while other potentially influential factors such as school leadership, organizational support, availability of resources, and community characteristics were not examined. Finally, the descriptive-correlational design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among variables. Future studies may involve larger samples, multiple districts, mixed-method approaches, and additional variables to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing Indigenous Peoples' Education implementation.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the status and challenges of Indigenous Peoples' Education (IPed) implementation in all IPed-implementing schools in Alfonso Castañeda District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. The findings showed that the respondents were predominantly female, relatively young, and had limited teaching experience and exposure to IPed-related trainings. These characteristics indicate that the implementation of IPed in the district is largely carried out by early-career teachers who possess varying levels of preparation for culturally responsive instruction.

The study further revealed that the overall level of IPed implementation was moderately high. Among the implementation domains, curriculum and instruction obtained the highest rating, indicating that teachers are actively integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) and contextualizing learning experiences to meet the needs of indigenous learners. However, learning resources and teacher preparedness received comparatively lower ratings, suggesting the need for greater support in terms of instructional materials and professional development opportunities.

In terms of challenges, teachers experienced a moderate level of difficulty in implementing the program. The most significant concerns involved shortages of learning materials, limited funding support, inadequate access to ICT resources, and insufficient training opportunities. These challenges demonstrate that the sustainability and effectiveness of IPed implementation depend not only on teacher commitment but also on the availability of institutional and material support.

The findings also showed that there were no significant differences in the level of IPed implementation when respondents were grouped according to sex, age, and ethnicity.

This suggests that demographic characteristics do not significantly influence teachers' implementation of IPed. Likewise, no significant relationships were found between implementation and the number of trainings attended, years of service, and challenges encountered. These results imply that successful implementation may be influenced more by systemic and organizational factors than by individual teacher characteristics alone.

The qualitative findings reinforced the quantitative results by identifying language barriers, lack of culturally relevant learning materials, limited training opportunities, financial constraints, and inadequate stakeholder support as major concerns. Teachers emphasized the need for continuous capacity-building programs, development of localized instructional resources, stronger collaboration with indigenous communities, and increased support from DepEd and other stakeholders.

Overall, the study concludes that IPed implementation in Alfonso Castañeda District is progressing positively, particularly in curriculum and instructional practices. Nevertheless, strengthening teacher preparation, expanding access to culturally responsive learning resources, and enhancing institutional and community support remain essential for improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Strengthen teacher capacity-building programs.** DepEd and school administrators should provide regular and sustained IPed-related trainings, workshops, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in culturally responsive education and the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices.
2. **Develop and provide culturally relevant instructional materials.** Schools and education authorities should prioritize the production and distribution of localized and culture-based learning resources that reflect the language, traditions, and experiences of indigenous communities.
3. **Increase financial and logistical support for IPed programs.** Adequate funding should be allocated for instructional materials, learning activities, community engagement initiatives, and technological resources that support effective implementation.
4. **Strengthen partnerships with indigenous communities and stakeholders.** Schools should promote active collaboration with indigenous elders, parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders in curriculum development, cultural activities, and educational decision-making processes.
5. **Enhance monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.** School heads, district supervisors, and DepEd officials should conduct regular monitoring and technical assistance activities to ensure the quality and consistency of IPed implementation across schools.
6. **Conduct further research on IPed implementation.** Future studies may include larger samples from multiple districts or regions, incorporate additional variables such as school leadership, organizational support, and learner outcomes, and utilize mixed-methods approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of factors influencing IPed implementation.
7. **Examine the impact of IPed on student outcomes.** Future researchers may investigate how IPed implementation influences learners' academic performance, cultural identity, engagement, and retention to provide stronger evidence of program effectiveness.

Acknowledgments

The researcher would like to express sincere gratitude to the Department of Education, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya, and the school heads of the IPed-implementing schools in Alfonso Castañeda District for granting permission and support in the conduct of this study. Special appreciation is extended to all teacher-respondents who generously shared their time, experiences, and insights, making this research possible. The researcher also acknowledges the invaluable guidance and encouragement provided by mentors, colleagues, and family members throughout the completion of this study. This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study. The research was conducted independently, and no financial, professional, or personal relationships influenced the design, implementation, analysis, or reporting of the findings.

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