

Integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) in the K to 12 Curriculum for Sama Bajaus: A Case Study

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Abstract: This study is concerned with mending the gap in department orders, specifically the policy framework on IPED known as DO No. 62, s. 2011, which was meant for indigenous groups. The study would concentrate on finding significant data to recommend a tailored policy framework that would answer the needs of Sama Bajaus. This study utilized a convergent mixed method with teachers, school heads, students, parents of students from pre-selected education institutions in Batangas, Sama Bajau elders, and local government and NCIP officials served as the participants. Based on the results and discussions presented in this study, it is concluded that the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of the Sama Bajau community exhibit characteristics that align with curriculum integration, promoting cultural advancement, social inclusion, and the preservation of Indigenous heritage. Integration of Sama Bajau’s IKSPs within the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum has the potential to support Sama Bajau learners by offering increased learning opportunities that are culturally sensitive and inclusive. Furthermore, it can enhance the awareness and understanding of school personnel, particularly teachers and school heads, regarding the importance of localizing and indigenizing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (KSAV) in education. However, the study also revealed that challenges and issues are impeding the effective integration of IKSPs into the curriculum. These challenges include the availability of cultural learning resources and the overall responsiveness of the educational system. It was found that the extent of integration of Sama Bajau’s IKSPs is significantly related to the problems and issues encountered. Therefore, a policy recommendation is suggested to address the gaps in localization and indigenization within the curriculum, ensuring that learners’ needs are adequately met.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices; Indigenous heritage; Cultural learning resources

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I. Introduction

In today's interconnected world, the pursuit of inclusive education has become a global concern, one that seeks to provide equitable opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their cultural background or societal barriers. Within this broader context, it is crucial to shine a spotlight on the Sama Bajau community, an indigenous group that faces unique challenges in accessing quality education. By anchoring their educational journey on the principles of inclusive education and the empowerment of indigenous peoples (IPs), people can take significant strides towards fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. As Mandela believed that education is the most powerful weapon to change the world, this study aims to integrate the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) in the K–12 curriculum for the Sama Bajaus in Batangas City ^[1].

Preservation of their indigenous knowledge systems and practices is very important and integrating it into the curriculum will pave the way for them to love schooling and embrace education as a tool for their community's development. Further, inclusive education emphasizes the right of every individual to access quality education, regardless of social, economic, or ethnic background. It calls for the removal of barriers that hinder educational opportunities, ensuring that no one is left behind ^[1]. By promoting inclusive education, people acknowledge the inherent value of diversity and strive for educational systems that respect and embrace the cultural identities of all students.

The Sama Bajau people, also known as the “Sea Gypsies”, have a rich cultural heritage that has withstood the test of time, despite facing marginalization and limited access to education ^[2]. Situated primarily in coastal areas of Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, the Sama Bajau community has struggled with discrimination, poverty, language barriers, and a lack of adequate educational infrastructure. These challenges perpetuate a cycle of exclusion and hinder their overall development ^[3].

In the research locale, the Sama Bajau community in Barangays Malitam and Wawa, Batangas City, started with two families and has grown to over 200 families in the past two decades. They live near the Calumpang River, relying on fishing for their livelihood. Some Sama Bajaus have found employment, intermarried with locals, and adopted different religions. Despite being migrants from the southern Philippines, they are now considered “Batangueños.” The Sama Bajaus face challenges in finding better opportunities and seeking basic necessities such as daily food, a safe community, and a stable place to live to avoid constant relocation. Education is seen as crucial not only for their well-being but also for preserving their culture.

Valle-Castillo highlights the contrasting literacy levels between younger and older generations of the Sama Bajau community in Batangas City, attributing this difference to the increased accessibility of basic education for the newer cohorts ^[1]. The implementation of the Indigenous People Education (IPEd) Program in 2016 has played a significant role in facilitating educational opportunities for school-aged Indigenous individuals, including the Sama Bajaus. Nonetheless, despite the government's efforts to ensure universal primary and secondary education, Bajau families continue to encounter a range of challenges, particularly concerning their children's educational pursuits. These challenges encompass the need for cultural adaptation within the school environment, in addition to economic and social barriers ^[2].

An investigation conducted by the Batangas City ENRO in July 2014 revealed that illiteracy remains one of the predominant issues among the Sama Bajau population. Respondents attribute their illiteracy to their inability to pursue education due to extreme poverty. Consequently, the financial limitations experienced by these families impede their ability to enroll the majority of their children in school. Frequently facing financial hardship, families struggle to meet their basic needs, relying on income-generating activities such as

pearl selling and begging. This scarcity of resources further obstructs the educational progress of those Sama Bajau children who manage to access schooling. Moreover, these children encounter bullying as a result of their distinct cultural backgrounds, further exacerbating the challenges they confront within the educational system.

Inclusive education assumes even greater significance when applied to the Sama Bajau and other indigenous communities. By championing inclusive education for the Sama Bajau and equipping Sama Bajau children and youth with quality education, people empower them to break free from the cycle of poverty, discrimination, and limited opportunities. Inclusive education opens doors to higher education, vocational training, and meaningful employment, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their communities and society ^[3]. Moreover, inclusive education fosters social cohesion as it promotes understanding, acceptance, and respect among diverse cultural groups.

Hence, the global emphasis on inclusive education aligns seamlessly with the imperative of empowering indigenous communities, as exemplified by the Sama Bajau population. The Philippines recognizes that education plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals in various spheres of life, and the nation's progress is closely tied to the accessibility and quality of education provided to its people. To ensure quality education for all, including marginalized and indigenous communities, the Philippines has embraced the Education for All (EFA) initiative, which addresses the educational needs and demands of society. This commitment reflects the principle that no one should be left behind, in line with the United Nations' vision and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of universal primary education and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. As globalization has emerged inevitably, the commitment to achieve the EFA has been deepened through the enactment of Republic Act 8372, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA). The IPRA recognizes and promotes the rights of Indigenous cultural communities and Indigenous people within the framework of national unity and development; protects the rights to their ancestral domains; preserves and develops their culture, traditions, and institutions; guarantees enjoyment of human rights without discrimination; and assures maximum participation in education, health, and other services responsive to the needs of Indigenous people.

The Department of Education (DepEd), for its part, recognizes the need for a systematic and comprehensive response to the specific learning context of Indigenous communities by their educational vision and aspiration. Hence, DepEd, in collaboration with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and with the support of other government agencies and stakeholders, adopted the national Indigenous peoples' education policy framework through DepEd Order No. 62, 2011, aimed at promoting shared accountability, continuous dialogue, engagement, and partnership among government, Indigenous people (IP) communities, civil society, and other education stakeholders ^[4]. The framework guides schools and other education programs, both public and private, as they engage with indigenous communities in contextualizing and enhancing the K–12 curriculum anchored on peoples' educational and social settings for the attainment of quality education ^[5].

Moreover, this framework addresses different concerns that will improve the education system being implemented in the country. In this order, DepEd has a comprehensive approach to addressing the educational needs of IPs. DepEd's strategy encompasses several key components to ensure the provision of quality and relevant education services to all IPs. In addition, DepEd is committed to providing adequate and culturally appropriate learning resources and environments that meet the specific needs of IP learners ^[6–7]. This includes ensuring that the materials, facilities, and instructional approaches are respectful and responsive to their

cultural context. To support the implementation of the IP Education Program, DepEd emphasizes the hiring, deployment, and continuous development of qualified teachers and learning facilitators who are equipped to meet the diverse needs of IP students ^[8].

DepEd also recognizes the importance of establishing dedicated units within the department that are responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring IP education interventions. These units play a vital role in coordinating efforts, tracking progress, and ensuring the effective implementation of policies and programs related to IP education ^[3]. Furthermore, DepEd actively seeks to strengthen partnerships with institutions and civil society organizations to enhance coordination, knowledge sharing, and the overall sustainability of the IP Education Program.

Lastly, DepEd is committed to implementing stronger affirmative action to eradicate all forms of discrimination against IPs in the entire Philippine education system. This includes promoting respect for Indigenous cultural expressions and values and fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational environment for Indigenous Peoples. By recognizing and addressing the unique educational needs and cultural contexts of IPs, DepEd aims to provide an education system that empowers and uplifts Indigenous communities across the Philippines.

2. Research objectives

In general, this study intended to develop Sama Bajaus educationally through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) in the K–12 curriculum. Specifically, it described the characteristics of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus in Batangas City and identified the issues and problems that confront IPed teachers in integrating the IKSPs of Sama Bajaus into the K–12 curriculum. With this, the study specifically aimed to:

- (1) Identify the characteristics of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus regarding: a) Objectives, b) Practicality, c) Cultural preservation, and d) Sustainable development.
- (2) Determine the extent of integration of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus in the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum relative to a) Meeting the needs of every learner, b) Provision of clear goals and objectives, c) Building the learning experience, and offering integrative approaches.
- (3) Identify the issues and problems confronting IPed teachers in the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus.
- (4) Propose a curriculum guide for the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajau.

3. Research methodology

The study attempted to describe the features of the K to 12 curriculum and likewise determined the responsiveness of the curriculum to the program goal of preserving the culture and rights of the Sama Bajau people in Batangas City. It also determined the issues and challenges in the preservation of Sama Bajaus' culture along with the implementation of the indigenous people's curriculum. This study used a convergent mixed method design to gather data and information about the topic at hand, wherein it involved collecting quantitative

and qualitative data and analyzed, then compared the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data.

The research participants included teachers, school heads, students, parents of students from pre-selected education institutions in Batangas, Sama Bajau elders, and local government and NCIP officials. A purposeful sampling technique was utilized, wherein the participants were purposely selected because they were the ones who could provide the needed information through their knowledge and experience in Indigenous education. Yet, the participants joined voluntarily concerning the ethical considerations that this research honors.

The study made use of qualitative instruments in the form of focus group discussions and key informant interview guides and quantitative instruments in the form of a structured questionnaire. The next step was pre-testing. This was done to check for adequate reliability and validity of the procedures. Essentially, in this pre-testing step, the full implementation procedures (e.g., setting up interviews, the interview proper, callbacks, etc.) were tested. The study prioritized the validation of responses in the questionnaire through phone calls. However, should participants refuse or be unable to provide contact numbers, face-to-face validation would be done, pending approval of the conduct of face-to-face interviews from the local government unit. The obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.85, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the items^[9]. As with the survey instrument, qualitative instruments in the form of FGD and KII guides were also developed through a literature review. In addition, an initial assessment or review of interviews from the pre-testing step was conducted. The findings that were generated from this assessment were used to develop the questions for the FGD and KII guides.

Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on mobility, the study opted to conduct a self-administered survey among teachers, school heads, parents, and students, as well as key informant interviews through email and phone calls. The study conducted face-to-face focus group discussions with the group of Sama Bajau elders, following basic health protocols in accordance with the Inter-Agency Task Force's (IATF) guidelines^[10]. A permit to conduct face-to-face focus group discussions was also secured from the local government unit.

3.1. Quantitative phase

A survey was the primary data collection method in the quantitative phase. The questionnaire for teachers and school heads included inquiries on teaching-related factors along with readiness, professional development activities received, and perceptions on the responsiveness of the K–12 program to the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus. In addition, the questionnaire for students included queries on the student's level of comfort in using their native language and how well they understood the lessons and/or discussions, their enthusiasm and willingness to learn, their ability to interact and communicate with their peers without fear of being misinterpreted, their ability to recognize their native culture and traditions and incorporate them into their daily activities, and their learning preferences. Meanwhile, the questionnaire for parents included questions on their level of knowledge, awareness, and perception of the issues and challenges in the preservation of Sama Bajau's culture, along with the implementation of the Indigenous people's curriculum for educational development^[11].

3.2. Qualitative phase

This phase involved a series of follow-up activities for quantitative results through focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The main tool of inquiry was a semi-structured interview guide. The guides

involved questions that were intended to aid in explaining and providing nuance to the quantitative results.

3.3. Integration phase

Convergent mixed methods is a research approach that involves the simultaneous collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. It aims to merge or converge these two types of data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic or question. In convergent mixed methods, equal emphasis is placed on both qualitative and quantitative data, and the results from each approach are combined during the analysis phase.

During the integration phase, the researcher brings together the results from both qualitative and quantitative analyses. This can be done by comparing the findings, identifying patterns or relationships between the data, or using one type of data to help interpret or validate the other. The goal is to provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research topic by drawing on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Convergent mixed methods can be particularly useful when the research question requires a comprehensive exploration of a complex phenomenon. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter, uncovering both the what and the why behind the observed patterns or relationships.

Quantitative data from the survey were processed, encoded, and analyzed through different statistical software, such as Stata and R. Descriptive statistics were used to report the basic measures of the survey data. This included simple summaries such as frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode).

Meanwhile, qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The analysis involved three phases: 1) familiarization with the data, 2) identifying themes and patterns, and 3) defining and naming themes. All interviews were repeatedly reviewed and transcribed to search for meaning and patterns. The transcriptions were in consistent structure in MS Word form. Using an Excel spreadsheet, raw data were logged and summarized with a unique identifier for the source, such as the participant code, to detail the team's progress in converting the raw data in such a way that themes could be easily identified.

The ethical issues of informed consent, risk of harm, confidentiality, anonymity, and conflict of interest were considered in the data gathering since the majority of the respondents were Sama Bajau, and the activities were done in their community.

Adherence to NCIP standards was pushed through NCIP Administrative Order No. 1 Series of 2012 ^[12]. The researcher requested approval of the study to be conducted from the NCIP IV-A Regional Office, and once approved, a team validated it in the community to see if all the provisions in the administrative order were complied with. Approval from the tribe leader was also sought by the researcher before any activity was done in the community. A Memorandum of Agreement between the researcher and the community, which contained the details of the obligations and commitments of both parties, was signed as a form of formal written agreement.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Characteristics of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Bajaus

Local knowledge is included within Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), which have evolved

through decades of trial and error and are transmitted verbally from one generation to the next. Owing to their tight linkages to resource management and conservation, they were determined to be a significant growth driver. As seen in the table, IPED programs equip teachers, school principals, and administrators, as well as all other staff at all levels of government, to administer culture-based education for IPs.

Respondents have interpreted this signal as representing the actual situation at the research locale. This indicates that the academic community in the study strongly considers the incorporation of IKSPs into teaching and learning content. In addition, several governments and local and international organizations have expressed concern about providing Indigenous Peoples with an education that is culturally grounded and relevant.

In terms of objectives, it is very true that the characteristics of the indigenous knowledge system and practices of Sama Bajaus focus on the objectives, as the 4.40 composite mean quantitatively signifies that the curriculum supports the learning of the said tribe. As aligned with the themes, namely curriculum inclining to relevant learning and cognitive advancement toward cultural and societal inclusion, the objectives crafted for the intention of inclusive education are justifiably achieved.

In connection to practicality, the curriculum's practicality helps Sama Bajaus IKSPs spread into the mainstream. Location-based, ancestor-derived Indigenous curricula with bodies of knowledge are intrinsically related to their environs, Indigenous bodies that foster them, and the circumstances in which they thrive. With a 2.89 general mean, this situation can make the Sama Bajau curriculum practical. Indigenous peoples and institutions are collecting indigenous materials and epistemologies for educational curricula, which most kids do not know about. Sustainability of natural resources, biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate change mitigation and adaptation require such knowledge. This is summed up with the themes of academic adaptation, coping mechanisms, and competent learning for cultural survival.

In line with cultural preservation, IP communities should improve while keeping their heritage. To promote culture-based education, the general mean of 3.14 signifies that DepEd is collaborating with IP communities to localize the K–12 core curriculum through the IPED Program. This effort seeks to institutionalize contact and cooperation with IP elders and other community representatives to ensure that IP youth participate in and benefit from inclusive, culturally sensitive, and IP youth-oriented education programs. Intergenerational responsibility within and among Indigenous communities and oral modeling for comfortability and assurance were the themes of the cultural preservation aspect of IKSPs.

About sustainable development, IKSPs are always sustainable. Sustainable development in education gives everyone the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to construct a sustainable future. It also requires teaching and learning approaches that empower students to change their behavior and act for long-term development ^[13]. This is reflected in the 3.80 mean about sustainable development in general. Hence, sustainable development education promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration as supported by the themes that emerged in the study which were culturally responsive education and comprehensive goals for cultural connections. Education for sustainable development requires significant changes in education, especially inclusive education.

4.2. Extent integration of Sama Bajau's Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) in the K to 12 basic education curriculum

Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) are local knowledge established by the ancestors who lived centuries ago and subjected to experimentation by succeeding generations. These are transferred

informally through oral communication of ideas from an older to a younger generation. These knowledge systems and practices have proven to be a substantial backbone for maintaining sustainable development among indigenous groups, linking the past, present, and future. Despite their importance, these knowledge, systems, and practices are deteriorating at an escalating rate due to consistent assimilation that resulted from the continuing loss of interest in these practices among young people.

In line with meeting the needs of every learner, garnering a weighted mean of 3.72, participants revealed that the Sama Bajau community validates that the K to 12 curriculum supports learners to be in school, thus preventing them from participating in the exploitative labor force. There are two themes generated that describe how the K to 12 curriculum meets the Sama Bajau learners' needs through integration: creation of learning opportunities in schools for Sama Bajau learners and increasing awareness of teachers on IPed^[14-15].

In connection to the provision of clear goals and objectives, results revealed that the curriculum optimistically impacts the IPs by prioritizing the core values of inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and flexibility that support the localization and indigenization of the teaching and learning process. The weighted mean of 3.89 signified that the comprising educational institutions relevantly included in their priorities catering to learners with a different cultural orientation. Meanwhile, two themes were generated from qualitative data, which are School Heads' Promotion of IPed and Teachers' Commitment to IPed.

In terms of building the learning experience, the provision of basic education which focuses on promoting native culture and traditions is well-defined in their activities and strategies which signified the highest weighted mean of 4.37. Data also revealed that school activities which include their cultural diversity promulgate their culture and tradition, making it stand out as an entity of a culture-based curriculum. Accordingly, three themes were generated. These are Optimally Creative Pedagogies and Instructions, Culturally Sensitive Learning Facilities and Educational Resources, and Community Extension, Linkages and Partnership.

About offering integrative approaches, data presented revealed that the school has a formalized plan for what topics are to be taught in each grade level. These are designed to ensure educational continuity which reciprocates the needs of learners and teachers before the pandemic. It can also be noted that teachers have varied opportunities for professional development. The teacher's academic and professional development activities help to create engaging and effective lessons for Badjao learners. Based on the gathered information, three themes were extracted namely: Intertwining Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Skills, Associating Learners Conceptual Understanding to Multiple Representations Across Curriculum, and Linking Professional Development to Students Learning^[16-17].

Based on the two types of data gathered by the researcher, it can be concluded that offering integrative approaches in the integration of IKSPs of Sama Bajaus into the K-12 curriculum is realized by the learners. Data revealed that teachers possessed content knowledge and pedagogical skills in the application of culture-based education for Sama Bajau learners^[17]. In addition, they link their lessons across different subject matter to share effective techniques for differentiated, developmentally appropriate opportunities to address learners' individual differences and professional development for teachers to improve their skills to implement innovation and integration that are congruent with the content and performance standards established by DEP.

4.3. Issues and problems in the integration of Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus

Indigenous knowledge and learning systems have long been acknowledged as essential components of

Indigenous education. The incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into mainstream educational curricula is considered to increase Indigenous students' self-esteem and the relevance of curricular content. According to Victor and Yano, Indigenous tribes demand an education that focuses on the young generation's cultural well-being and personhood.

With time and student diversity, culture-related teachers face many obstacles that threaten IKSP's inclusion in the curriculum. The long school years of students are a problem ^[17]. Due to their scarcity, Sama Bajaus are not employed in technological facilities like libraries, computer labs, and others. Finally, Sama Bajau kids have a shortage of classrooms, teachers, and non-teaching staff. Problems and issues in the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus were compressed into these two topics that emerged from the qualitative research's findings. The themes at hand are cultural learning resources and the responsiveness of the educational system.

To address the specific needs of Sama Bajau students, teachers should receive training in teaching Indigenous learners. This training should equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand the unique cultural and educational requirements of the Sama Bajau community. Teachers who are trained in working with Indigenous people, such as the Sama Bajaus, can better tailor their instructional methods and approaches to meet the student's needs and promote effective learning ^[1-2]. In addition to training, teachers need to develop and produce instructional materials that cater to the specific needs and experiences of the Sama Bajau students. These materials should be culturally relevant, engaging, and accessible, enabling the students to effectively engage in the teaching and learning process.

Overall, addressing the shortage of classrooms, teachers, and non-teaching personnel, along with providing appropriate training and Indigenous materials, can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for Sama Bajau students, allowing them to thrive academically while maintaining their cultural identity. In this connection, many teacher education programs do not make preservice teachers aware of the cultural and linguistic differences they are likely to face in their future classrooms or give them the knowledge, strategies, and pedagogical skills they need to deal with these differences.

As teacher education moves away from preparing only Indigenous preservice teachers to work mostly in tribal or on-reserve schools and toward preparing all teacher candidates to teach all students about Indigenous histories and perspectives in line with international curriculum reform and changing standards for the profession by teacher regulating bodies, Indigenous teachers bring valuable knowledge and experience to the professional development of other educators. Indigenous educators should be careful about taking on the role of expert and being in charge of all parts of education because it can be a lot to handle ^[3-5]. Indigenous teachers can help their non-Indigenous colleagues by giving them support in the classroom, giving advice about Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing, and building and keeping home-school relationships.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussions presented in this study, it can be concluded that the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of the Sama Bajau community exhibit characteristics that align with curriculum integration, promoting cultural advancement, social inclusion, and the preservation of Indigenous heritage. Integration of Sama Bajau's IKSPs within the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum has the potential to support Sama Bajau learners by offering increased learning opportunities that are culturally

sensitive and inclusive. Furthermore, it can enhance the awareness and understanding of school personnel, particularly teachers and school heads, regarding the importance of localizing and indigenizing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (KSAV) in education.

However, the study also revealed that challenges and issues are impeding the effective integration of IKSPs into the curriculum. These challenges include the availability of cultural learning resources and the overall responsiveness of the educational system. It was found that the extent of integration of Sama Bajau's IKSPs is significantly related to the problems and issues encountered. Therefore, a policy recommendation is suggested to address the gaps in localization and indigenization within the curriculum, ensuring that learners' needs are adequately met.

To facilitate the integration of Sama Bajaus Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs), the study proposes the development of a curriculum guide specifically tailored to this subject. This guide would provide educators with the necessary resources, strategies, and approaches to effectively incorporate IKSPs into the teaching and learning process, thereby promoting a more inclusive and culturally responsive education for Sama Bajau learners.

6. Recommendation

In the light of the core findings and concluding statements above, this paper recommends that:

- (1) The Department of Education may conduct an in-depth study on the characteristics of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) of Sama Bajaus to explore the specific goals and aspirations embedded within Sama Bajau IKSPs, examining how they contribute to the cultural identity, community cohesion, and overall well-being of the Sama Bajau people.
- (2) A comprehensive assessment may be conducted to determine the extent of integration of Sama Bajau's Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs) within the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, focusing on meeting the needs of every learner, provision of clear goals and objectives, building the learning experience, and offering integrative approaches.
- (3) The division may conduct a qualitative study to explore the perspectives and experiences of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) teachers regarding the integration of Sama Bajau's Indigenous Knowledge System and Practices (IKSPs), with a focus on identifying the underlying factors that hinder or facilitate successful integration.
- (4) The proposed curriculum guide may be adopted, utilized, and enhanced thereafter.

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