

Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy in the Preservation of Higaonon Practices

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ABSTRACT: As globalization and modernization continue to influence educational practices, the preservation of indigenous practices has become a concern, particularly for marginalized communities such as the Higaonon people of Mindanao, Philippines. The study was limited to investigating culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of the students' Higaonon culture. Using simple random sampling through Slovin's Formula, one hundred eighty (180) students were the respondents of this study from the North III District- Center for Indigenous People of Gingoog City Division. Correlational and causal research designs were used. The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire that passed the validity and reliability tests. Statistical tools like Mean and Standard Deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis were utilized for the treatment of the gathered data. Results showed that the overall extent of culturally responsive teaching pedagogy is at high while the overall level of the preservation of Higaonon practices is effective. There is a moderate to high positive correlation between the extent of culturally responsive teaching pedagogy and preservation of Higaonon practices. Teachers have the crucial role in preserving Higaonon practices. Thus, continued integration of the Higaonon's culture and practices in teaching may help students remember and love their identity.

KEYWORDS: assessment, cultural integration, teaching methods, teaching pedagogy

I. INTRODUCTION

The Higaonon people have a rich cultural heritage. They are found in remote regions or mountains. They are closer to nature and enjoy a more peaceful society. They are also quite welcoming to guests. These people are distinctive not just because they follow different customs, but also because they are incredibly honest with both themselves and other people. They differ from other Indigenous communities because of these customs. They have a wealth of traditions and customs that help them define who they are.

Consequently, the obstacle in preserving the Higaonon practices of the students remains a challenge. 21st-century teachers play a vital role in bridging the gap between modern educational practices and the traditional values of students. The educational system faces the challenge of preserving cultural identities while adapting to the demands of globalized, technology-driven classrooms. Teachers have to use culturally responsive teaching pedagogy that would make students active and engaged. It has to be aligned with the diversity and sensitivity of students' Higaonon practices. Republic Act (RA) 10533, which is the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, provided that education should adhere to the standards and principles in developing an enhanced basic education curriculum by being contextualized and global as well as being culture-sensitive.

Additionally, as globalization and modernization continued to influence educational practices, the preservation of indigenous practices become an increasingly critical concern, particularly for marginalized communities such as the Higaonon people of Mindanao, Philippines. The Higaonon, like many indigenous groups, face the dual challenge of maintaining their cultural heritage while adapting to a rapidly changing educational environment. Indigenous students are often caught between the demands of mainstream education and the preservation of their ancestral traditions, languages, and practices. This cultural tension makes it essential for educators to adopt teaching methods that honor and integrate indigenous knowledge into the curriculum (Santos & Cruz, 2023).

Furthermore, meeting academic criteria, these teachers recognize and preserve the cultural legacy of indigenous students by fusing technology with culturally appropriate education. Beyond teaching, they take in the roles of social change

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agents, inclusive classroom facilitators, and cultural awareness advocates. They make sure that contemporary education acts as a platform for empowerment rather than cultural deterioration by carefully modifying curricula and involving the community. 21st-century teachers, who are expected to be tech-savvy, culturally responsive, and inclusive, played a vital role in bridging the gap between the preservation of indigenous identity and the requirements of modern education (Patel & Nguyen, 2023).

For Higaonon students, this pedagogical approach is particularly important as it ensures that traditional cultural practices, language, and values are woven into classroom activities, contributing to the preservation of their cultural background while maintaining academic success through culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), teachers are able to create an educational environment that recognize and respect the cultural backgrounds of students, thereby supporting their academic success and social-emotional well-being (Nguyen & Lee, 2022).

For educators to provide lessons that connect with students' life experiences, these programs are crucial in helping them become more conscious of and knowledgeable about a variety of cultural backgrounds. These programs foster more inclusive and significant learning environments by equipping educators with methods to respect and integrate indigenous languages, customs, and knowledge systems. The transformation of classrooms into places where cultural identity is not only recognized but also embraced ultimately depends heavily on professional development. Recent studies emphasized the need for professional development programs that equipped teachers with the skills to integrate culturally relevant teaching practices in their classrooms (Gonzalez-Perez & Ramirez-Montoya, 2022).

Thus, the researcher aimed to investigate culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of Higaonon practices within the classroom. It examined how teachers could incorporate Indigenous knowledge into their teaching methods, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they used to ensure that Higaonon students developed a sense of pride and belonging in both their academic and cultural lives

This study was anchored on Cultural Relevance Theory by Paris (2020) which emphasizes the importance of centering students' cultural identities in educational practices. Paris highlighted that culturally relevant pedagogy is not merely about incorporating cultural content but involves a transformative approach that validates and affirms students' cultural backgrounds, which fosters a sense of belonging and academic success. This theoretical lens is particularly pertinent in the context of Higaonon learners, as it allows for the integration of their indigenous knowledge systems and practices into the curriculum, thereby preserving and promoting their cultural heritage.

Supporting this perspective, Bastida et al. (2023) proposed a rights-based instructional planning approach for teaching Higaonon learners, which emphasized the inclusion of cultural integrity, ancestral domains, self-governance, and social justice in the curriculum. They argued that such an approach empowers indigenous learners by recognizing and upholding their inherent rights, which is essential for the preservation of Higaonon practices. This aligns with Paris's (2020) assertion that culturally relevant pedagogy should be rooted in the lived experiences and rights of students.

Moreover, Inocian (2020) highlighted the need for a culturally responsive model that intertwines cultural knowledge, mastery, reflections, and innovations in education. He suggested that such a model can promote sustainable development by preserving cultural identities and practices. This reinforces the idea that culturally responsive teaching is instrumental in safeguarding indigenous cultures, including those of the Higaonon

Additionally, Mercado (2021) discussed the implementation of a culturally responsive curriculum in an Indigenous People's school in the Philippines, which focused on the integration of indigenous knowledge systems and practices. He noted that while challenges exist, such as limited resources and teacher preparedness, the incorporation of indigenous cultural elements into the curriculum significantly contributes to the preservation of indigenous practices.

Furthermore, Balaba (2023) examined the social impact of multicultural education on indigenous secondary learners, including the Higaonon, in the Caraga Region. Her study showed that engaging in multicultural education enhances learners' acceptance of their own culture, leading to improved self-knowledge and self-development. This underscored the role of culturally responsive pedagogy in fostering cultural pride and continuity among indigenous students.

II. METHODOLOGY

To effectively investigate the impact of culturally responsive teaching pedagogy on the preservation of Higaonon practices, the study used appropriate research designs suited to its objectives. Using a correlational research design to establish relationships between independent and dependent variables without manipulation. The investigation acknowledged that correlation does not imply causation, but by looking into the relationship between the variables, it offered insights into how some elements might be connected, because it enables the investigation of trends and relationships between different teaching methods and students' outcomes without changing the variables. This design is especially helpful in educational research. The results can provide educators and policymakers with useful information on how various teaching strategies affect students'

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performance and engagement, especially when it comes to culturally sensitive pedagogy. Correlational research aimed to describe and measure the degree of association between two or more variables without interfering with causation, as noted by Fraenkel et. al. (2019).

Moreover, a causal research design was also employed to determine the link between the causes and effects of the independent and dependent variables, considering the factors to ensure accurate output and a better understanding of specific behaviors. This design was used to investigate culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of students' Higaonon culture. The designed and implemented learning activities that anchored content and competencies in the ancestral domain and cultural practices of students, as mentioned in Culturally Responsive Curriculum in IP School Mercado (2021).

The data collected for Problems 1 and 2 were analyzed using statistical techniques such as Mean and Standard Deviation. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for Problem 3, and Multiple Linear Regression was utilized for Problem 4.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Problem 1. What is the extent of the culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in terms of;

- 1.1 teaching methods;
- 1.2 cultural integration; and
- 1.3 assessment?

Table 1. Overall Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy

Variables	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Teaching Methods	4.24	0.92	Strongly Agree	Very High
Cultural Integration	4.18	0.92	Agree	High
Assessment	4.17	0.92	Agree	High
Overall	4.19	0.92	Agree	High

Note: 4.21-5.00 Very High; 3.41-4.20 High; 2.61-3.40 Average; 1.81-2.60 Low; 1.00-1.80 Very Low

Table 1 presents the overall extent of culturally responsive teaching pedagogy. It registered an overall Mean of 4.19 with SD=0.92, described as Agree and interpreted as High Level. The data imply that the teachers make sure that they are teaching the students well and that they also give emphasis on the importance of presenting and integrating topics about culture and traditions in their classes. They make sure that the learners value the importance of their heritage and the sacrifices made by their ancestors. In addition to protecting students' cultural identity, this method helps them understand how important these customs have been in forming their lives. Teachers create a more inclusive and culturally sensitive classroom atmosphere by integrating cultural knowledge with academic learning, which in turn helps students develop a stronger feeling of pride and respect for their heritage.

According to Ward et al. (2021) cultures and traditions should not only be taught on the subjects dealing with it, but it must also be integrated to other subject areas as well for better exposure and understanding for the learners. In this way, the learners can appreciate the connections of reality to the lessons they are studying as well.

In the same table, the variable, *Teaching Methods* was rated the highest with the Mean of 4.24 with SD=0.92, described as Strongly Agree and interpreted as Very High Level. The data imply that the teachers made sure that they are exposed to various teaching methods and strategies that will aid them in integrating cultural concepts in their lesson discussion with the learners. It is the responsibility of the educators to ensure that the instructional strategies they employ are respectful of the learners' cultural backgrounds and practices. They make certain that such things are not lost to history, but rather remembered and treasured, so that the subsequent generation can understand the significance of what they have accomplished. For students to become familiar with their legacy and to have the impression that it is still significant in the present day, it is essential for teachers to incorporate aspects of culture and tradition into their lessons. By helping students understand the importance of their customs in the context of modern society, teachers may motivate them to take an active role in conserving and passing on these traditions to coming generations. Additionally, this will assist the learners in comprehending more and appreciating their origins (González-Pérez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2022).

Meanwhile, the variable, *Assessment* was rated the lowest with the Mean of 4.17 with SD=0.92, described as Agree and interpreted as High Level. Not only do teachers evaluate the tactics they use, but they also evaluate the performance of the students they are teaching. This is extremely important since it will provide information to both the teachers and the parents about the present status of their students. Additionally, it will provide the educators with an idea of the students that may require additional aid and direction because of this. It is the obligation of teachers to keep both the students, and their parents informed

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about the students' performance. This allows the teachers to have a notion of the kind of assistance and follow-up they will provide for their students.

Additionally, by ensuring that students are aware of their areas of strength and growth, transparent assessment techniques encourage students to take charge of their education. Furthermore, a cooperative attitude to assisting the students' educational journey may be fostered by good communication between parents and instructors, building a solid support system that may result in improved academic performance. In addition, this will assist the students in determining if they should put in more effort or continue with their current methods of studying and achieving well in school and throughout their extracurricular endeavors (Zhang and Wang, 2021).

Problem 2. What is the level of the preservation of Higaonon practices in terms of:

- 2.1 cultural knowledge;
- 2.2 cultural engagement; and
- 2.3 cultural traditions?

Table 2. Summary of Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Cultural Knowledge	4.16	0.93	Agree	Effective
Cultural Engagement	4.18	0.95	Agree	Effective
Cultural Traditions	4.22	0.94	Strongly Agree	Very Effective
Overall Mean	4.19	0.94	Agree	Effective

Note: 4.21-5.00 Very Effective; 3.41-4.20 Effective; 2.61-3.40 Fair; 1.81-2.60 Less Effective; 1.00-1.80 Least Effective

Table 2 showcases the overall level of the preservation of Higaonon practices. It registered an overall Mean of 4.19 with SD=0.94, described as Agree and interpreted as Effective Level. The data imply that the learners believe that their teachers are effectively employing strategies and techniques that allow them to better understand and appreciate their cultures and traditions. They feel that the effort made by their teachers is relevant to their needs. It means that students not only acknowledge but also appreciate culturally responsive instruction as a crucial component of their educational journey. A more inclusive and courteous learning atmosphere is promoted, student engagement is increased, and self-esteem is increased when pedagogy takes into account the cultural backgrounds of the students. Additionally, it gives students a better sense of who they are by enabling them to relate academic material to cultural experiences in real life. In the end, this method equips students to be culturally conscious individuals who respect variety and make significant contributions to both their local and larger communities. According to Tan (2023) an appropriate set of strategies and activities must be provided to the learners so that they will not get confused with what they are learning and studying. In this way, they will not get conflicted by the ideas and information that are presented to them.

In the same table, the variable, *Cultural Traditions* was rated the highest with Mean of 4.22 with SD=0.94, described as Strongly Agree and interpreted as Very Effective. The data imply that the teachers make sure that they can present the concepts of cultural traditions as well as its importance to the learners. It is important for educators to ensure that they apply instructional strategies and approaches that can utilize the historical and cultural samples that are present in the area since this is essential since it gives the students the opportunity to get more familiar with their past and with the material that is significant in their community. Because it makes learning more meaningful, relatable, and personally relevant for the students, this high grade demonstrates the powerful influence of integrating local culture into education.

Teachers who ground their teachings in cultural traditions assist students in appreciating their heritage as a live aspect of who they are, rather than merely as a subject of study. Additionally, it promotes cultural continuity by motivating the next generation to uphold and transmit the knowledge and customs of their forebears. Additionally, such culturally infused learning fosters tolerance for variety, sharpens critical thinking skills, and enables students to see their traditions as stepping stones to identity development and personal progress rather than as antiquated artifacts. By doing so, students could get a deeper understanding of themselves as well as the community in which they live.

According to (Torres & Ramos, 2024) for students to have more comprehensive and profound concepts and comprehension of the things they do at home and on their tribe, it is necessary for schools to also teach them about cultural customs.

Meanwhile, the variable, *Cultural Knowledge* was rated the lowest with Mean of 4.16 with SD=0.93, described as Agree and interpreted as Effective level. The data imply that the teachers make sure that cultures and traditions are inculcated to the

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minds of the learners so that it will not be easily forgotten. The students have the impression that their instructors are doing everything in their power to ensure that they have a profound understanding of the significance of culture and customs in their community. Activities are provided by the instructors to assist them in expanding their understanding of the past and traditions of their surroundings, both on a local and a national level. For the learners to develop greater understanding and appreciation for their cultural and historical roots, it is essential that they be provided with the opportunity to learn more about their personal heritage and culture. In addition to this, it will give them the opportunity to model desirable personality traits and principles that they can subsequently pass on to subsequent generations (López & Smith, 2024).

Even though this aspect received the lowest rating, it nevertheless shows a high degree of efficacy, demonstrating the dedication of teachers to making culture a key component of learning. Cultural knowledge integration exposes students to the customs, beliefs, and stories that characterize their society and aids in bridging generational divides. A solid basis for identification, empathy, and social responsibility is established when students are exposed to their cultural knowledge deeply and regularly. Furthermore, being aware of one's cultural heritage promotes a feeling of pride and belonging, both of which are essential for creating resilient and self-assured people. As a result, teachers are essential to maintaining intangible cultural legacy and developing students who are socially conscious and culturally grounded.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent culturally responsive teaching pedagogy and the level of preservation of Higaonon practices?

Table 3. Test of Correlation

Independent Variables	r-value	p-value	Description	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Teaching Methods	0.692**	0.000	Moderate Positive	Reject	Significant
Cultural Integration	0.782**	0.000	High Positive	Reject	Significant
Assessment	0.758**	0.000	High Positive	Reject	Significant

Table 3 shows the test of the relationship between the extent of culturally responsive teaching pedagogy and the level of preservation of Higaonon practices. The main variable is teaching pedagogy as to teaching methods, cultural integration and assessment. For *Teaching Methods*, the computed r-value was 0.692, with a computed p-value of 0.000. The computed p-value is less than the required p-value of 0.05 significance level. This data indicates a moderate positive significant correlation between culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of Higaonon practices in terms of teaching methods. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. Teaching methods are essential in preserving Higaonon practices as it allows the teachers to create ideas and activities that will integrate cultural concepts in the teaching and learning process. The learners have now the chance to learn and understand their culture and traditions in ways they can easily learn and understand it. The significance of strategic instructional decisions in cultural preservation is shown by this important relationship. Students are more involved and feel more connected to their culture when teachers explicitly employ strategies that emphasize and include indigenous knowledge and traditions. In addition to enhancing academic learning, these strategies are an effective way to pass on culture, especially to underprivileged or vulnerable groups like the Higaonon. Additionally, using culturally relevant pedagogy might encourage students to actively participate in cultural revival initiatives, develop intergenerational understanding, and feel prouder of their culture. It demonstrates that education is about maintaining identities as much as it is about transferring knowledge. According to Paris (2020) it is important that cultures and traditions pass on to the young generation so that they can appreciate it more and prepare themselves on passing it as well to the next generations.

For *Cultural Integration*, the computed r-value was 0.782, with a computed p-value of 0.000. The computed p-value is less than the required p-value of 0.05 significance level. This data indicates a high positive significant correlation between culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of Higaonon practices in terms of cultural integration. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. Cultural integration is essential to be part of the teaching and learning process as it will help the learners understand that culture-based and tradition-based concepts are relatable and can still be applied to present times. In this way, the learners will find it interesting and important. This study demonstrates how well culturally integrated teaching strategies work to provide students a sense of purpose and accessibility to cultural learning. Teachers create an atmosphere where cultural history is valued and useful to contemporary life by demonstrating how customs and cultural practices are still relevant today. Instead of seeing these cultural ideas as remote or unnecessary relics from the past, this method encourages pupils to internalize them as ongoing traditions. Additionally, it might encourage students to see themselves as active contributors to the continuance and preservation of their cultural heritage. By doing this, culturally integrated teaching strategies help students grow in self-awareness

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and pride, which in turn helps them appreciate and comprehend their heritage. According to Patel & Nguyen (2023) when the learners are exposed to cultures and traditions embedded on the lesson they are learning and studying at school they feel connected to it, and they begin to appreciate and embrace it.

For *Assessment*, the computed *r*-value was 0.758, with a computed *p*-value of 0.000. The computed *p*-value is less than the required *p*-value of 0.05 significance level. The data indicate a high positive significant correlation between culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of Higaonon practices in terms of assessment. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. Assessment is essential for the teachers so that they can gauge the level of understanding and even the appreciation of the learners towards cultural practices. It will also provide them with data that can serve as their basis on what more things that they need to do to increase the learners' acceptance towards it.

Teachers can gain a great deal about their students' cultural awareness, heritage connection, and practical application of cultural information by using evaluations that are culturally sensitive and conscientious. Additionally, assessments enable teachers to pinpoint areas in which students might require more assistance, allowing for more focused interventions that promote a greater understanding of culture. Teachers may guarantee that their instruction not only promotes academic success but also fosters a lifelong respect for cultural customs by tying evaluation to cultural responsiveness. This will help to preserve and perpetuate Higaonon culture. According to Santos & Cruz (2023) teachers can even make research-based findings so that their conjectures are backed up with scientific basis in a more convincing and informative ways.

Problem 4. Which of the independent variables predict/s singly or in combination the preservation of Higaonon practices?

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression

Independent Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standard Coefficient Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	0.211	0.161		1.306	0.193
Teaching Methods	0.298	0.049	0.274	6.041	0.000
Cultural Integration	0.243	0.058	0.230	4.183	0.000
Assessment	0.417	0.056	0.398	7.475	0.000
		R=0.812	R ² =0.659	F=214.018	Sig=0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy

b. Predictors: (Constant), Teaching Methods, Cultural Integration, Assessment

Table 4 shows the Regression Analysis on culturally responsive teaching pedagogy in the preservation of Higaonon practices. Teaching Methods ($B=0.274$, $t\text{-value}=6.041$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), Cultural Integration ($B=0.230$, $t\text{-value}=4.183$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), and Assessment ($B=0.398$, $t\text{-value}=7.475$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$) have positively predicted the preservation of Higaonon practices. This implies that culturally responsive pedagogy is a consequential determinant in the preservation of Higaonon practices and further explained the overall variance at 69%, while

the 31% was attributed to other factors that are not included in this study. Hence, Teaching Methods, Cultural Integration, and Assessment are significant predictors in motivating and boosting the preservation of Higaonon practices.

Teachers have a critical role in attaining this achievement. Their role as cultural stewards extends beyond only imparting knowledge; they must assist students in reestablishing a connection to their past and realizing its significance in the modern world. Teachers become vital contributors to the preservation of cultural identity by including these activities into their lesson plans and fostering a learning atmosphere that celebrates cultural variety. This preserves the community's cultural heritage while also enhancing the educational experience of pupils and guaranteeing that Higaonon customs are carried on to the next generations.

According to Gonzalez-Perez & Ramirez-Montoya (2022) preserving culture and traditions is essential for the learners. In this way, they have better understanding and appreciation of the heritage that they have. They will also learn to protect and preserve it despite the advances of the technology and the influences of foreign cultures.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are formulated:

1. Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy is done by teachers

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2. Teachers believe that preservation of the Higaonon practices is an essential role of teachers who are teaching in the hinterlands.
3. Culturally Responsive Teaching Pedagogy is crucial for the preservation of Higaonon practices.
4. Teachers have the important role in preserving the culture one's place, tribe.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that the:

1. Continued integration of the Higaonon's culture and practices in teaching may help students remember and love their identity.
2. Maintaining preservation of Higaonon practices in school may give students the sense of belonging and may be a way to improve students' interest in school.
3. Reestablishing a connection to their past and realizing its significance in the modern world teachers may do to increase their love for learning.
4. Teachers are vital contributors to the preservation of Higaonon culture and practices that regular trainings may guide teachers on how to integrating these in their lessons.

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