

## **Roles of Indigenous Peoples Leaders in the Indigenization of Education: Basis for an Indigenous Peoples Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This basic qualitative study delves into the pivotal role of Indigenous Peoples (IP) leaders in the indigenization of the curriculum, acting as the cornerstone for the development of an Indigenous Peoples Education Program. The study investigates the multifaceted responsibilities undertaken by IP leaders, assuming roles such as translators, facilitators/resource persons, coordinators, and narrators in the intricate process of curriculum development. Additionally, the research scrutinizes the various issues and challenges that these leaders encounter in fulfilling their crucial roles. Key challenges identified include a lack of awareness regarding their rights as integral members of the indigenous community, insufficient educational and training opportunities, limited access to pertinent sources for IPs, and a deficiency in knowledge, skills, and representation within the*

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*Department of Education (DepEd). These challenges underscore systemic barriers that impede the effective participation of IP leaders in the indigenization of the curriculum. In response to these findings, the study advocates for the implementation of a comprehensive Indigenous Peoples Education Program. This proposed program aims to address the identified challenges by focusing on providing education and training for IP leaders, raising awareness about their rights, and advocating for their active representation within the educational system. It is anticipated that the implementation of the recommended IP Education Program will contribute to a more inclusive, culturally sensitive, and representative curriculum that aligns with the diverse perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, fostering a harmonious coexistence between traditional knowledge and mainstream education.*

**Keywords:** *Indigenous Peoples, indigenization, contextualization, IP education*

## **1. Introduction**

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 declared in Article 8, that “Indigenous Peoples have the collective and individual right to maintain and develop their distinct identities and characteristics, including their rights to identify themselves indigenous and to be recognized as such.” Further, Article 3 stipulates that “Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.

According to Minority Right Groups (2020), there are approximately 11.3 million Indigenous people in the Philippines, which is equivalent to 11-12% of the total population. Among 11.3 million, 33% are from Northern Luzon, 61% are from Mindanao and

the remaining 6% are from the Visayas regions (United Nations Development Programme 2013). That is why the Philippines needs to look for the development of IP education.

The Philippine government enacted Republic Act 8317 or the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) Law, which recognizes the rights and development needs of the IPs. Indigenous teachers are prioritized with support from experts or elders as resource persons for cultural topics. The community or ancestral domain is the learning space using indigenous materials, and indigenous teaching and learning methods. IPAs intervention include basic literacy numeracy to children and adults to learn, read, write, and count for their daily interactions in the society as well as to exercise their right to suffrage. Adult-based training like livelihoods, health, and the like to expand livelihood options and access to health services; provision for school supplies, tutorials, scholarships and health services; and provision for facilities, resources, and infrastructure similar to mainstream education to facilitate IP education towards self-determination (Victor and Yano 2018).

The Department of Education adopted this Indigenous Peoples' Participation Framework for the Teacher Effectiveness and Competencies Enhancement Project to support the rights of indigenous peoples to basic education and as part of its mandate to provide inclusive basic education for all by the 1987 Philippine Constitution and the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997. The National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework is in line with this framework, which was established by the Department under DepEd Order No. 62, s.2020. This is the commitment of the Philippine government to achieving its Sustainable Development Goals in 2011.

The K–12 Basic Education Curriculum, which adheres to the following standards and principles, among others, is supported by the IPEd Program. It is inclusive, culture-sensitive, and flexible enough to allow schools to localize, indigenize, and improve it by the educational and social context of the community (DepEd Order No. 22 s. 2016). In this order, it is further stated that a Program Support Fund (PSF) shall be given to regional and school division offices in FY 2016 to increase DepEd's ability to respond to IP learning demands in a flexible,

demand-driven, and evidence-based way. When the program is implemented in 2016, the PSF must only be used for IPEd-related activities that support three (3) thematic focus areas, namely: (1) the creation of curricula and learning resources; (2) capacity building; and (3) IPEd education planning. These focus areas are intended to increase the institutional capacity of DepEd offices in addressing and managing the complexity of IPEd implementation, assisting with the indigenization of the curriculum at the school/division level, and developing education plans that are responsive to and relevant to cultures at the division and school levels. These thematic focus areas' activities incrementally expanded upon the priority activities from earlier years.

There are studies on Indigenous Peoples Education particularly on approaches, but there is a dearth of studies on the roles of IP leaders in the implementation, except that on the role of Aeta leaders of Zambales.

A few studies were conducted on the role of IP leaders in indigenization, but no one has focused on the role of IP Leaders on the Indigenization of the curriculum among the Malin-awa tribal community. Because of this, the researchers conducted this study in order to raise consciousness among educational administrators about the overlooked efforts and behaviors of teachers in the tribal community, as well as to have a basis for IP Leaders' Development Program.

### **1.1. Research Objectives**

The study determined the role of IP leaders in the indigenization of education. It specifically gathered responses on the profile of IP leaders and parents in terms of age, gender, position in the Community and highest educational attainment; the roles/responsibilities of the IP leaders in the indigenization of education; and the issues and challenges encountered by the IP leaders in the indigenization of education.

## **1.2. Significance of the Study**

The results of the current study will provide an information that can be used by the Department of Education in the formulation of a plan on how to engage the IP leaders in the indigenization of educational materials. It will also be helpful to the school heads who are responsible for designing interventions to make the learners motivated to learn. It will be advantageous for the teachers in that these IP leaders can be enlisted to guarantee the educational materials' quality. Additionally, because the learning materials to be used are based on the localized setting of knowledge, the pupils will be assisted in improving their understanding of their lessons and will be encouraged to actively participate. The IP parents will realize their roles and responsibilities toward the school and the community.

## **1.3. Underpinning Theory**

The study is based on socio-cultural theory of human learning by Vygotsky (1978) which describes learning as a social process with the origin of human intelligence is the society or culture. This theory also has its basis in interacting with other people. When this happens, the information is integrated on the individual level. Socio-cultural theory focuses not only on how adults and peers influence individual learning, but also on how cultural beliefs and attitudes took place in the teaching-learning process. Each culture, however, provides what is referred to as tools of intellectual adaptation. These tools allow children to use their basic mental abilities in a way that is adaptive to the culture in which they live. This theory is appropriate for the present study being conducted since, with IP education, the cultures, traditions, beliefs, and values, as well as how IPs interact with others, are considered integral to their way of life.

## **1.4. Literature Review**

### *1.4.1. The Indigenous Peoples*

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 (Article 1.1) in 1989 defines IP as “tribal people in independent

countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations.” It entails recognition of their presence, their historicity, and cultural indelibility (May and Aikman 2003). IPs are populations of specific geographical locations whose institutions were preserved even after colonization of the country. Their ways of life and living are not changed, differentiating them from populations shaped by modern and complex socio-political and economic structures. Their “being different” from the majority places them in vulnerable situation, hence, articulation of their identity and rights became increasingly prominent in the past decades. IPs are now at the forefront of promoting respect for their societies, their ways of existence, and their holistic social constructs – all of which are part and parcel of affirmation to their collective and individual rights (May and Aikman 2003).

The expression of IP rights has become clearer as outlined through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. In Article 8, it is stated that “Indigenous Peoples have the collective and individual right to maintain and develop their distinct identities and characteristics, including their rights to identify themselves indigenous and to be recognized as such.” Further, Article 3 stipulates that “Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.” Hence, policies and actions of mainstream society to assimilate them are forms of unequal power and betrayal to their identity and self-determination. However, various social mechanisms such as migration, colonization, conflicts, and environmental problems inevitably expose the IP on the verge of cultural and historical loss. It is important to reclaim their collective and individual right; central to this is education. May and Aikman (2003, 141) stressed education as a “key arena in which indigenous peoples can reclaim and revalue their language and cultures.”

IPs are significant groups of people in communities. When properly “recognized” and given positive attention through holistic Education, they could be useful toward national development. There

is a lack of a definitive, universal description of “indigenous” but Cobo (1983) mentioned that IPs are those having their historical continuity developed within their own territories.

When referring to Education, the term “Indigenous” generally pertains to the first or original inhabitants of a later colonized group by a group of powerful people who imposed their own culture and language on the original inhabitants (Reyhner and Singh 2015). This historical definition of “indigenous” prompted institutions to implement policies aimed at protecting the rights of IPs and ensure that their culture and traditions are preserved. The integrity of this protection, however, is sometimes questionable, as it is consistently challenged by the need to adapt to mainstream culture. Various constitutional provisions grant the IPs the rights to Education along these lines: (a) to establish and control their education; (b) to receive protection of the State without discrimination; and (c) a mandate for the state to take measure to ensure children of IPs have access to Education using their own language and culture (The 1987 Philippine Constitution). To this end, the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 was enacted. It further recognizes the state’s obligations to ensure the continuity of the unique cultural expression of IPs/ICCs by assuring their full participation in the activities and endeavors toward health, education, and other areas of services making them responsive to the demands of their unique communities. However, the study of Eduardo (2017) showed that there is a limited mechanism to promote awareness among IPs on the framework of IPRA of 1997.

The IPs deserve holistic education that represents their beliefs, feelings, principles, and general ideas that share a family resemblance (Forbes 2003; Hare 2010). According to Hare (2010), education focuses on the whole person, encompassing both cognitive and affective aspects. In this connection, an IP education is described by Section 28 of the IPRA of 1997, as one that provides comprehensive system of education relevant to the needs of the children and young IPs/ICCs through the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). The concern of IP education is both global and international in scope. IPs are mostly deprived of access to quality education. The current curriculum of education programs is incapable of addressing the special needs of the IPs/ICCs. Despite the reality that very few

Indigenous students can do well in the education methods that do not consider the uniqueness of Indigenous culture, the system of Education still assumes universality of application, disregarding the distinctive nature of IP students' cultural orientation and social experiences. To address the issue, the Education International (EI), including the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (WGIPPFII), passed resolutions that recognize the peculiarity of the IP culture and language in terms of Indigenous Education. It highlights the need to enrich and protect Indigenous cultural heritage and identity (Eduardo and Gabriel 2021).

#### *1.4.2. Roles of IP Leaders and Members*

Some divisions that provide IPED curricula, such as the Division of Kalinga, where the Senior High School offers Backstrap Weaving, Tattooing, and Pottery, asked IP leaders to certify the instructional materials used in the institution. By DepEd Order No. 22 to improve DepEd's ability to meet IP learning demands in a flexible, demand-driven, and evidence-based way, funding was made available in 2016. In 2016, the utilization of the PSF is restricted to activities associated with IPED, specifically supporting three key thematic areas: (1) developing curricula and learning materials; (2) enhancing capacity; and (3) planning IPED education. These areas aim to enhance the institutional capacity of DepEd offices, enabling them to effectively address the intricacies of IPED implementation. Additionally, the focus is on supporting the incorporation of indigenous elements into the curriculum at the school/division level and formulating culturally relevant and responsive education plans at both division and school levels. Progressively expanding on the key activities from preceding years are the activities under these thematic focal areas.

Tecson (2020) highlighted the indigenous elders' key role as mentor and guide in the education of children in their communities in Central Luzon during the pandemic. They serve as the partner of the Department of Education (DepEd) in addressing the distance learning barrier. They underwent online training on IPED learning materials development based on IP alphabet primers to equip them with the necessary knowledge on how to guide and mentor their children on



their studies, according to Lacson (2020). Aside from this, according to Montemayor (2020), the focal person said that the IP leaders joined the consultative advisory body and participated in the curriculum contextualization required by IPED. They (referring to IP leaders) are their partners, especially in the matter of contextualization. There are also orthographies, alphabet primers, storybooks, and IP lesson plans that can be used to teach IPED in the region.

With these current issues in IP education that significantly concern their identity and self-determination, there is a dimension that is usually neglected in state-run programs and IP education practitioners – the elderly of Ips. It is very unfortunate that the IP elderly have miniscule role in IP education. The elders are the most important resource in the classroom formal schooling and research in curriculum development (Ismael and Cazden 2005). The elders are the vessel of their history, indigenous language, and cultures. They have the “lens” in imparting the appreciation of their identity and contextual relevance of their traditions even in the present. In an Aeta community in Pampanga, Aeta children attend formal schooling in a nearby DepEd accredited IP school. There is a rewarding feeling among Aeta parents and non-IP community leaders when they are able to send their children to formal schools. However, signs of fleeting indigenous language and cultures are already evident in the community, leading to cultural conflicts between Aeta elders and non-IP collaborators. One Aeta mother, who sends all her children to the formal IP school, expressed joy that her children are learning and is hopeful that formal schooling could provide them with better opportunities in life. However, she admits that her children’s lessons are not familiar to her. Although her children can speak their indigenous language, they can no longer perform their traditional system of writing. In the school, they speak their indigenous language with awkwardness. Aeta students shared that they only use their language when communicating among themselves, adjusting when communicating with non-IP students.

During interviews, the observation was made that social and cultural traditions are scarcely practiced in the village. Nonetheless, there is a willingness and attempt to preserve their language and cultures, especially among the elders. In the community, four Aeta elders are still knowledgeable about their stories, language, and

traditions. In their desire to impart this knowledge to the younger generation, they occasionally gather Aeta children to share stories and teach traditional songs and dances. The knowledge and efficacy of the elderly toward their indigenous identity are valuable family resources that must be shared and transmitted to the children. Indigenous education should support this process rather than disrupt or deprive the family of this resource. Hence, there is a conscious effort to revitalize their Identity and promote self-determination among the young Aeta population in the community.

The teachers at Pagsanjan Elementary School in Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija, have a limited understanding of the cultural practices of the place. To address this, they sought the guidance of tribal elders to educate students about these cultural practices. The process of education also emphasizes the revitalization of the indigenous language. However, the lack of written materials poses a hindrance for teachers in preserving and effectively transmitting the language (Mercado 2021).

Endowed with rich history and cultures, IPs, particularly the elderly, should oversee the shaping and controlling of their education system (Tolentino 2017). Todal emphasizes the significance of linguistic maintenance in IP education, requiring the participation of both IP families and non-IP groups connected in strategizing and implementing IP education (as cited in May and Aikman 2003). Hornberger et al. (2018) refers to this as a “bottom-up language process” that promotes local decision-making, control, and participation.

Additionally, the DepEd order specifies several activities that must be carried out, including curriculum contextualization and learning resource development sessions, consultations, and workshops with IP elders, leaders, and culture bearers (who may be invited as resource persons); community representatives; and other relevant stakeholders. Moreover, it emphasizes the production of learning materials with content that has been duly validated with concerned IP communities. The most valuable resource in formal education settings and curriculum development is the older generation (Ismael and Cazden, 2005). Their history, indigenous language, and cultures are

transmitted through the elders. They have the “lens” to communicate the value of their identity and the contextual applicability of their traditions even now (Tolentino 2017).

#### *1.4.3. State of Indigenous Education in the Philippines*

In a survey of IP situations in different countries show that indigenous peoples are already given due recognition and importance as part of the bigger community. In an earlier study on indigenous people in the Philippines in 2000, it was revealed that most of them were only done with their elementary education, and only few have gone higher in the educational ladder (Soriano 2008).

The EFA conferences held in Mindanao and the Cordillera in 2002 to 2007, revealed that the education program brought up by the indigenous themselves focused on priority task for the people to learn the modern/dominant languages, knowledge, and skills that would further empower them to assert their rights.

The tribe people learn within the corners of their ancestral domain, similar to the ‘lifelong learning’ concept of education. Their elders believe that anyone is a possible source of knowledge and companions in the learning process like their grandparents, parents, elders who have recognized expertise. The knowledge passed on to the next generation of young people is called traditional knowledge (Castellano 2000, cited in Steinhauer 2002, 2).

Indigenous peoples education is similarly given priority and attention. In line with its thrust to promote culture-based education, the DepEd through its Indigenous Peoples Education Program continues to strengthen the Indigenous Peoples communities especially in the contextualization of the K to 12 basic education curriculum.

#### *1.4.4. Issues and Challenges in IP Education on the Roles of Leaders*

Some of these issues include the strain between the traditional and formal schooling; the disappearing indigenous peoples’ language; and the fading voice of the IP elderly in transmitting their historical

and cultural resources (Arquiza 2006; Ismael and Cazden 2005; May and Aikman 2003). This task is important to be able to collect, validate (by the elders), transmit, and revitalize indigenous cultures in an educational system. On the other hand, education practitioners can train elders and parents to become teachers to their fellow indigenous peoples.

Only a little amount of studies have been conducted explicitly in the Philippines, even though many studies have looked at the indigenization and localization of teaching materials. Additionally, the majority of study articles did not specifically address how IP elders helped in the indigenization of education. To better understand the role and experiences of IP, it is deemed necessary to conduct this research.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

Basic qualitative design was employed in this study. The researcher inquired about the IPs' roles, challenges, and issues in their roles in the indigenization of lessons in Malin-awa Elementary School. The information was gathered from the IP leaders and members during the personal interview, which was conducted following the interview guide. The replies of the participants were coded to support the respondents' spoken responses.

### **2.2. Participants of the Study**

The participants of the study were IP leaders and members of the Malin-awa community who were chosen through purposive sampling. Age of the respondents was the primary basis for choosing them where only those whose ages range from 50 years old and above and who are actively involved in the indigenization program of the school. The study concentrated on how IP leaders helped in the indigenization of education.

### **2.3. Instrumentation**

The Interview Guide was the primary tool used to gather the data required to carry out the study. In Part I, the researcher collected data on the IP leaders' demographics, including their age, gender, position in DepEd and highest educational attainment. The second part dealt with the participants' roles in the indigenization of the curriculum. The third part was about the issues and challenges encountered by the IP leaders in the indigenization that the IP leaders faced when indigenizing education.

### **2.4. Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher sought the permission of the District Supervisor of Western Tabuk District to conduct the study as it involved indigenization of the curriculum. The researcher interviewed the IP leaders and the parents who are also members of the IP community. Another letter of request was sent to the barangay leader of Malinawa that they would be allowed to reach out the participants. She used a tape recorder to capture their comments in Tinongrayan, the local dialect that is widely spoken by the IP leaders and parents. The respondents were given the freedom to express themselves. The participant's comments were coded with the letters IPL.01, IPL.02, etc. (Indigenous Peoples' Leader Elder) to maintain their anonymity. The members were given the same letter code as IPL.

### **2.5. Ethical Considerations**

The researchers asked permission respectfully from the participants for their participation in the study.

For the researcher to contact the IP leaders, the barangay captain's consent was requested. To ensure their active involvement in the focus group discussions and interviews, parents' and the IP leaders' approval was requested. The participants affixed their signatures to a letter of consent. Their privacy was specifically protected in the interests of protection and security. All information collected were treated confidential and were used in the study's purposes only, wherein codes were utilized to identify each participant

as a substitute to their name for the anonymity, in order to secure their privacy.

### 2.6. Data Analysis

The data were organized into themes in order to identify relevant information that characterized the roles played by the IP leaders and members in indigenization of lessons, and after the data were categorized, the researcher analyzed them.

### 2.7. Rigour of Qualitative Research

To confirm and validate that the respondents' rephrased statements in the dialect were accurate, the researcher went back to the participants in the barangay hall to conduct focus group discussion. This was done to ensure the correctness of the information given.

## 3. Results and Discussion

**Table 1.** Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
50-60 years old	6	40.00
61-70 years old	5	33.33
71 years old and above	4	26.67
Sex		
Male	13	86.67
Female	2	12.33
Position in the Community		
IP Leader	3	12.33
IP Member	12	80.00
Educational Attainment		
College Graduate	3	20.00
High School Graduate	7	46.67
Elementary Graduate	5	33.33
Did Not Attend School	0	0

Most of the respondents were 60 years old and above, majority were males, IP members and leaders and high school graduates. In an earlier study on indigenous people in the Philippines in 2000, it was revealed that most of them were only done with their elementary education, and only few have gone higher in the educational ladder (Soriano 2008).

The data reveals that they are much aware of their roles as IP leaders since they are already of old age. The data also reveal that in the community, most of those involved in IP activities in school are males.

### **3.1. Roles of IP Leaders in Indigenization**

#### *3.1.1. Theme 1: Translator*

One of the roles identified by the informants was to help the teachers translate the difficult words used by the IP community so that they could be in turn translated to English or Filipino when they teach. The following are the statements:

IPL 1: *Fumachanga san mansursuro way mangikenga san kenga ni.* (I help the teachers in the translation of our dialect.)

IPL 2: *Fumachanga san mansursuro way mangitudtuchu san man-chacharok way kenga.* (I help the teachers in explaining the difficult words in our dialect.)

IPL5: *Fumachanga way mangammaan san ustu ukud yak mamawa.* (I help in the preservation of our language by providing the proper terms.)

One important concern in the indigenization and contextualization of lessons is language. Teachers have difficulty in translating lessons especially those that were prepared by Curriculum developers of the DepEd so they have to seek the assistance of the IP elders. Because the elders want to preserve the authenticity of their dialect, they are very willing to help the teachers. Valenzuela et al. (2022) also found that there is willingness and attempt to preserve the language and culture of the Aetas by the elders.

Indigenous language is also highlighted and revitalized in the process of education. The lack of written materials, however, is a hindrance for teachers to preserve and effectively transmit the language (Mercado 2021).

### 3.1.2. Theme 02. Facilitator/Resource Person/ Coordinator

The IP elders and members are culture bearers of the community. They perform roles as facilitators/resource persons as told by the following:

IPL 2: *Fumachanga waymangacharan san tudtucho nu maisuro nan ugali nan Tinongrayan.* (I help facilitate the lessons when a Kalinga practice is taught.)

IPL 1: *Osak way maayakana nga mangifingay san ugalingi.* (I am invited to explain our practices.)

IPL 5: *Ipailaknan inaawi way oyoyooni way masiput pak uchum waymakmakwa.* (I demonstrate our indigenous practices in farming and other activities.)

IPL 9: *Ifusway u nan inaawi way tufag isu nan ogkayam, salichummay yak chanchanag.* (I sing our native songs oggayam, salichummay and chanchanag (song for the dead).

IPL 4: *Mangatocha as user as mangil-an man acher.* (I give examples of our material culture for instructional purposes.)

IPL 6: *Makaukucha san papangat nu achan inoni way mangifillay san inaawi wau ug-ukali yak mamawa.* (I coordinate with other leaders how we can share our indigenous culture and practices.)

The IP leaders and members were happy to narrate the they do in school. Facilitating learning in Araling Panlipunan is done especially when the topic is about their cultural practices. In their Science and Health, part of their contextualization is showing or demonstrating planting and harvesting of palay and other crops. The teachers invite an elder to illustrate what they are doing.



In Music, PE, and Health, the IP elder is happy to sing the native songs so that the learners can understand the messages of their songs. No one said that somebody demonstrates native games. Perhaps, the children are aware of these games as they observe them during community fiestas.

The material culture such as the bamboo instruments or crafts are brought to school by an elder for the demonstration of their uses. The bamboo musical instruments are then donated to the school, anyway, they can easily make and give for free. They just look for bamboos in the forest to dry before making instruments. All of these are part of the contextualization and localization of lessons.

As specified by DepEd order no 22, S of 2016, activities must be carried out such as curriculum contextualization and learning resource development sessions, consultations, and workshops with IP elders, leaders, and culture bearers (who may be invited as resource persons); community representatives; and other relevant stakeholders; and production of learning materials with content that has been duly validated with concerned IP communities.

Montemayor (2020) observed that the IP leaders of Pampanga, Region 03 joined the consultative advisory body and participated in the curriculum contextualization required by IPED. They are their partners especially in the matter of contextualization. There are also orthographies, alphabet primers, storybooks, and indigenous IP lesson plans that can be used to teach IPED in the region.

One leader said that he coordinates with other members of the community how they can share their indigenous culture and practices. Since they are looked up as helpful partners in the indigenization or contextualization by the school, they generously work together on what they can share the teachers so that their children will learn better.

### 3.1.3. Theme 03. Narrator

Narrating events and stories to the teachers and children are claimed by the elders as one of their roles as expressed by the following:

IPL 8 : *Ul-ullituk nan mamawa san mansursuru yak man-acher.*  
( *I narrate events of importance to the teachers and children.*)

IPL10: *Ifillay unan ul-ullit nan chachakker.* (I share stories narrated by our old folks.)

The IP leaders and members, especially the older ones, share events that happened in the past and tell stories such as legends, myths, short stories and poems to the teachers, parents and learners. They are a repository of folklore that are worth integrating in the curriculum. That is why Ismael and Cazden (2005) consider the elders as the most important resource in the classroom, formal schooling and research in curriculum development.

Tecson (2020) in her article highlighted the indigenous elders' key role as mentor and guide in the education of children in their communities in Central Luzon during the pandemic. The elders serve as the partners of the Department of Education (DepEd) in addressing the distance learning barrier. But even during normal times when they can also move freely to the school or wherever they are invited.

As a whole, Valenzuela et al. (2022) observe that among the Aeta community, the knowledge and efficacy of the elderly towards their indigenous identity are family resources, thus they must share and transmit to the children. Indigenous education should aid this process and not disrupt or deprive the family of this resource. Hence, there is a conscious effort to revitalize their identity and promote self-determination.

### **3.2. Issues and Challenges of the IP Leaders and Members**

#### *3.2.1. Lack of Knowledge of Their Rights as Members of the IP Community*

It is sad to note that the IPs of Malin-awa in Tabuk City do not have enough knowledge on their rights as expressed by IPL 1 who said:

*Kinafuwat nan agamun nan papangat nan indigenous people (IP) sa karobfongan cha han lintog.* (Insufficient knowledge of the rights of IPs guaranteed by law.) This can be attributed to the low educational attainment of most informants and they might not have attended orientations or symposia conducted by the NCIP.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 clearly outlined the expression of IP in Article 8, which states that “Indigenous Peoples have the collective and individual right to maintain and develop their distinct identities and characteristics, including their rights to identify themselves indigenous and to be recognized as such.” Further, Article 3 provides that “Indigenous Peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.” However, it was found by Eduardo (2017) that there is a limited mechanism to promote awareness among IPs on the framework of IPRA of 1997.

#### *3.2.2. Lack of Education and Training/ Lack of Sources for IPs*

The informants gave the following statements to imply their lack of education and training:

IPL 5. *kinakurang way magifaka san kulturan nan anchanaya way indigenous people ya kinakurang nan laing cha han pangkop nan pulitika.* (Inadequate skills in verbalization of the culture of IPs and their indigenous political structure.)

IPL 8. *Kinakurang nan akammon nan papangat way Indigenous People way san pangkop san way mamawa isun nan*

*kultura ya maususer way kenga san uswelaan isun nan mother tongue.* (Insufficient skills of IP leaders in vocalizing their knowledge of IP indigenous knowledge systems and practices, culture, customary norms in the languages used in normal education).

IPL 9. *Anghan nan kenga tau way mansikab as ikenga han English ya Pilipino.* (Many of our terms are difficult to translate in English and Filipino.)

IPL 11. *Maid o-on u akammu way mansuru san indigenous lesson.* (I do not have enough skills in teaching indigenous lesson.)

IPL 15. *Kinakurang cha way magisurat nu ngachan ininon nan Indigenous People (IP) un Malin-awa.* (Insufficient writings about Indigenous People in Malin-awa.)

IPL 14. *Manmanu nan manginap san osa way fanag pangkop na (IP).* (Inadequate references on the Ips.)

An informant admitted that he lacks the ability to articulate their culture and their political structure that many times they could not explain well to the teachers especially those who are not from Malin-awa or Tinglayan. This is due to the fact that there are terms that could not be translated into the medium of instruction which are English and Filipino. According to the teachers, they have terms that could not be translated to either Filipino or English.

The researcher agrees with the claim that there are not enough written resources about the people of Malin-awa. However, there are materials that were written about the iTongrayan and other ethnic groups of Kalinga by the Belgian missionaries and other foreign and local researchers who came to the province of Kalinga like Barton (1949) who wrote about the Kalinga institution and customs, Billiet (1970) the first Belgian missionary stationed in Lubuagan, Kalinga who wrote the Kalinga Ullalim. Local scholars also followed documenting the Kalinga Hilltribe of Northern Luzon. (Sugguiyao, 1990), the Kalinga Bodong (Dang-awan, 1971; Ayang-ang 1973; Maslan 1980; Sallidao 1982). All of these authors covered the

Kalingas in general and the Malin-awa sub-tribe is a part of their documents.

### 3.2.3. *Lack of Coordination by the DepEd*

The respondents expressed lack coordination as their challenge. The following statements were given:

IPL12. *Maid usto as man-uukuchan nan papangat nan education.* (Lack of coordination by education officials.)

IPL 09. *Kinafuwat nan umoy magifaka way papangat nan IP san papangat nan education.* (Lack of real representation in special bodies in education.)

IPL 14. *Masapur way awad magifagfaka han papangat nan education pangkop san inun nan manfalin pangat nan Indigenous People (IP).* (There must be a coordination of education officials regarding to the Indigenous People.)

Successful implementation of IPED can be attributed to close coordination between the IP leaders and school authorities. However, the informants believed that coordination with them is not enough.

They play an important role in the contextualization of lessons. The DepEd order specified some activities that must be carried out, including curriculum contextualization and learning resource development sessions, consultations, and workshops with IP elders, leaders, and culture bearers (who may be invited as resource persons); community representatives; and other relevant stakeholders; and production of learning materials with content that has been duly validated with concerned IP communities. The fading voice of the IP elderly in transmitting their historical and cultural resources is also evident in other studies (Arquiza 2006; Ismael and Cazden 2005; May and Aikman 2003). These important roles really need close coordination by the department through the school heads if successful indigenization or contextualization is desired.

### 3.2.4. Protection and Promotion of One's Culture

The respondents' concern was on how they can protect or promote their cultural values and practices. The leaders have these statements:

IPL 11. *Usa ah` way maseknan san inon way mangammaan han kachawyan way ukali.* (I am concerned on how I can protect our culture.)

IPL 15. *Piok way itudtuchu san adchachakher/uswila nan khinapatog nan Fain, Ngilin ya Paniyaw.* (I want to inculcate to the young learners our core values of Fain, Ngilin, and Paniyaw.)

IPL 10. *Matakinayunon nan kachawyan nu` manfifinnachang ta.* (We need to foster our practice of helping one another.)

On the protection of the indigenous culture of the IPs of Malinawa, the elderly feel and observe that their cultural practices are becoming modernized. Because of this they want to preserve them. However, this cannot be controlled as the impact of education and social media is strong. Among these are indigenous peoples' language (Arquiza, 2006; Ismael and Cazden, 2005; May and Aikman, 2003), their dances, and songs.

One respondent also expressed his desire to inculcate the Kalinga core values of fain, ngilin and paniyaw. These are the core values of the Kalinga people. "*Fain*" is a value where one should not do something that will put him/her or family and relatives to shame, thus maintains his/her integrity or a person. "*Ngilin*" is another value of following a practice within a certain period of time. Literally, it is having "holiday" to avoid criticism from the community. An example of *ngilin* is the avoidance of a father to go to his farm after the wife has given birth so that nothing will happen to the baby. A widower does not have his haircut or will not get married for a year after his wife dies. *Paniyaw* is a belief of not doing and acyion because it will rebound to te person. Example of this is criticizing a person from an inborn disease otherwise such illness will be experienced by members

of the family. A widower for example does not have his haircut or will not get married for a year after his wife dies.

Another expressed the need to strengthen their culture of cooperation in their community. Like other Filipinos, this old value of “bayanihan” is practiced by the people of Malin-awa and they want to be retained. Helping one another in the community lightens the burden of the concerned member. Older people want this practice to be learned by the young members.

The Indigenous Education Accord supports indigenous identities, cultures, languages, values, ways of knowing, and knowledge systems. Among the goals are to respect and welcome learning environments, inclusive curricula, culturally responsive pedagogies, value and promote indigenesness in education, culturally responsive assessment, affirm and neutralize indigenous languages, indigenize education leadership, and respect indigenous research (Ganal 2017).

#### **4. Conclusion**

The IPs of Malin-awa have indispensable role in shaping the IP education. They are valuable sources and transmitters of their traditional learning, linguistics, and social practices essential development. They play very important roles in the indigenization of the elementary education of Malin-awa Elementary School as translator, facilitator/resource Person/ coordinator and narrator. In spite of these role they encountered issues and challenges such as lack of knowledge of their rights as members of the IP community; lack of education and training/ lack of sources for IPs; lack of knowledge, skills and representation in the DepEd and protection and promotion of their culture. An IP Education program is highly recommended ‘

#### **5. Recommendations**

Conducting orientation program for the IP leaders of Malin-awa may help to instruct and educate them with regards to their

responsibility as in guiding and helping their children in terms of learning.

The tribal community is also recommended to continue playing their roles as it helps the elementary teachers to discover and learn new strategies on how to teach the pupils

Awareness campaign for all IPs of Malin-awa enlighten their minds regarding IP education as they may influence and educate the youth.

Implementation of the Proposed IP Education Program is highly recommended.

The desirable values of the IPs of Malin-awa be preserved.

A study that will use observation and more in-depth interview with elderly, school collaborators and IP students are recommended to future researchers.

## 6. Proposed IP Education Program

### IPs' Journey to Curriculum Indigenization

**Goal: IPs as competent partners of the school in contextualization of the curriculum**

Objectives	Activities and Topics	Time Frame	Champions	Expected Outcome
to orient the IPs on their rights as members of the IP Community	Symposium	May 2023 (1 day)	IP leaders and member NCIP Resource Person(s)	Increased awareness of IP rights.
to enhance language literacy of the IPs in	Formal classes/ Basic English and Filipino	3 hours once a week	IP leaders and members	Increased proficiency in English and Filipino



English and Filipino.		(May-June 2023)	School head Teachers	
to equip the IP leaders and members with basic skills of teaching.	Lecture with Demonstration classes/ Strategies of teaching	3 hours once a week (May-September 2023)	School Head Master Teacher Teachers IP leaders and members	Acquired basic teaching skill
to improve one's skills in planning for indigenization	Planning workshop on indigenization	3 days (July 2023)	School Head Master Teacher Teachers IP leaders and members	well planned indigenization of lessons

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