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UNHEARD SENTIMENTS OF MAMANWA (INDIGENOUS) LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION: A BASIS FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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Abstract
This article aimed to investigate the unheard sentiments among Mamanwa learners in mainstream education to create a suitable educational policy for indigenous learners in the Philippines. The study utilized purposive (non-probability) sampling comprising fifteen participants residing in Panaon Area, Southern Leyte, Philippines. Since the study involved the indigenous people community, free prior informed consent (FPIC) was secured from authorities. This study focused on the lived experiences of Mamanwa learners, particularly the barriers, challenges, and coping mechanisms for handling the struggles they faced in mainstream education. A face-to-face semi-structured interview was employed to gather meaningful responses analyzed through Colaizzi's strategy. The findings revealed that the Mamanwa learners' social isolation, the inadequacy of learning materials, lack of access to educational services, and limited support resources and educational funds from the government have contributed to their ongoing challenge to completion in mainstream education. These factors have all affected their personal and social well-being. Conclusively, despite the barriers and challenges, however, the Mamanwa learners are becoming resilient and diversely unique individuals who need to be understood, accepted, and embraced just like any other member of society. Furthermore, the fueling mechanisms of every indigenous group to cross mainstream education are in the hopes of building growth, promoting connections through intense exposure in the community, and as individuals of disadvantaged groups with a social change mindset aimed to improve their social status.

Keywords: indigenous people, indigenous peoples' education (IPEd), mainstream education, phenomenological analysis

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Introduction

Indigenous communities in the Philippines have a role in developing the country and have been promoting education (Gabriel et al., 2020). The Department of Education (DepEd) has promulgated a program for indigenous people called Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program. The purpose of this program is to provide an educational initiative undertaken through formal, non-formal, and informal modalities with an emphasis on the critical areas of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) (Cahapay, 2021). Moreover, the program also focuses on community lifecycle-based curriculum and assessment, educational goals, aspirations, and competencies specific to the Indigenous Cultural Community (ICC), engagement of elders and other community members in the teaching-learning process, assessment, and management of the initiative, recognition and continuing practice of the community's ILS (Napanoy & Peckley, 2020). The IPEd program serves as the response of the DepEd to the Indigenous peoples' (IP) right to basic education (Victor & Yano, 2016). IP's context-responsive education respects indigenous cultures and promotes the importance of indigenous knowledge, skills, and other cultural heritage aspects. In that case, indigenous education aims to restore civilization, strengthen communities and cultures, and develop economic and political skills to effectively manage local indigenous affairs and economies in national and international contexts (Clarke, 2001). The priorities of indigenous education include self-government, community-based projects, and strengthening language, experiences, beliefs, culture, and values (House, 2006; Casinillo et al., 2020). Moreover, the protection of the indigenous language is a way to protect the culture, and values and reinforce the identity of native people in the country.

Indeed, indigenous peoples are entitled to a sufficient and holistic education, and this education must reflect and point out their shared values, beliefs, principles, and general notions, among others (Clarke, 2001). Hall et al. (2015) depicted that education that focuses on the complete being, both cognitively and emotionally, is beneficial to the community. To ensure universal and equitable access of all Indigenous People (IPs) to quality and relevant education services towards functional literacy for all, the DepEd implemented Department Order No. 62, s. 2011 entitled "Adopting the Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework". As a culture-responsive education, the pedagogy, content, and assessment of all learning areas integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs) and Indigenous Learning System (ILS) of the IPs. Indigenous communities need knowledge and intellectual resources to protect and pursue their interests within the framework of the state as well as the international community. However, the study of Eduardo and Gabriel (2021) showed a limited mechanism to promote awareness among IPs on the framework of DepEd.

In addition, the study by UNESCO (2014) stressed that Indigenous Peoples face numerous barriers to education and are deprived in terms of the growth and transformation of education. Moreover, the fact that official school systems rarely reflect the realities of indigenous lives or traditional educational methods is a crucial flaw in administering IP education. Unfortunately, most of the national curricula overlook indigenous peoples' history, beliefs, customs, and languages; learning materials, textbooks, and other academic resources mirror mainstream society's ideals, traditions, and norms, among others.

The methods for imparting knowledge and enforcing class discipline differ from those used in the pupils' homes or communities. Because they lack cultural training and understanding of indigenous peoples' values and ways of life, most non-indigenous teachers are unprepared to teach in indigenous communities (Napanoy & Peckley, 2020). Wherein the school's orientation and educational goals are not determined by elders or community members (UN, 2008). Thus, this study claims that the Indigenous people faced challenges in completing their education. There were hidden obstacles, numerous barriers, and challenges, as well as unheard sentiments among indigenous students in mainstream education. This study is crafted in a way that there is a need to address this problem experienced by Indigenous People (IP) students. Therefore, this study is conducted, which claims to investigate the unheard sentiments of Mamanwa learners in mainstream secondary education and their coping strategies. And hopefully, help the teachers and school administrators address and cater to the learning difficulties experienced by indigenous students and their educational needs. In this connection, the WCIP (2014) suggested that efforts are necessary to ensure that there is access to education for indigenous peoples that is culturally and linguistically acceptable and that does not target or result in forced assimilation. The formal education system has not discussed this part of the educational needs of indigenous people in the Philippines. Most non-indigenous teachers are not prepared to teach in indigenous communities because they lack cultural training and understanding of their values and ways of life. Elders and community members are not involved in setting the direction or educational goals of the school (UN, 2008; UNESCO, 2014).

It is worth noting that how IP education will effectively be carried out depends on the teachers' and school authorities' competency skills in implementing and managing IP education. De Vera (2017), and Napanoy and Peckley, (2020) portrayed that enhancing teachers' competencies is a must through a series of training to equip them with cultural sensitivity and skills needed to teach the indigenous children. The study of cultures, values, and beliefs of indigenous learners from the Philippine perspective is very scarce in the literature. Indigenous learners' perspective is a good basis for creating an educational policy and improving the existing educational plan for the learners in the country. Hence, this research study is realized and carried out. Therefore, the results of this study will provide baseline information on the quality and accessibility of education, which researchers and academe can utilize for future endeavors in designing and developing a new direction for IP education in the Philippines. This study aims to look for possible means to explore the impact of the distinct barriers and diverse challenges faced by Mamanwa learners, coping strategies, and their unnoticed sentiments in mainstream education. Likewise, this study significantly looked at the effect of the culture of Indigenous People (IP) on education, for this will hopefully help the Mamanwa learners cope with their constant challenge to completion in mainstream education.

Methods

Research design

This research used a descriptive-narrative phenomenological research design, a type of qualitative research that focuses on how people perceive the

world. This qualitative design allowed the researcher to expand the manifestation of Mamanwa learners' unheard sentiments to determine their lived experiences, such as barriers and challenges they faced in mainstream education, and reconstruct their coping mechanisms to improve student learning outcomes.

Research participants and sampling procedure

The study was conducted at three selected Secondary High Schools and one private high school in Pintuyan and San Francisco of the Division of Southern Leyte, Philippines. These districts were chosen because they have more enrolled Mamanwa learners in their respective schools than in other districts. The schools selected were the following: (1) Marayag National High School; (2) Pintuyan National Vocational High School; (3) Saint Joseph College (San Francisco Branch) of San Francisco District; and (4) Alternative Learning System (ALS). The province's ethnicity is generally Bisaya. Some aboriginal people are found locally known as "Kongking" or Mamanwa in the Panaon Area, an island located in the southernmost part of the province, meaning mountain people. The focus participants of this investigation were fifteen Mamanwa learners enrolled in both public and private secondary high schools in the Districts of Pintuyan and San Francisco (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of Mamanwa learners (participants)

Schools	**Mamanwa Learners**	
	Frequency	***Percentage (%)***
Marayag National High School	2	13.33
Pintuyan National Vocational High School	2	13.33
Saint Joseph College	5	33.33
Alternative Learning System (ALS)	6	40.00
Total	**15**	**100.00**

This study utilized non-probability sampling, particularly purposive sampling, as the researcher focuses on informant selection. The researchers employed a subjective method in recruiting the target participants. Fifteen participants were recruited in this phenomenological study that fit the suggestion of Iwamoto et al. (2013) as an ample number of participants to generate meaningful themes and valuable interpretations. To strengthen the recruitment of participants, the researchers conducted a preliminary interview that aimed to verify if the selected participants are indeed Mamanwa learners with unheard sentiments. Most of the participants who were enrolled in the ALS-EST program in the San Francisco District and Pintuyan District are from Brgy. Pinamudlan. The participants of this study are the dropped-out Mamanwa learners who failed to complete primary and secondary education. The recruited participants can provide sufficient information about barriers and challenges in mainstream education in the country. Most of them were dominated by women, accounting for ten women, one homosexual man, and four men.

Research instruments

This study utilized an adapted questionnaire from Episcopal Commission on Indigenous Peoples (ECIP) (Eder, 2013) with an interview guide and focus group

discussion (FGD) to measure the validity and content reliability of the data. This tool was employed to gather meaningful responses analyzed using Collaizzi's Method (1978). According to Eder (2013), the said questionnaire was validated by some experts and depicted that it is reliable and associated with students' well-being and resilience in learning. Plus, the said instrument contained open-ended questions and enabled the researchers to unveil the lived experiences among Mamanwa learners. The research questionnaire consists of three parts. Part I of the questionnaire collects information on the profile of the participants. This part includes the participants' highest educational attainment in their family members, year level, age, gender, and academic performance. Part II is the gathered relevant questions of considered barriers and emerging challenges encountered by the Mamanwa Learners in Mainstream Education, which intends to guide the researcher in collecting and coding interview data into categories based on themes, patterns, concepts, or similar features. It consists of 18 open-ended questions in an interview guide that solicit the unheard sentiments and challenges experienced by Mamanwa learners in mainstream secondary education. Part III is the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Mamanwa learners and solicits relevant data and emerging issues in the classroom setting with Mamanwa learners in mainstream education. It also consists of 3 probing questions that collect relevant information on the common barriers and sentiments at school experienced by Mamanwa learners in mainstream education. Pilot testing was conducted to test the consistency of the results and the relationships among interviewed data.

Data gathering procedure and ethics

After recruiting the fifteen focus participants, a semi-structured interview was conducted. The face-to-face interviews were carried out one by one, and their responses were recorded using an audio recorder that usually lasted from 15 to 20 minutes. The safety of the participants was the researcher's primary duty since this analysis utilized human subjects. Following a standardized process, the researcher collected data in compliance with minimum health requirements as recommended by the local government unit, which involved obtaining permission to perform the analysis on respondents by giving them a letter of authorization from the School Head, Barangay Chairman, and the Chieftain of the Mamanwa community before interviewing the participants. The adapted questionnaire was employed during the free and convenient time of the participants. They were thoroughly informed about the study's goal and the procedures for both the researcher and the participants. The schedule for the conduct of the study was stipulated in the letter to inform all the concerned authorities regarding when and where the study was conducted and orally recorded agreement to allow me to collect essential data for this investigation.

These selected individuals were informed that it was voluntary and without any pressure to participate in the study, and the study's purpose and procedures were explained to them. They were also oriented and given direction in answering the questionnaire like the demographic data and asked to answer the semi-structured interview with open-ended questions in the adapted questionnaire with utmost honesty, openness, and sincerity and their freedom to withdraw from participation at any time and for any reason in my recruitment letter. After receiving the authorization, the face-to-face interview with the participants

commenced. However, the time allocated was relaxed due to the heavy emotional content of the testimonies, with a large number of conversations lasting up to 20 minutes. The body language, tone of voice, or emotional intensity were recorded in field notes or memoranda, which became part of the study's artifacts and the interview transcripts. Moreover, the verbatim transcriptions of the audio recordings were done after the interview. The verbatim transcriptions were translated into the English language and were peer-reviewed by an English critic. To impose the confirmability aspect of the study, the researcher carried out the process by maintaining accurate written notes and persistently checking and rechecking the data. Moreover, through bracketing with its application in phenomenology, personal biases were minimized to examine the data from a new and different perspective.

Data analysis procedure

The data collected was analyzed using Collaizzi's Method (1978) with detailed steps, as cited by Morrow et al. (2015), which were carried out by organizing the qualitative data collected from the interviews into categories based on themes patterns, concepts, or similar characteristics. Relative to the data analysis used, member checking was employed in the form of focused group discussion. Besides, this analysis was used to verify whether the generated themes emerging concepts, relationships, categories, and structure of the phenomenon captured the respondents' unheard feelings and life experiences that established data credibility. The researchers personally interviewed using a recorder device and transcribes it for coding purposes in the data analysis. Once the coding process was initiated, the researcher had to formulate the coding guide for the transcription and other related relevant purposes. This study was expected to gather a large amount of data. To manage the processing and analyses of these data, the researchers utilized a technique of grouping them into emergent or 29 main themes (Colaizzi, 1978), where 'P' stands for Participant, with the number referring to the specific participant, where 'P1' means Participant #1; 'P2' is Participant #2; and so on. The 'Council of Elders' refers to the collective or collegial body of tribal leaders in the communities. They make up one group for each area identified or labeled as such.

Colaizzi's (1978) seven-stage process ensures a thorough examination, with each phase remaining true to the facts. The ultimate product is a concise yet comprehensive account of the phenomenon under investigation, which has been validated by the people who generated it. The technique relies on detailed first-person accounts of experience, which can be gathered through face-to-face interviews or a variety of alternative means, such as written narratives, blogs, research diaries, and internet interviews. The seven steps in Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method are (a) *familiarization* with the data, (b) *identification of significant statements (SS)* that directly relate to the phenomenon under investigation, (c) *formulating meanings* relevant to the phenomenon that arise from a careful consideration of the significant statements, (d) *clustering themes* that are common across all accounts, (e) d*eveloping an exhaustive description* of the phenomenon, incorporating all the themes produced at step 4, (f) *producing the fundamental phenomenon structure*, and (g) *seeking verification of the fundamental* structure that captures all participants lived experiences.

Data triangulation

This study utilized data triangulation through focus group discussion (FGD), interview guide, and validation. To achieve the validity of the questionnaire, the researchers have focused on the opinion that the survey instrument measures what it was designed to accomplish. By combining multiple ways, researchers can overcome weaknesses or intrinsic biases and problems from single-method and single-observer studies. A series of Focus Group Discussions (5 batches) with four randomly recruited participants for each set was conducted to check and verify the researchers' thematic analysis of the data collected from narratives and interviews. Validating and re-validating the researchers' interpretation of the narratives and the responses during the discussion were made intensively. After the FGD process, four out of six formulated themes were finalized.

These themes were now labeled as the unheard sentiments of Mamanwa learners and the barriers and challenges they experienced in mainstream education. The data gathered was presented in tables which served as the basis for the discussion and generated emerging themes. In analyzing the data in Part I, the statistical technique employed was frequency counts which were interpreted statistically. The semi-structured interview data gathered through questionnaires with open-ended questions were analyzed and interpreted from various angles as reflected in the emerging themes. The data collected from Part II and III of the questionnaires were analyzed qualitatively.

Results and Discussion

Barriers and challenges of Mamanwa learners in mainstream education

Their sentiments in different avenues have gone through leaps and bounds as they experienced various challenges and barriers in mainstream education (Table 2). Indigenous learners in nature commonly showcase their ineptness regarding lifestyle, performance in school, and social interaction in the community as members of the marginalized sector on different platforms. As viewed holistically, the barriers and challenges are categorized into six: historical and ongoing assimilation barrier, limited support resources barrier, financial barrier, geographical barrier, social, cultural, and political barrier, and contextual barrier and challenges.

Table 3. Historical and ongoing assimilation as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	Indicators	Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response	F
Historical and ongoing Assimilation Barrier	Racism	Our classmates were humiliated and mocked, and referred to us as "Kongking,"having an inferior race. [P4] [SS 48]	13
		"As a member of the minority group, I can hardly escape the discriminatory judgments and labeling us an inferior for being a member in a minority group." [P11] [SS 114]	
	Peer Pressure in Classroom	"I was bullied by my classmates and a victim of discrimination in school." [P11] [SS 114]	11

	Victims of Unaddressed Bullying and Mocking Experienced	"My elder siblings recounted to me their experience of being bullied and humiliated by their peers at school, an event that was not appropriately addressed by the school or teacher" [P5] [SS 56]"	5
	Dark Past Experienced	"I thought about it and chose not to enroll in that school because my elder siblings had gone through that horrible experienced." [P7] [SS 75]	5

Under this category of historical and ongoing assimilation barriers, racism is the top-ranked indicator (Table 2). Peer pressure in the classroom is the second barrier, and victims of unaddressed bullying and mocking are experienced as the last indicator. This indicator, however, resulted in the upsurge of overwhelming prejudices, stereotyping, and racism from Non-IP people that exasperated them. Racism and discrimination in schools have long been recognized as significant impediments to creating supportive classroom and school environments. As a result, students are more engaged in their studies and feel more connected to their school (Pachter et al., 2010).

These scenarios show how the Mamanwa learners perceived their battles and struggles in the school setting of mainstream education and portrayal of the as highly disadvantaged sector in the community, and in some angles, impacted them negatively. This manifestation is explained in the Social identity theory, which indicates that group stereotyping and prejudice are more likely when social identities are salient; conversely, downplaying the salience of intergroup differences can mitigate discrimination (Merolla & Jackson, 2019). According to Walton et al., (2020), indigenous students reported that positive relationships with faculty aware of their unique needs and struggles helped their achievements.

Table 3. Limited support of resources as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	**Indicators**	**Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response**	**F**
	Lack of funding from government/LGU and limited benefits in education for IPs and other resources	I can testify that we seldom received financial assistance from the LGU or other stakeholders as members of the 4Ps, unlike in the other municipality. [P8] [SS 89]	13
		I can attest that we seldom received educational funds from the Government/LGU and we did not receive the same benefits and privileges as enjoyed by the Non-IP students [P12] [SS 125]	
	Lack of Learning and Supplementary Materials	Because of limited learning materials, we tend to borrow and share books with other classmates. [P4] [SS 49]	10
	Denied Indigenous	I can recall that I was humiliated	10

Limited Support of Resources Barrier	Perspective and Dismissal of Indigenous Knowledge	by my Non-IP classmates because of my indigenous knowledge and perspective about mother nature which is way different than theirs. [P6] [SS 70]	
	No Allowances in Boarding House, Clothing, Travel allowance & Lack of Public Transport/Transit	I can claim that we do receive free tuition at Saint Joseph College, a private institution, but only for our matriculation fee because other fees, such as uniforms and additional school fees, are paid by us" [P6] [SS 67]	8
		There was a time when we were unable to get to the highway in time to catch passing buses or other public utility vehicles (PUVs), causing us to miss school." [P7] [SS 76]	
	Child Labor and Refugees	I can remember when we were young back then, we frequently got absent because we were obliged to go to the mountain for mat weaving and rattan weaving, and it was fun. [P1] [SS 9]	6

In this study, among the five indicators above, "lack of funding from local government and limited benefits in education for IPs and other resources" is the topmost indicator under the limited support resources barrier. This finding corroborates the findings of De Vera (2017) about the insufficiency of the resources provided by the government. However, most of the respondents disclosed by an elderly ALS student [P12] that they used to receive financial assistance from the local government of Saint Bernard for 5,000 pesos for each Mamanwa learner. But this had stopped due to the pandemic, so they moved to Pinamudlan because they did not have a stable income in Saint Bernard. Unfortunately, in the Municipality of San Francisco, where the Mamanwa community in Barangay Pinamudlan is located, she unhappily shared that they had not received any financial assistance from the municipality. The majority of Mamanwa students were unhappy and complaining, too. They feel that despite free education to students studying in public schools, the efforts exerted by the government are not enough for them to say that they get better access to free education (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021).

The second topmost indicators were the lack of learning and supplementary materials, denied indigenous perspective, and dismissed indigenous knowledge. This situation is no longer new in the classroom setting with students of different races. This situation will continue to be part of teachers' challenges because there are currently no supplementary learning and reading materials in the Minamanwa language that indicate their community setting. Teachers and schools also have low standards of indigenous students' abilities and are willing to tolerate their academic failure (Perso, 2020). The methods used to impart instruction and discipline clash with those commonly practiced in the student's homes or communities. Most non-indigenous teachers

are not prepared to teach in indigenous communities because they lack cultural training and understanding of their values and ways of life. Elders and community members are not involved in setting the direction or educational goals of the school (UNESCO, 2014).

In this study, the researchers identified government inaction as a barrier, with community action and creating support systems as related support resources. Government inaction can represent instances of lack of response or neglect by officials and entities. The lack of balanced inclusion of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems holds implications for the communities with those knowledge systems and humanity's broader adaptive capacity to cope with environmental and social challenges (Eder, 2013; De Vera, 2017). P1 can remember when they were young back then, and they frequently got absent because they were obliged to go to the mountain for mat weaving and rattan weaving as their primary economic source of living.

When dealing with indigenous students, culturally responsive teaching allows teachers to modify the curriculum and their approaches and strategies. Culturally attentive instructors should develop, conserve, and strengthen IP culture as a basis for learning and growth (Cahapay, 2021). Moreover, respondents also revealed that no allowances in boarding houses, clothing, travel allowance, & lack of public transport/transit are considered barriers to access to education that was taken for granted. P6 can claim that they do receive free tuition at Saint Joseph College, a private institution, but only for their matriculation fee because other fees, such as uniforms and additional school fees, are paid by them. P7, an SJC student also, noted that there was a time when they were unable to get to the highway in time to catch passing buses or other public utility vehicles (PUVs), causing them to miss school. This event, which he shared with his Mamanwa classmates and friends, demonstrates a barrier to education. Access and limited support resources are some of the most significant obstacles to arriving at school on time. Barriers to accessibility can be linked to a variety of challenges (Casinillo, 2022).

Table 4. Finance as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	**Indicators**	**Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response**	**F**
Financial Barrier	Poverty	Due to our nomadic lifestyle, we felt discriminated against by the Non-IP community because we get visible along with our family and fellow Mamanwas during fiestas to ease our hungry stomachs. [P10] [SS 108]	14
	No permanent income of parents	Our studies are greatly affected because our parents don't have a permanent source of income in the mountain and pastoralism. "[P4] [SS 49]	12
		I believe I have had to work hard, even if there have been times when I have had to miss class due to a lack of "baon," or lunch food"	

	Doing underpaid work	[P4] [SS 45] My siblings would have to work hard in construction, run errands, and do odd jobs just to put food on our table. [P1] [SS 4]	10

In a more specific manner, under the category of financial barrier, based on the responses, poverty is the topmost barrier, followed by no permanent income of parents (Table 4). This finding also corroborates the findings of Jabbar et al. (2019) and Napanoy and Peckley (2020) that poverty is a big problem faced by IP parents and students. This data is supported by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (2008) study, which revealed that financial hardship remains at the top of the list as the main barrier to Indigenous educational achievement. Financial pressures were a concern for all students, especially true of the Indigenous student population. Indigenous students listed lower socio-economic class as an added stress (De Vera, 2017; Cahapay, 2021). The study of Casinillo (2022) reaffirmed this point by confirming that financial support was essential to success. Being financially unprepared was identified as a barrier. P4 indicated that even though she was working under budgetary restrictions, she still had to get it out alive. Despite the shortage of food and other resources, she has to labor hard. These experiences caused her to become self-directed and focused on reaching her goals, which enabled her to complete her education and support her mother. She shared her determination to go to school despite the various barriers and challenges. In addition, Indigenous children are more likely to arrive at school hungry, sick, and exhausted, they are often bullied, and there is also extensive use of corporal punishment. Their socioeconomic level and minority status make them feel ashamed. Bullying from non-IP students is common, and branding them as underachievers and underprivileged.

Table 5. Geographical condition as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	**Indicators**	**Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response**	**Fr**
Geographical Condition	Geographic separation and distance from their community to school	Often, we get separated from our parents looking for food, and because of our distance from our community, we had to walk for about 45 minutes to get to school, and we arrived late with my other Mamanwa classmates" [P4] [SS 47]	11
	Absence of farm-to-market road	Because we don't have an access road passable by vehicle, our studies and delivery of our products are somewhat affected. [P3] [SS 39]	10
	Semi-permanent communities	Due to the influence of our chieftain, we tend to transfer from one place to another [P1] [SS7]	9

The geographical barrier has three indicators with which geographic separation and distance from their community to school was the top rank indicator. The absence of a farm-to-the-market road is the second-highest and semi-permanent community as the least indicator of geographical barrier (Table 5). Indigenous students often experienced social isolation due to factors such as geographic separation and cultural differences. P4 testified that they had to walk for about 45 minutes to get to school. Mamanwa students have habitually been late to class because of geographic barriers. Frequently they had frequent experiences such as being judged and underestimated by mainstream students. P7 shared that they missed their courses because they could not get to the highway in time to catch the buses.

Moreover, P6 claimed that they sometimes did not attend their classes because they were scared and ashamed of their teachers. Besides, they are bullied and mocked again by their mainstream classmates. This situation is an evident example of barriers that IP students continuously face while attending mainstream schools. However, the absence of farms to market roads harms the Indigenous people community. According to De Vera (2007), most of the country's Indigenous Peoples rely on traditional agriculture using available upland areas. In this study, the respondents were crafting their products such as mat weaving and rattan art, hunting, and gathering from rugged mountains are their main economic activities. However, because of the absence of farm-to-market roads, their transportation was greatly affected, as mentioned by P3. She emphasized that because they do not have an accessible road passable by vehicle, their travel time to school and their products' delivery are hampered.

Table 6. Social, cultural, and political condition as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	**Indicators**	**Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response**	**F**
Social, Cultural, and Political Barriers	Minority groups are often excluded from school and community representation	As a member of the minority group, I can hardly escape the discriminatory judgments in school and labelling us as inferior for being a member of the minority group in the community." [P11] [SS 114]	12
	Denied Indigenous Culture	When we were arguing with my Non-IP classmates, I recall insisting that their culture is right and way better than ours. [P2] [SS 20]	10
	Social disadvantages and underserved in accessing governmental services	I recall that we were ignored and experienced stereotyping behavior from the Non-IP community when we tried to access public services from the government [P3] [SS 38]	9

The social, cultural, and political barriers are composed of: minority groups often excluded in school and community representation as the topmost indicator; denied indigenous culture as the second indicator, while social

disadvantages and underserved in accessing governmental services as the last indicator barriers (Table 6). The statement of P14 manifests the existence of political barriers. He claimed that maybe their budget from the national government to Indigenous people was used and exploited by political leaders which is why they do not receive any financial assistance. However, according to one of the Pinamudlan Elementary school teachers I spoke with, the financial aid for Indigenous Peoples was allotted for their travel and allowances during the Indigenous Peoples (IP) day every year (August 9) Regional Summit. De Vera (2007) discussed the lives and status of Indigenous People in the Philippines among the IPs, they are the groups or communities most marginalized and given lesser attention by the government.

Another need to be addressed is the cultural barrier that indigenous parents share: providing culturally adapted and more realistic and vocational-oriented school curricula that consider the community's needs. For indigenous peoples, education should reproduce indigenous cultures and preserve, rather than substitute, indigenous identity. Even in some of the most necessary conditions, physical isolation, school funding, and language are not barriers, and there remain difficulties.

The third indicator denied indigenous culture, can be manifested in school uniforms versus formal dress, which is often controversial in many countries. School authorities need to consider other issues related to cultural traditions (e.g., hunting trips or religious rites).

One way to recognize social barriers is to experience various types of socioeconomic disparities. The manifestation of this concept may be seen in the answers to P3. She said they were bullied at school and subjected to open prejudice, specifically regarding how they identified themselves as "kongking." People who knew them in the neighborhood were involved in the name-calling. Also, they are victims of having to obtain no government services like health care and livelihood assistance (Steffens et al., 2021). At school, peers and other students discriminate against them in many ways.

Table 7. Contextual condition in school setting as a barrier to completion in mainstream education

Barriers and Challenges	Indicators	Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response	Frequency
Contextual Barriers and Challenges	Having an untrained teacher with their language resulted in a barrier and communication gap	I was scolded by our teacher together with my IP classmate for not listening to the discussion, and the teacher was concerned since our medium of communication was the Minamanwa language, or our native language, resulting in a language barrier and gap" [P5] [SS 58]." Our non-IP classmates often mock and bully us because of our Minamanwa language, which is slightly different from theirs. [P6] [SS 70] Because of our language, our teacher and Non-IP classmates would seldom communicate with	13

		us and hardly understand our feelings and sentiments. [P4] [SS 50]	
	Misunderstanding their culture results in the misconception of their Behavior	Our Minamanwa language is different from the Non-IP community resulting in misunderstanding. [P11] [SS 118] Because they lack knowledge about our culture, the Non-IP community could hardly understand our behavior and lifestyle. [P8] [SS 90] Due to our language barrier and communication gap, our behaviors in school are often mislabeled and misinterpreted. [P3] [SS 39]	12
	Decay on Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices	I recall being mocked by my Non-IP classmates because of my indigenous knowledge and practices about mother nature and the environment, which are different from theirs. [P6] [SS 70]	10

Among the contextual barriers exhibited from the interview, the indicator "having an untrained teacher with their language resulted to the barrier to communication and gap" is the topmost barrier; "misunderstanding of their culture resulting to misconception from their behavior" is the second-highest indicator; and the indicator "decay on Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices" as the least indicator (Table 7). Based on the responses from the interview, a significant experience in the classroom setting in mainstream education was shared and uncovered by P5, a Mamanwa student at Saint Joseph College. She recalled being scolded by her teacher for not listening to the discussion. The teacher was concerned since their communication medium was the Minamanwa language, or their native language, resulting in a language barrier and coercion. The situation was skewed because the Mamanwa can comprehend and speak Cebuano or Bisayan, but the teacher cannot understand and speak their Minamanwa language. Teachers often lack knowledge of Indigenous languages and customs, resulting in misinterpretation of students' behavior, learning behavior, learning abilities, and students' needs (Eder, 2013; Napanoy & Peckley, 2020). According to Cahapay (2021), education is a critical arena where indigenous peoples can reclaim and revalue their language and customs. Some even claimed that they have trouble writing, reading, and comprehending what is written in books or materials provided by the school, as evident in the existence of language and communication barriers. They were sometimes influenced by their peers or friends, causing them to drop out of class or school.

The coping mechanism of Mamanwa learners in mainstream education

Mamanwa learners positively cope with academic and personal anxiety through different coping strategies. Thus, parents need to nurture their children in a supportive home environment. When students are in their second home,

teachers must continuously provide a conducive learning environment to improve academic achievement. According to Valenzona et al. (2022), educational coping strategies were also designed to help undergraduate students cope with their lives, including physical well-being, emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being.

Table 8. Mamanwa learners coping mechanism amidst the barriers and challenges in mainstream education

Coping Strategies	Behavioral Indicators	Sample Utterances / Verbatim Response	Code
Positive disposition to finish the study in Mainstream Education	Intrinsic motivation despite barriers and challenges in school.	"I was once humiliated and mocked by our classmates who referred to me as "Kongking. We just laughed hard and ignored them and rediscovered that what is more important in life is finishing our studies and achieving something in the future, so that they would no longer bully us, and learning to live with the fact that we were born with this race and there was nothing wrong with accepting it."	[P4] [SS 48]
		"Bisan pag bugal-bugalan me ug tawgon mig "kongking" mukatawa nalang me ug amo ra silang baliwalaon kai ang mas importante nga maka human mis pag skwela ug makab-ot namo ang among mga pangandoy para dili nami maliiton ug madawat nami nila" "I truly wanted to finish my studies on time without dropping out, so I told and asserted to my mother that I wanted to enroll in Pintuyan because I had made friends there during my elementary school years, rather than adjusting to a new environment in Catmon, Saint Bernard, which would only add to my stress at school, regardless of our chieftain's influence"	[P1]
		"Gusto gajud ko nga muhuman ug eskwela nga	[SS 10]

		dili ko mag undang-undang, maong me ingun ko sa ahung mama nga gusto gajud kog anhi sa Pintuyan mo pa-enroll kai naa nkoi mga amigo tungod kai dinhe ko nahuman sa Elementary, unja dili npod ko ganahan mag adjust sa bag-ong skwelahan sama sa Catmon"	
Confrontive coping against bullying behavior in school	Breaking the behavioral stigma in school through positive reframing against bullying behavior of classmates	"Anytime our classmates began harassing and humiliating us at school, we simply had to go to the guidance office and report it to our guidance counselor for proper management of my classmates' misbehavior and misconduct" "*Pag naay classmate nga mo-bully namo, mo adto rami sa guidance office ug among itug-an sa among guidance counselor para mahatagan ug aksyon ug sa pag disiplina nila, arun dili nami bullyhon*"	[P3] [SS 37]
Positive mentoring through educating the community and learning to value education	Positive behavior negates societal labeling through a sense of purpose and direction in life through education.	I really wanted to pursue my studies because I want to break the cycle of illiteracy in our family and to influence the whole Mamanwa community on the importance of education" "*Gusto gajud ko makahuman sa akong pag skwela, kai arun makatabang ko pag hinay-hinay pagtambag ug pagmatoto unsa ka importante ang pag skwela para mawagtang ang pagka wlai grado ug maka impluwensiya sa among komunidad"*	[P13] [SS 131]
Resiliency despite discrimination experienced in school and marginalization in the community	Learning to live with the situation through active coping and positive goals as being marginalized in the community.	"Because we want to be accepted and to be part of the larger community, so we thrive and build connection and enroll in mainstream education despite the discrimination"	[P6] [SS 69]

		" *Gusto man gajud namo nga madawat me isip usa ka tawo nga kalakip niining komunidad, maong naningkamot me nga makig-halubilo ug ne skuyla sa mainstream education bisan pa sa mga diskriminasyon."* "Being a good inspiration to others together with strong parental support and having friends who also share the same objectives pushes me to work hard to finish my studies, for I am in Senior High school now"	[P13] [SS 139]
Positive modeling that is worth emulating by other IPs to recompense the support of family and community	Manifested by the robust support system from family, friends, and significant others to withstand adversities in school and community.	*"Sa akong pag paningkamot sa pag skuyla ako nahimong modelo ug inspirasyon sa akong mga kalumad nga Mamanwa ug tungud usab sa suporta sa akong pamilya ug mga higala, ako krun naa sa Grade 11 na sa among tulunghaan"*	

Table 8 shows the current investigation of how Mamanwa learners cope by providing diverse coping strategies and support that influenced the Indigenous students in mainstream education reflects a very rewarding realization. Coping mechanisms were exhibited by these individuals, which empowered them in preserving their identity as an Indigenous people and characterization as Mamanwa people amidst negative experiences and remarks from others. Their coping strategies recompensated the barriers and challenges they experienced in mainstream education: a *positive disposition in life to finish their study in mainstream education*. Obstacles and difficulties in school become insignificant when your inner desire drives you. Despite the humiliation and mockery, she received from the non-IP, P4 found something positive in it. Education is a need in life, she understood. To avoid being ridiculed or humiliated due to their ethnicity, education may be a solution. In addition, this coping strategy is evident in self-controlling, like making efforts to regulate feelings and actions. This experience is shared by P1, where she insisted and asserted to her mother to finish her studies. Regardless of their chieftain's influence, she studied in Pintuyan because she had made friends there and established a good relationship. In return, their self-perceived development and the validation they receive from people they interact with concerning attaining their ideal social interaction and approval enhance their confidence and improve their self-esteem. As they positively build up a better image of themselves. From the perspective of social identity theory (SIT), individual reactions warrant a personal mobility mindset in which society's hierarchical ties are valid and stable but permeable, from the perspective of social identity theory (SIT). As a result, individuals of disadvantaged groups with a

social change mindset try to improve their group's position through collective action, whether they do so alone or with the help of other in-group members (Steffens et al., 2021).

The second coping strategy is *confronting and coping against bullying behavior in school*. It is a reward to reframe bullying behavior in a positive light, according to P3. Instead, students would go to the guidance office if one of their classmates began harassing and humiliating them at school to deal with them appropriately. This action is the only way they'll be able to cope with all of the abuse. This individual employed the distancing managing strategy and let the formal school authority handle their misbehavior. This coping strategy embodies the Relational Cultural Theory. The theory analyzes the impact of disconnection, acknowledging that it is an unavoidable element of being in a relationship, in addition to addressing the benefits of growth-fostering relationships, i.e., connection (caused by empathic failures, relational violations, injuries, etc.). Experiences of disconnection can lead to a strengthened relationship and an increased sense of relational competence (Lertora et al., 2020).

Another coping strategy is positive mentoring through educating the community and learning to value education. A behavioral indicator emphasizes the importance of "positive behavior to negate societal labeling through a sense of purpose and direction in life through education." This coping strategy is a concrete manifestation of the central tenet of Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT) which states that people develop through and toward relationships, which occur within and are influenced by a cultural context. Above all, RCT asserts that people need to be connected to change, open up, shift, transform, heal, and grow.

The result shows that the participants believe that education is beneficial to IP students who are studying and intends to learn or continue their education (out-of-school youth). The students can read and write and mingle with other students and teachers, boosting their intellectual abilities and emotional behavior. Teachers must consider the speed of learning of the students (Eduardo & Gabriel, 2021). The eminent nature of Mamanwa learners in molding and building up their status in the community by establishing a connection and utilizing it in the process of reconstructing their natural form and cultural perspectives and transforming it to their ideal societal inclusion in the community is more than just the act of attending to school in mainstream education as they experienced barriers and challenges.

The fourth coping strategy is *resiliency despite discrimination experienced in school and marginalization in the community* with a strong emphasis on its behavioral indicator, "learning to live with the situation through active coping and positive goals as being marginalized in the community." However, discrimination against their race is one of the struggles they encountered. P11 shared that they thrive on blending in with the dominant culture of the non-IP community despite being bullied and discriminated against. This discrimination from school and lack of parental support significantly affect her studies. In addition, she added that as a member of a minority group, she can hardly escape discriminatory judgments and label them as inferior for being a minority group. P6 also shared her sentiments that they wanted to be accepted and part of the larger community, so they thrived, built connections, and enrolled. This situation holds the idea of social constructionism that humans learn about the world in a social environment. Much

of what we experience as reality is based on shared beliefs. Social constructionists think that things that are commonly perceived as natural in society, such as gender, race, class, and disability, are socially built and hence do not accurately reflect reality.

Indigenous students and their parents also have to face deep-rooted discrimination and racism, rendering the school atmosphere unfriendly and awkward, despite increasing recognition and efforts by governments and civil society. School kids often frequently have to contend with violence from school administrators and other students; modern communities also do not know Aboriginal peoples' beliefs, cultures, and histories. However, building resilience and inner determination factored into program completion (Walton et al., 2020; Casinillo, 2022). Several strategies increased the strength of Indigenous students. Strengthening hope through mentorship and instructor support increased potential success. Having access to education is crucial for the indigenous people who are considered a minority in society. These people feel that they are less privileged and are given lesser attention by both the government and society. They think that what is currently being provided is not enough for the benefit of their children in school.

But resilience, or the ability of students to move forward when schooling was difficult, tedious, or other factors interfered, significantly influenced student success (Casinillo, 2022). This intrinsic factor allowed students to continue despite setbacks. Indigenous students showed lower motivation when the class content was viewed as not immediately relevant to their lives or careers (Cahapay, 2021). Furthermore, the definition of success was not the same for many Indigenous students as it was for non-Indigenous students (De Vera, 2017). This scenario and the relationship to resilience warrant further examination. The last coping strategy is *positive modeling that is worth emulating by other IPs to recompense family and community support* with a behavioral indicator, "manifested by the strong support system from family, friends and significant others to withstand adversities in school and community." According to Jabbar et al. (2019), community and family support are essential influencers. This support was often lacking for various reasons; however, its importance cannot be underestimated for Indigenous students.

Conclusion

The Mamanwa learners' social isolation, the inadequacy of learning materials, lack of access to educational services, limited support resources, and educational funds from the government have contributed to their constant challenge to completion in mainstream education. Despite the barriers and challenges, however, the Mamanwa learners are becoming resilient and diversely unique individuals who need to be understood, accepted, and embraced just like any other member of society. To address the numerous barriers and challenges Mamanwa learners face, the government might build a formal school for Indigenous Peoples (IP) and establish an accreditation program for other IP schools in the Panaon Area. Valuing the significance, it brings to each Mamanwa learner and assisting in the establishment is a greater manifestation to improve Indigenous students' learning outcomes. For future research, one may investigate the sentiments and perceptions after being used and exploited as victims of false

hope and promises from various researchers and scholars in different fields. In addition, research into gender perceptions, orientations, and sexuality of the Mamanwa community might provide an interesting study and comparison of the community's perception of gender sexuality of IP and non-IP students on a larger scale.

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