

Implementation and responsiveness of indigenous people education program in Socsargen

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aimed to examine the implementation and responsiveness of the Indigenous Peoples Education Program (IPEd) in South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City (SocSarGen), focusing on evaluating the level of IPEd implementation and schools' responsiveness in meeting the educational requirements of Indigenous Peoples students enrolled in the IPEd initiative.

Research methodology: A descriptive quantitative approach was utilized, employing surveys to gather data on the implementation and responsiveness of the IPEd Program. The data were analyzed to evaluate the degree of implementation and responsiveness of the various indicators.

Results: The findings revealed strong implementation of the IPEd Program, emphasizing robust support for building learning resources, ensuring teachers' efficiency, and creating a culturally responsive curriculum. Notable success was observed in curriculum development, learning resources, educational intervention, and the physical learning environment. However, capacity building remains an area of improvement.

Limitations: The scope of the study is confined to South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City, focusing solely on the specific dimensions of IPEd implementation and responsiveness within the specified geographic area.

Contribution: This study enhances the existing knowledge base by delivering a thorough evaluation of the implementation and responsiveness of the IPEd Program in SocSarGen. It offers valuable insights to policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to enhance the quality of education for indigenous students and to foster educational equity.

Novelty: This study contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the implementation and responsiveness of the IPEd Program in SocSarGen.

Keywords: *Implementation, Responsiveness, Indigenous Peoples Education Program, Socsargen*

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1. Introduction

All individuals are inherently equal and are entitled to freedom from discrimination. Nevertheless, indigenous communities in the Philippines have not been exempt from such discrimination. They have endured marginalization, bias, and encroachment on their ancestral territories over decades, leading to social and economic setbacks. To address and prevent this prejudice, it is imperative for them to trust the government and engage in governmental programs aimed at enhancing their livelihoods in

accordance with their rights and cultural heritage.

The pursuit of education is fundamental to improving quality of life, particularly in upholding the right to self-determination. In the Philippines, initiatives to uphold the educational rights of indigenous communities are evident. The passing of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) in 1997 underscores this commitment, mandating government protection of indigenous peoples' rights to their ancestral lands, self-governance, equitable treatment, and cultural preservation (Cornelio & de Castro, 2016).

In response, the Department of Education (DepEd) established the National Indigenous Peoples Education Program, known as IPed, in line with the policy directives outlined in DepEd Order 62. 2011. This program reflects DepEd's dedication to providing culturally appropriate primary education to indigenous peoples, respecting their identities, and emphasizing the significance of their indigenous wisdom, abilities, and cultural legacies (Oxtero, 2022).

However, the implementation and responsiveness of schools to the educational needs of indigenous people remain challenging. The existing curriculum, implemented through formal and informal education, often fails to address their specific challenges and is not aligned with their way of life, thereby impacting their customs and traditions.

To address this, DepEd has committed to integrating indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSPs) into education, adopting appropriate and culturally relevant learning resources and environments for indigenous people (IP) learners. Furthermore, DepEd seeks to improve the recruitment, deployment, and continuous training of teachers and learning facilitators to bolster the implementation of the IP Education Program (Mercado, 2021).

Despite established state policies, the full realization of school implementation and responsiveness to the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Program remains incomplete for many IPs. A significant educational disparity persists between the general population and IPs, underscoring the ongoing challenge of indigenous peoples lagging behind in education despite the implementation of such programs (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021).

Consequently, the establishment of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) highlights a commitment to safeguarding the customs, beliefs, traditions, and institutions of IPs while addressing hurdles within indigenous education, encompassing various dimensions such as educational resources, teacher capacity, culturally sensitive curriculum, policy environment support, and ensuring access to the fundamental educational needs of learners in IP-majority schools.

Despite these efforts, IPs remain among the poorest and most disadvantaged communities (Andrada, Magalona, & Evangelista, 2020). Thus, it remains crucial to ascertain whether schools are attentive to the educational needs of indigenous learners and whether the implementation of indigenous education programs has effectively reached indigenous learners, particularly in schools located in remote areas.

This study aimed to investigate how school heads, teachers, and communities represented by tribal elders provide a culturally responsive curriculum in classroom instruction by considering measures supporting the implementation and responsiveness of an inclusive IP Education program. Additionally, it examined intervening elements influencing the delivery of DepEd's IPed program, and their effects and implications for IP learners.

This study may contribute to the enhancement of the IPed implementation strategy by laying the groundwork for future adjustments to be adopted by DepEd, resulting in a more relevant, learner-centered, and culture-sensitive learning package that provides learners with a more meaningful educational experience.

1.1 Research questions

This study focused on assessing the implementation and responsiveness of the Indigenous Peoples Education Program in South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City (SocSarGen). Specifically, this study aimed to address the following questions.

1. What is the level of implementation of the indigenous peoples' education (IPed) program in terms of the following parameters:
 - a. Building learning resources
 - b. Teachers' Capacity and Efficiency
 - c. Culturally Responsive Curriculum
 - d. Policy Environment Support to IPed Program Implementation
 - e. Learners' Access to Basic Educational Needs; and
 - f. Educational Support for the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan
2. To what extent is the schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the (IPed) program to the educational needs of IP learners in terms of:
 - a. Curriculum-learning Resource Development
 - b. Capability building;
 - c. Teaching intervention;
 - d. Learning delivery modalities; and
 - e. Physical learning environment

1.2 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the implementation and responsiveness of the indigenous peoples' education program (IPed) in South Cotabato, Sarangani, and General Santos City (SocSarGen). Specifically, this research aims to assess the level of implementation across various parameters, including building learning resources, teachers' capacity and efficiency, culturally responsive curriculum, policy environment support, learners' access to basic educational needs, and educational support for the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan. Additionally, the study seeks to determine the extent of schools' responsiveness to the educational needs of indigenous people learners, focusing on curriculum learning resource development, capability building, teaching intervention, learning delivery modalities, and the physical learning environment. Through these objectives, this research aims to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the IPed Program and contribute to enhancing the educational outcomes for Indigenous Peoples in the SocSarGen region.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Legal Basis

DepEd Order No. 62, issued in 2011 and titled "Adopting the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Education Policy Framework," signifies the Department of Education's (DepEd) commitment to align with the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework. This framework is designed to support the Education for All (EFA) objectives of the Philippines, emphasizing the importance of collective responsibility, ongoing communication, engagement, and collaboration among governmental entities, indigenous communities, civil society, and other Education for All stakeholders. At its core, DepEd advocates the enhancement of its IP education policy and the establishment and implementation of an IP education program, recognizing education as a fundamental tool for realizing various human rights and essential freedoms. The curriculum framework of this program is rooted in a rights-based approach, emphasizing the principles of inclusivity, participation, and empowerment.

Continuing its efforts, DepEd actively implements the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Program, which operates under a curriculum framework designed to equip public schools with the readiness to effectively deliver education to communities with a majority of indigenous people (IP) learners (DepEd, 2015, 2016). This initiative serves as DepEd's response to the inherent rights of IP communities to access primary education tailored to their context, identities, and preservation of their indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage (DepEd, 2015, 2016). The overarching goals of the IPed Program include adapting educational programs to the cultural environment of IP learners, enhancing the capacity of educators and administrators to provide culturally appropriate education, developing

educational materials and settings sensitive to the unique circumstances of IP communities, improving policy support for IPed, and ensuring educational access for IP learners who may face barriers to basic education (DepEd, 2015, 2016).

Essentially, DepEd's adoption of the IP Education Policy Framework underscores its commitment to promoting inclusive and culturally responsive education for indigenous communities in the Philippines. By aligning with national policy frameworks and implementing targeted programs, such as the IPed Program, DepEd seeks to address the educational needs of IP learners while respecting and preserving their diverse cultural identities and knowledge systems. These initiatives reflect DepEd's recognition of education as a fundamental human right and powerful tool for advancing social justice, equity, and sustainable development within indigenous communities. Through ongoing collaboration and engagement with stakeholders, DepEd aims to strengthen its efforts to deliver quality education that empowers and uplifts indigenous learners, thereby contributing to the broader goal of achieving education for the entire Philippines.

2.2 Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program

The implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program signifies a pivotal milestone in the pursuit of inclusive and culturally responsive education for indigenous communities in the Philippines. Battiste's seminal research in 2013 underscores the imperative of decolonizing education to foster a conducive learning environment within Indigenous populations. This pedagogical approach aligns seamlessly with the objectives of the IPEd Program, which prioritizes the recognition and preservation of indigenous cultural identities and knowledge systems. By dismantling colonial constructs and embracing indigenous perspectives, the programme aims to empower indigenous learners and nurture their unique heritage.

McCarty, Romero-Little, Warhol, and Zepeda (2009) shed valuable light on the significance of culturally relevant education, particularly in border-town schools where indigenous youth often face unique challenges. Their findings underscore the pressing need for educational initiatives such as the IPEd Program to address indigenous learners' multifaceted needs and experiences. Snively and William (2016) advocate for the seamless integration of indigenous science with Western science, emphasizing the inherent value of indigenous knowledge within educational discourse. This perspective not only enriches the curriculum, but also reinforces the core objectives of the IPEd Program, which seeks to promote indigenous knowledge, skills, and cultural heritage within the educational framework.

Sleeter's insightful analysis in 2001 delves into the complexities of preparing teachers for culturally diverse classrooms, emphasizing the continual need for professional development and training. Within the context of the IPEd Program, initiatives aimed at enhancing teacher capacity and efficiency are paramount for the effective implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy. Wang's groundbreaking work in 2013 explored the pivotal role of culturally responsive pedagogy in facilitating ethnic identity formation among indigenous students. This study underscores the critical importance of curriculum development and instructional strategies that resonate with the cultural backgrounds and lived experiences of indigenous learners.

The synthesis of findings from these diverse studies underscores the pivotal role of the IPEd Program in advancing education, which is not only inclusive, but also culturally responsive to indigenous communities in the Philippines. By bridging insights from multiple research endeavors, this literature review provides a comprehensive understanding of implementation processes and their far-reaching implications for indigenous education. It highlights the significance of recognizing and valuing indigenous knowledge systems, fostering cultural pride, and ensuring equitable access to quality education for all indigenous learners. Through the concerted efforts of stakeholders and policymakers, the IPEd Program serves as a catalyst for transformative change, paving the way for a more inclusive and culturally affirming educational landscape for indigenous communities nationwide.

2.3 School's Responsiveness of IPED Implementation

The responsiveness of schools to implementing indigenous people education (IPed) is a critical aspect of promoting equity, cultural diversity, and inclusion within educational systems. Research indicates that schools' commitment to inclusivity serves as a foundational element of their responsiveness to IPED initiatives (Victor & Yano, 2016). Educational institutions that prioritize indigenous voices, perspectives, and experiences demonstrate greater readiness to embrace IPed and create inclusive learning environments.

Strong leadership and administrative support are essential factors that influence schools' responsiveness to IPed implementation (Lamb & Weiner, 2018). School leaders who advocate indigenous rights and equity play a pivotal role in fostering an environment conducive to the successful integration of IPED initiatives. Their support ensures that indigenous students' needs are addressed effectively, and that indigenous cultures are respected and valued within the school community.

Professional development significantly impacts school responsiveness to IPed. Continuous training and support for teachers and staff are necessary to address the unique needs of indigenous students and communities (George, 2021; Miller, 2005). Investing in cultural competency training and providing educators with the necessary tools and resources enhance schools' capacity to deliver culturally relevant and responsive education.

Collaboration and partnerships with indigenous communities are integral to enhancing school responsiveness to implementing IPed (Victor & Yano, 2016). Engaging in collaborative efforts allows educational institutions to co-create culturally relevant curricula, incorporate traditional knowledge into their teaching practices, and foster meaningful connections with indigenous stakeholders. These partnerships help ensure that IPED initiatives align with the needs and aspirations of indigenous communities.

Furthermore, regular assessment and evaluation of IPed programs are essential for measuring schools' responsiveness and ensuring the effectiveness of indigenous educational initiatives (Asuncion & Follero, 2024). Systematically assessing the impact of IPED initiatives on student outcomes enables schools to identify areas for improvement and to make informed decisions to enhance their responsiveness to indigenous students' needs.

In conclusion, schools' responsiveness to implementing IPed is crucial for promoting equity, cultural diversity, and inclusion in educational settings. Factors such as school commitment to inclusivity, leadership and administrative support, professional development, collaboration and partnerships, and assessment and evaluation significantly influence school readiness to embrace IPED initiatives. Prioritizing indigenous perspectives, investing in cultural competency training, fostering community partnerships, and adopting culturally responsive assessment practices allows educational institutions to enhance their responsiveness to IPED implementation and create more inclusive learning environments for indigenous students.

3. Methodology

3.1 Locale of the Study

The research was conducted in schools implementing the IPed Program in South Cotabato, Sarangani Province, and General Santos City, collectively referred to as the SocSarGen area. The selected schools included Lake Seluton Integrated School, Tboli Sbu Senior High School, Tboli Integrated School, Maan Elementary School, Landan National High School, Lunen Integrated School, Libi Integrated School, Calay IP School, Blat Integrated School, Malabod Integrated School, Blaan Integrated School, Lamlifew Integrated School, Datal Salvan High School, Datu Balunto High School, Dangan Elementary School, Fataldao Elementary School, Upper Labay Elementary School, and Banwalan Elementary School. These schools primarily cater to indigenous learners belonging to tribes such as Blaan, Muslims, Tboli, and Taga Kaolo, constituting 70–90% of the student population. Enrollment data from the selected schools in SocSarGen were collected for analysis.

3.2 Methods and Materials

To assess the implementation and responsiveness of the indigenous peoples' education program, this study employed a survey questionnaire that underwent adaptation, revalidation, and pilot testing. A survey methodology was employed to collect extensive data on implementation and responsiveness within the selected schools in the study area.

3.3 Respondents of the Study

Using the Cochran formula, the sample size was determined to be 154 out of the total population of 251. These 154 individuals constituted the respondents of this study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study utilized a stratified random sampling method to select participants from the specified target population.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a set of questionnaires. These questionnaires were adapted and modified to suit the context of the study as suggested by J. V. Baron and Robles (2023). To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, it was validated by experts and pilot testing (J. Baron, 2022; J. V. Baron & Cruz, 2023).

3.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher employed the following data collection procedure. First, after securing permission from the school administrators, the researcher administered the survey questionnaire directly to the participants, offering clear instructions on its completion. Furthermore, the researcher elucidated the objectives and significance of the study. After completing the questionnaire, the researcher collected the surveys promptly. Second, the respondents were randomly chosen to ensure fair and unbiased inclusion. They were allocated proportionately across schools, considering the school population. The researcher personally selected the necessary samples while ensuring a proportional representation.

Following the data collection, the collected information underwent meticulous data treatment procedures in preparation for statistical analysis. This process encompasses organizing, cleaning, and coding data to guarantee precision and uniformity. Moreover, any absent or inaccurate data were rectified during this stage to maintain the data integrity. Subsequently, the treated data were subjected to diverse statistical analyses to evaluate the degree of implementation and responsiveness of the indigenous peoples' education program within the chosen schools.

3.7 Statistical Treatment

The mean was used to measure the implementation and responsiveness of the indigenous peoples' education program in SOCSARGEN.

4. Results and Discussions

Research Question 1: What is the implementation level of the indigenous people education (IPEd) program in SOCSARGEN?

In the context of SOCSARGEN, the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) program holds significant importance in ensuring the equitable delivery of education to indigenous communities. Understanding the level of implementation across various dimensions is crucial for evaluating a program's effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement. Hence, Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the level of implementation, highlighting key indicators such as building learning resources, teachers' capacity and efficiency, culturally responsive curriculum, policy environment support, learners' access to basic educational needs, and educational support to the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan.

Table 1. Level of Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPeD) Program in SOCSARGEN

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
Building Learning Resources	3.55	.62	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Teachers' Capacity and Efficiency	4.43	.46	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Culturally Responsive Curriculum	4.31	.54	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Policy environment support for IPED program implementation	4.29	.56	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Learners Access to basic educational needs	3.79	.69	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Educational Support to Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan	3.92	.53	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Overall Mean	4.05	.43	Highly Implemented IPED Program

Table 1 illustrates the effective execution of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPeD) Program in SOCSARGEN, as evidenced by various key indicators. Across dimensions such as Building Learning Resources, Teachers' Capacity and Efficiency, Culturally Responsive Curriculum, Policy environment support for IPED program implementation, Learners Access to basic educational needs, and Educational Support to Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, the program consistently garners high ratings, denoted as "Highly Implemented," with mean scores ranging from 3.55 to 4.43. This robust implementation aligns with the literature that emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive practices and supportive policies in indigenous education. Scholars, such as Battiste (2014), Bishop (1995), McCarty et al. (2009), Snively and William (2016), Sleeter (2001), and Castagno and Brayboy (2008) have extensively documented the positive outcomes associated with culturally relevant pedagogies and policies in Indigenous education. These findings underscore the success of the IPeD Program in addressing the unique educational needs of indigenous communities in SOCSARGEN, thereby contributing to broader discussions on inclusive and equitable education.

The findings presented in Table 1 highlight the significant strides made in the implementation of the IPeD Program in SOCSARGEN. The consistently high ratings across various dimensions indicate a comprehensive and well-rounded approach to indigenous education encompassing aspects such as resource allocation, teacher training, curriculum development, policy support, and learner access. This holistic approach is in line with best practices identified in the literature, which emphasize the importance of addressing multiple dimensions of Indigenous education to achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes (Anthony-Stevens, Moss, Jacobson, Boysen-Taylor, & Campbell-Daniels, 2022; Smith, 2018).

Moreover, high mean scores suggest a strong commitment from stakeholders to prioritize indigenous education and ensure its success. Emphasis on building learning resources, enhancing teachers' capacity, developing culturally responsive curricula, and providing policy support reflects a concerted effort to address the unique needs and aspirations of indigenous communities. These findings align with research highlighting the positive impact of culturally relevant pedagogies and policies on indigenous students' academic achievement and cultural identity (Battiste, 2014; Sleeter, 2001).

Furthermore, the robust implementation of the IPeD Program in SOCSARGEN underscores the importance of community engagement and collaboration in indigenous educational initiatives. Actively involving Indigenous communities in program development and implementation ensures that educational interventions are culturally appropriate, responsive, and sustainable (Kester, Sweeney, Chang, Watkins, & Cha, 2020). The success of the IPeD Program in SOCSARGEN serves as evidence

for the effectiveness of such collaborative approaches in promoting inclusive and equitable education for indigenous learners.

In summary, the findings presented in Table 1 demonstrate the effective implementation of the IPed Program in SOCSARGEN, as evidenced by high ratings across key indicators. These findings underscore the importance of culturally responsive practices, supportive policies, and community engagement in indigenous educational initiatives. Addressing the multiple dimensions of indigenous education and actively involving indigenous communities enhances the quality and relevance of education for indigenous learners, contributing to broader goals of inclusivity and equity in education.

Research Question 2: To what extent is schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the (IPed) program to the educational needs of IP learners in SOCSARGEN?

The extent of schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the (IPed) program to the Educational Needs of IP Learners is a critical aspect of evaluating the effectiveness of indigenous education initiatives in SOCSARGEN. Table 2 provides insights into the responsiveness of schools across various dimensions that are crucial for addressing the educational needs of indigenous learners. These dimensions include curriculum and learning resource development, capacity building, education intervention, learning delivery modalities, and the physical learning environment. A comprehensive understanding of these factors is essential to ensure that the educational experience of IP learners is tailored to their unique cultural context and to support their holistic development.

Table 2. The extent of schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the (IPed) Program to the Educational Needs of the IP Learners.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Description
Curriculum and Learning Resources Development	4.23	.56	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Capacity building	3.41	.80	Moderately Implemented IPED Program
Education Intervention	4.14	.51	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Learning Delivery Modalities	3.59	.68	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Physical Learning Environment	4.26	.56	Highly Implemented IPED Program
Overall Mean	3.93	.43	Highly Implemented IPED Program

Table 2 offers a comprehensive assessment of the extent of schools' responsiveness in the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Program to the Educational Needs of IP Learners. This analysis sheds light on the program's efficacy across various key indicators in the SOCSARGEN region. It is evident from the table that the program has been implemented across multiple dimensions, indicating a strong commitment from schools to address the unique educational needs of indigenous learners.

One dimension highlighted in Table 2 is curriculum and learning resource development, which received a mean score of 4.23, suggesting that the IPed Program has been effectively implemented in this aspect. This implies that schools have taken proactive steps to develop culturally relevant curriculum materials and learning resources that resonate with the cultural background and experiences of indigenous students. Such initiatives are vital to promoting student engagement and fostering a sense of belonging in the classroom.

Similarly, the Physical Learning Environment dimension received a high mean score of 4.26, indicating that schools have created conducive learning environments that support the holistic development of IP learners. Research has shown that a positive and culturally affirming school climate can have a significant impact on students' well-being and academic achievement. Therefore, a high rating in this

dimension reflects the efforts of schools to create inclusive spaces where indigenous students feel valued and supported.

Additionally, the Education Intervention dimension, with a mean score of 4.14, signifies the successful implementation of targeted interventions aimed at addressing IP learners' specific learning needs. These interventions may include additional academic support, cultural enrichment programs, and counseling services tailored to the unique challenges faced by indigenous students. By providing such interventions, schools demonstrate their commitment to ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students regardless of their cultural background.

Despite the overall positive assessment of the IPed Program implementation, it is worth noting that the capacity-building dimension received a moderately implemented rating, with a mean score of 3.41. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in terms of providing teachers with the necessary training and support to effectively implement culturally responsive pedagogies. Teacher professional development programs that focus on indigenous education can play a crucial role in enhancing teacher efficacy and improving student outcomes.

Furthermore, the dimension of Learning Delivery Modalities received a mean score of 3.59, indicating that, while the program has been highly implemented overall, there may be challenges related to the delivery of instruction to IP learners. Research suggests that incorporating indigenous knowledge systems and practices into teaching methods can enhance student engagement and promote cultural relevance within the curriculum. Therefore, schools may benefit from exploring innovative pedagogical approaches that align with IP learners' cultural backgrounds and learning styles.

The findings presented in Table 2 highlight the significant progress made in promoting responsive and culturally relevant education for indigenous students of SOCSARGEN. The consistently high ratings across multiple dimensions underscore the commitment of schools to address IP learners' unique educational needs. However, there are areas such as capacity building and learning delivery modes where further improvements can be made to enhance the effectiveness of the IPed Program. By continuing to prioritize culturally sensitive practices and policies, schools can ensure that all students, including indigenous learners, have access to high-quality education to celebrate their cultural heritage and promote academic success (J. V. Baron, 2023).

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

Based on a comprehensive analysis of the implementation and responsiveness of the indigenous peoples' education (IPed) Program in SocSarGen, several key conclusions can be drawn from the findings. First, the teachers in the region demonstrated a commendable level of capacity and efficiency in implementing the program. This suggests a strong commitment among educators to the objectives and principles of the IPed Program, indicating genuine dedication to promoting indigenous education and addressing the unique needs of indigenous learners.

Second, the IPed curriculum stands out because of its notable cultural responsiveness. The curriculum reflects a deep awareness of and respect for indigenous cultural heritage and knowledge systems, acknowledging the importance of incorporating indigenous perspectives and practices into educational experience. This cultural sensitivity in curriculum development is crucial for ensuring that indigenous learners see themselves as reflected in their education and feel a sense of pride and connection with their cultural identity (J. V. Baron, 2023).

Additionally, the presence of policy support for the implementation of the IPed Program is a significant indicator of stakeholders' commitment to its success. Policy support provides a framework for guiding and sustaining the program, ensuring that it receives the necessary resources and institutional support to thrive. This institutional support is essential for overcoming barriers and challenges that may arise during implementation and fostering a conducive environment for indigenous education to flourish.

Moreover, the provision of educational support for the primary education learning continuity plan demonstrates a commitment to the ongoing improvement and sustainability of indigenous education. This support indicates the importance of continuous learning and development for both students and educators, ensuring that the IPed Program remains responsive to evolving needs and challenges in the educational landscape.

Furthermore, the findings also highlight efforts to address barriers to education and ensure that indigenous learners have access to essential educational needs. This reflects a commitment to equity and inclusivity in education, striving to overcome systemic barriers and disparities that may hinder indigenous students' educational attainment and success.

Moreover, there is a significant level of responsiveness to the physical learning environment, curriculum and learning resource development, education intervention, and learning delivery modalities. This comprehensive approach to enhancing the educational experience of indigenous learners provides a holistic understanding of their needs and challenges, with targeted interventions aimed at maximizing learning outcomes and fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

These findings collectively underscore the effectiveness of the IPed Program in SocSarGen and its importance in promoting indigenous education and fostering inclusive learning environments. By continuing to prioritize cultural responsiveness, policy support, and educational equity, stakeholders can further enhance the impact and sustainability of the IPed Program, ensuring that indigenous learners receive the quality education they deserve and empower them to thrive in their academic journey.

5.2. Limitation

This study examined the implementation and responsiveness of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Program, specifically within the SocSarGen region. This research limitation confines the investigation to specific geographic boundaries, thereby excluding other regions or provinces of the Philippines from the analysis. Furthermore, this study is limited to the evaluation of key variables associated with the IPed Program, including Building Learning Resources, Teachers' Capacity and Efficiency, Culturally Responsive Curriculum, Policy Environment Support for IPed Program Implementation, Learners' Access to Basic Educational Needs, and Educational Support for Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan. While these variables provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the program, it is important to acknowledge that this study does not encompass a comprehensive assessment of all potential factors influencing indigenous education outcomes.

Moreover, the scope of this study was limited by the selected methodological approach and sample size. This limitation may affect the generalizability of the findings beyond the study population and time frame. It is essential to recognize the constraints imposed by these limitations and interpret the findings within the context of the study's scope and methodology. Despite these constraints, this study offers valuable insights into the implementation and responsiveness of the IPed Program within the SocSarGen region, providing a foundation for future research and policy development in the field of indigenous education.

5.3. Suggestions

In light of the study's specific context and findings, several recommendations emerge to further enhance the implementation and responsiveness of the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPed) Program.

1. **Enhance Technology Integration:** Explore innovative methods such as TV broadcast learning to supplement traditional teaching approaches, especially in areas with limited internet connectivity. This approach can facilitate remote learning and ensure continuity of education for IP learners by addressing accessibility challenges and promoting inclusivity.
2. **Improve School Facilities:** Prioritize improvements in school infrastructure, including internet connectivity and basic amenities, to create a conducive learning environment for IP learners. Equitable access to quality facilities is essential to promote engagement and enhance learning outcomes among indigenous students.

3. **Strengthening Laboratory Facilities:** Allocate resources to enhance laboratory facilities in IPed-implementing schools, enabling hands-on learning experiences aligned with the program's objectives. Practical learning opportunities can enrich the educational experiences of IP learners and promote holistic development.
4. **Facilitate Teacher Training:** Provide opportunities for IPed teachers to enroll in specialized courses or workshops focused on indigenous learning systems (ILS) and cultural responsiveness. Investing in teacher training can enhance pedagogical skills and ensure that educators are equipped to meet the diverse needs of IP learners effectively.
5. **Foster Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between schools, government agencies, and stakeholders to secure funding and resources for the implementation of the IPed Program. Leveraging support from organizations such as SEAMEO INNOTECH and the National Commission for Culture and Arts can strengthen the programme's sustainability and impact.
6. **Recognize Indigenous Leadership:** Officially recognize elders and culture-bearers within IP communities to provide leadership training and technical assistance. Empowering Indigenous leaders can ensure the culturally appropriate implementation of the IPed Program and honor their valuable contributions to education.
7. **Integrate Specific IP Subjects:** Incorporate subjects related to indigenous culture and institutions into the curriculum of all IPed-implementing schools. By promoting cultural heritage preservation and appreciation, these subjects can enrich their educational experiences and foster a sense of cultural identity among IP learners.
8. **Establish Cultural Heritage Learning Centers:** Create Cultural Heritage Learning Centers (CHLC) within schools to serve as hubs for transferring indigenous knowledge and practice systems (IKSP) to IP learners. These centers can play a vital role in preserving indigenous cultures and promoting intergenerational learning within communities.
9. **Encourage Stakeholder Participation:** Actively involve stakeholders from various national and local agencies in the implementation of the IPed Program. Collaborative partnerships can help to address the diverse needs of IP communities and ensure that educational initiatives are responsive to local contexts and realities.
10. **Replication and Further Research:** Encourage replication of similar studies to assess the effectiveness of IPed programmes in different contexts and regions. Continued research and evaluation are essential for identifying best practices, refining educational initiatives, and improving outcomes for indigenous learners nationwide.

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Overall, the author recognizes and appreciates the collective efforts of all individuals and organizations involved in this research endeavor. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing our understanding of indigenous education in SocSarGen and laying the groundwork for future initiatives aimed at promoting educational equity and inclusivity among indigenous learners.

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