

Integrating Indigenous Values Into Life Skills Education: A Social Work Perspectives

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Abstract

This article highlights the significance of integrating Indigenous values into life skills education within the field of social work. Through a comprehensive comprehension of distinct ideas, techniques, and cultural factors, social workers are able to enhance their ability to provide effective assistance for the holistic well-being and empowerment of individuals and communities. This study examines the pedagogy of life skills within the Poumai Naga communities, with a particular focus on its importance as an example of indigenous education or Indigenous-informed life skills training. This research aims to promote an inclusive and culturally sensitive approach to the practice of social work. This paper provides suggestions for incorporating a culturally specific viewpoint into life skills education, recognizing that indigenous communities possess unique cultural traditions and interact with persons and the environment in distinct ways. The article also discusses the difficulties associated with integration and underscores the importance of engaging in collaborative efforts with Indigenous people. The present study proposes that adopting a culturally tailored approach to teaching life skills can lead to tangible and empirically validated results.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge, Life Skills Education, Social Change, Cultural Practices

Introduction

Indigenous values are the core principles and beliefs that guide the lives of indigenous communities. These values are deeply rooted in their cultural heritage and are passed down through generations. They encompass a wide range of aspects, including spirituality, respect for nature, community, and interconnectedness. Indigenous values hold great significance in promoting

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well-being and holistic development. The pervasive influence of globalization in various domains is widely recognized. Globalization has a dual impact as a result of its occurrence. On one hand, it serves to enhance the quality of social existence. Conversely, it has the potential to contribute to the gradual erosion of indigenous cultural norms and beliefs (Stiglitz, 2015). In light of the current circumstances, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive examination of local knowledge systems. These systems encompass a unique amalgamation of indigenous wisdom that is essential for effectively navigating the complexities of the contemporary globalized context. The methodology demonstrates considerable promise for efficient utilization, particularly when applied to an indigenous demographic. The existing corpus of scholarly literature on local knowledge systems has primarily focused on empirical instances, in which the integration of indigenous community knowledge and scientific principles has been examined. Moreover, there have been scholarly debates surrounding the juxtaposition of indigenous community knowledge and neoliberal ideologies. The topic of local knowledge systems has received limited attention in academic research. In order to address this deficiency, it is crucial to provide further elucidation on this specific matter. In order to achieve this objective, it is imperative to focus research efforts on local knowledge with the aim of exploring practical considerations as well as the underlying educational principles of indigenous communities. Numerous scholarly inquiries have been conducted pertaining to the local knowledge system of the indigenous community. Currently, there is a lack of extensive academic research regarding the local knowledge system of indigenous communities and its potential to enhance educational outcomes within a formal educational environment. The primary objective of this study is to make a scholarly contribution to the ongoing discourse on local knowledge by developing a comprehensive conceptual framework that rigorously examines the educational principles inherent in local knowledge systems. The integration of values assumes a pivotal role in the context of informal education, particularly in the realm of life skills education.

The present study aims to enhance the existing corpus of local knowledge concerning indigenous education, focusing specifically on the Poumai Naga community in the state of Manipur. This study adds to the current reservoir of knowledge regarding enduring educational principles that have been established and utilized for centuries. Hence, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the various manifestations of local knowledge systems that influence individuals' everyday experiences and contribute to the educational principles that should be incorporated into social work education. The current study was conducted in Senapati District, a region predominantly populated by the Naga community. The Nagas are widely acknowledged for their unwavering commitment to preserving their ancestral

customs and traditions (Hodson, 2007). They actively maintain and protect their cultural practices in a manner that distinguishes them from other social groups. The sociocultural context of the Poumai Naga community is distinguished by its significant focus on modesty and steadfast dedication to indigenous knowledge. This research emphasizes the expression of Indigenous education within the Poumai Naga community, with a particular focus on the impartation of life skills necessary for individuals. The current study posits that the implementation of a culturally specific approach to the instruction of life skills can result in concrete and empirically supported outcomes.

Methodology

The research methodology employed in this study is ethnography. The purpose of this design is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and social viewpoints that are inherent within the indigenous community of Poumai Naga. The researchers have undertaken studies on the aforementioned issues in order to gain a direct comprehension of the practices by actively engaging with community elders who possess information regarding life skills education. The researchers consider the methods by which informants navigate and develop their responses. Therefore, it is considered accurate to investigate the informant's viewpoint regarding the theoretical and conceptual understanding of the local knowledge system of the Poumai Naga indigenous community. This investigation will specifically concentrate on the ideals of indigenous education, particularly in the domain of life skills education. Data was obtained by employing four specific strategies: observation, interviews, documentation, and the use of audio-visual material (Murchison, 2010). The researcher allotted about two-time intervals. The first phase extended from August through October in the year 2018. Following this, the second phase of the study spanned from April to June 2019, aiming to further enhance and expand the scope of the examination. The researcher conducted interviews with a sample of older adults from 4 blocks of the area under study in order to collect data on their understanding of the dormitory system as a technique of learning. Furthermore, a series of interviews were undertaken with elderly individuals in order to gather their insights and viewpoints regarding the acquisition of life skills. The complete set of data is subsequently analyzed and interpreted within a narrative framework.

Topography

The topography of Poumai Naga area is hilly terrains situated within the Senapati District of Manipur state, encompassing four villages that are administratively affiliated with the Phek District in Nagaland. The landscape is abundantly adorned with megalithic structures of diverse dimensions,

beside commemorative stones (Daniel, 2020). The area exhibits a primarily undulating topography, characterized by altitudes varying from 388m to 2740m above the average level of the sea. The altitude of Kangpokpi is documented as 1061 meters, although Mao is located at an elevation of 788 meters relative to sea level. The district located in the northern region is characterized by the presence of Mount Tenipu, which has an impressive elevation of 5015.08m, thus establishing itself as the most prominent summit within the vicinity. The geographical area is distinguished by a humid subtropical climate. The temperature demonstrates a spectrum that encompasses a lower limit of 3.36° C and an upper limit of 34.14° C. The annual precipitation demonstrates a variation spanning from 671mm to 1454mm. Forests encompass around 80% of the total land area, with the remaining 20% being designated as agricultural land. The Senapati district showcases a wide array of plants and fauna (Lisam, 2011). The district is characterized by the presence of several notable rivers, such as the Barak, Iril, Imphal, and Ithai rivers. The area encompasses a number of notable high peaks, such as Mount Tenipu, Ezzo, Koubru, Khouchi, and Houdu¹. The demarcation of the boundary is distinctly established, either via the harsh topography of the undulating landscape or by the existence of rivers and streams. The Poumai region is characterized by its immense natural beauty, which attracts persons who possess an awareness for the environment. This, in turn, nurtures a sense of belonging and fosters a deep connection with the land. The geographical area exhibits a notable richness of natural resources, encompassing forest resources, land resources, mineral resources, and water resources (Oppitz, 2008).

About the People

The Poumai Naga community constitutes a prominent Naga ethnic group residing in the northeastern region of Manipur, India. The Poumai Naga tribe is recognized as one of the oldest and most famous Naga tribes, and it holds the position of being the largest tribe among the several tribal groupings residing in the state of Manipur. According to the Hill House Tax of 2001, the total population of the Poumai Naga tribe is documented at 151,005 individuals. The Mao and Poumai ethnic groups are believed to have a shared ancestral lineage, leading to their collective identification as the Poumai or Poumai Naga community (Nepuni, 2010). Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the Poumai Naga tribe, with the exception of the Mao, was first categorized as a subordinate group under the Mao tribe. This misclassification occurred as a result of erroneous information provided by certain interpreters to the British Anthropological Survey teams operating in Manipur. As a result, the Poumai Naga and Mao ethnic groups

1 See the official information <https://senapati.nic.in/>

were together designated as the Mao tribe until the Poumai Naga were officially recognized as a distinct tribe in 2002.

From an ethnic perspective, the tribes inhabiting Manipur can be broadly classified into two distinct communities, namely the Naga and Kuki-Chin people. Within the region of Manipur, it is seen that out of the total of 33 tribes, approximately 17 tribes exhibit affiliation with the Naga tribes. The Nagas have garnered considerable acknowledgment for their cultural tradition of headhunting (Maheo, 2004). The Nagas were primarily adherents of animism as their religious belief system, although a considerable segment of the Nagas has subsequently adopted the Christian faith. The Kukis who relocated to Manipur during the 1830s and 1840s were a community distinguished by their itinerant way of life. The Kukis embrace a monarchist philosophy, whilst the Nagas adhere to republican ideas (Horam, 1988).

Cultural Ecology of Poumai Naga Tribe

Throughout history, the Poumai Naga tribe has maintained a government structure that is distinguished by the practice of direct democracy within their communities. The administration has been intricately intertwined with the unique culture and practices of the Poumai people, serving as a tool to preserve their distinct identity. Currently, the Poumai Naga tribe is undergoing a period of transition. Despite agriculture being the primary means of employment for the population, traditional customs like as hunting and fruit collecting have not been completely abandoned, and continue to coexist alongside their agricultural pursuits (Pahrü, 2010). The Poumai Nagas have been found to lack a comprehensive historical record, however there is clear evidence indicating significant alterations in their economic and socio-cultural situations. Scholars have grouped the historical socio-cultural changes within the Poumai Naga community, stretching from the pre-British era to present times, into distinct periods for the purpose of comprehending the shifts.

The Poumai Naga communities consistently chose to establish their villages atop the crests of hills, so affording themselves the opportunity to partake in a comprehensive visual observation of the encompassing vicinity. In order to maintain vigilance against potential enemy attacks, they made the decision to reside on elevated terrain. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the Poumai Nagas exhibited a tendency to settle in a particular territory and exhibited limited migratory behavior, opting to remain in their chosen location for the duration of their lifespan. The community exhibited a deep connection to the surrounding villages and maintained familial ties through shared bloodlines. Every village fiercely struggled to preserve its distinct identity. The strength of each village increased in tandem with the growth of its population, thereby fostering a heightened sense of communal sentiment and attachment among its inhabitants. The Poumai Naga exhibited a high

degree of cohesion and social integration throughout its groups, characterized by stringent norms and a strong emphasis on discipline. Any violation led to significant repercussions. The regulations of the territory were simultaneously regarded with both trepidation and admiration. The presence of customary rules might be attributed to the village's autonomous nature, resulting in the prompt administration of punishment. During the process of settlement, villages implemented distinct legal frameworks and rules aimed at safeguarding the well-being of their inhabitants. These measures included the prohibition of discriminatory practices based on factors such as caste, social class, gender, or place of birth. The village enforces punitive measures against individuals who employ profanity or engage in actions that inflict harm against others (Sanate & Lalbiaklian, 2011).

The Poumai Naga tribe upholds a patriarchal family system. Within many Naga groups, it is a prevalent practice for families to comprise a considerable number of people, often including a range of 8 to 10 individuals. The increased presence of additional family members during that specific time period was considered to be helpful due to the requirement of a significant labor force for the development of rice fields. However, the effectiveness of disseminating Family Planning messages in rural communities with limited access to external groups remains limited. The Poumai Naga community practices a patrilocal and monogamous family structure. The prevailing family structure within the society is primarily nuclear, with combined families being hardly found. Throughout history, there has been a gradual decrease in the size of families, primarily attributed to heightened rates of infant mortality. Consequently, a considerable proportion of children did not survive to reach maturity. However, the introduction of contemporary medical interventions has been associated with an increase in the number of individuals within a family unit, particularly during the period after the 1950s. Prior to the early 1980s, it was commonplace to witness a typical household size ranging from 8 to 10 members in the majority of rural towns. According to the results of the recent field survey, the majority of households presently comprise a varying number of family members, often ranging from 4 to 6 members. In Poumai Naga villages, it is common to discover a wide variety of clans, known as *Khels*, with a typical range of two to six *Khels*. Population density and the presence of *Khels* in neighboring settlements determine the size and quantity of *Khels*. There are additional subdivisions within the *Khel* known as *Seisou*. Marriages between members of the same *Khel* are restricted to the majority of the Poumai Naga tribe. Many villages engage in the practice of *intra-khel* marriage, albeit under the restriction that it is exclusive to *intra-seisou* marriages.

The significance of clan elders in the Poumai Naga group lies in their pivotal role in preserving the tenets of unadulterated and participatory democracy within the clan, despite its comparatively modest scale. The

elder members of the Clan play a crucial role in promoting communal harmony and calm, both within their own clan and in their contacts with members from other clans within the village. The governing body of the village, known as the village council or *Kabora/Gaonbura* (G.B), consists of representatives selected from each clan, usually one or two individuals per clan (Behera, 2021). The interconnection between the many clans within the community is characterized by robust communal ties. In the context of paddy transplantation or harvesting, it is commonly observed that when a member of a clan falls ill, members belonging to the same clan or *Khel* often demonstrate a collective response by offering aid to the affected individual through many methods.

Dormitory System Among the Nagas

The *Morung* system, a traditional institution found among many tribes in north-east India, is a distinctive Naga practice that continues to be observed in some capacity within their communities. However, its original significance has diminished through time as a result of evolving beliefs and shifting political circumstances (Ao, 2019) protect and deliver justice. The variance between customary laws and the contemporary statutory laws has to be balanced by recognizing and satisfying the wants, desires, and wishes of the society. The book is a legal work on the efficacy of Naga customary law in governance and judiciary. It begins with a legal investigation on the history of the Naga customary law and its Constitutional recognition. It then delves into the Naga customary administrative and judicial bodies and the legitimacy of its actions in the eye of statutory and formal laws. The present work also makes a legal examination of the customary ownership of land and its resources. Furthermore, it reflects on the contemporary social and legal issues emanating in the State of Nagaland and investigate the role of the executive, legislature and judiciary in harmonization and reconciliation. The appendix of the book contains important colonial documents on Naga history, colonial judgments & orders, pre-constitutional documents and important judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and High Court on Naga customary laws. The influence of Christianity resulted in the abandonment of traditional and social practices within numerous tribes, a phenomenon that was met with disapproval by certain enthusiastic missionaries. The significance of the *Morung* as a "guard-room" or a structure accommodating warriors and functioning as an armoury diminished subsequent to the prohibition of headhunting and the termination of inter-village conflicts (Venuh, 2004). Within the context of Naga villages, it has been found that different tribes utilize unique terminology to designate communal habitation areas. The residential facility commonly known as the dormitory holds different names among various tribes in Nagaland. The Poumai Naga refer to it as *Kheloukizii* or *Reipeiki*, while the Lotha

tribe calls it *Champo*. Similarly, the Aos refer to it as *Arichei*, the Sema as *Dekhachang*, and the Tangkhul Naga as *Lonsghin*.

The *Kheloukizii*, alternatively referred to as the *Dormitory* or *Morung*, constituted a prominent architectural feature that was commonly observed across various Naga villages. The *Kheloukizii* showcases embellishments that include buffalo skulls and human sculptures attached to the panels, which are afterwards hung from the frontal wall. The male residential facility is popularly known by the name “*Khekizii*,” whereas the female residential facility is commonly referred to as “*Loiikizii*.” Following the consumption of a meal at their respective parental dwellings, the adolescent males and girls proceed to their own sleeping quarters, known as *Kheloukizii*, with the intention of resting. A multitude of social activities were organized within the dormitories. The transmission of traditional cultural knowledge within elderly communities occurs through the pedagogical means of folklore, folktales, folksongs, and folk dances, which are facilitated within the communal space known as the *Morung*, or *Dormitory*. The institution is a community owned educational facility that provides instruction to teenagers in the practical skills of handicrafts, together with the norms of social decorum. The *Morung* functioned as a military training establishment for the purpose of headhunting purposes and as a recreational clubhouse. Moreover, it functions as the central hub for social, religious, and political activities, while simultaneously serving as the core for village democracies. In other words, the Naga culture was characterized by the notable existence of a communal habitation referred to as the dormitory. This expansive dwelling functioned as a domicile for adolescent males and females, who occupied distinct dormitories and participated in diverse modes of instruction before to their eventual union.

Separate residential accommodations were allocated for male and female youths. Male youths were granted permission to enter the female dorms, whilst female students were restricted from accessing the male hostel. Based on prevailing belief systems and cultural norms, it is commonly asserted that the presence of women within the boys’ dormitories will yield unfavorable outcomes for the entirety of the community. Dormitories play a significant role as institutions where young individuals partake in social interactions with their age groups, facilitating the growth and formation of their character and personality. Moreover, these establishments offer avenues for the acquisition of artistic and practical skills, while simultaneously facilitating a comprehensive education in social and cultural domains. In addition, dormitories serve as a structured environment that effectively acquaints inhabitants with the essential concepts of collaborative coexistence. This includes highlighting the significance of embracing varied viewpoints, adjusting personal conduct to align with the collective, and placing the welfare of the community above individual concerns. The mitigation of

obstacles related to ego, complexes, immorality, selfishness, and shyness leads to the cultivation of a personality that is more comprehensive, mature, and sophisticated, hence enhancing one's ability to effectively participate in social interactions.

Male Dormitory (*Khekizii*)

Khekizii is widely recognized as a prominent cultural institution. The total number of *Khekizii* people in a village is determined by the size of the village. *Khekizii* functioned as an educational establishment that specifically addressed the educational requirements of the Poumai Naga people in previous eras. During the initial stages of adolescence, it is customary for male individuals to participate in communal sleeping arrangements with their peers in a designated setting referred to as *Khekizii*. The facility mandates that all unmarried individuals residing in the village to allocate their evenings within its premises. During the historical period characterized by headhunting, the *Khekizii* implemented a prevalent custom of instilling strict discipline and offering extensive training in diverse areas to its members. In essence, this is the space where young individuals residing in rural communities acquire comprehensive knowledge and skills, encompassing the entirety of their cultural belief system. The individuals were instructed in a range of disciplines, including combat skills, wrestling, leadership, historical knowledge, traditional songs and dances, folklore, discipline, teamwork, morality, and numerous other facets of human existence. These teachings encompassed principles of discipline, collaboration, ethical conduct, and various other aspects of human expression and existence. Individuals assimilate the cultural norms and societal principles prevalent in their environment, along with the prevailing notions of morality and detriment. In addition, individuals also acquire a diverse set of vocational skills that will facilitate their self-reliance subsequent to entering into matrimony. The individuals engage in the examination and application of leadership abilities. The *Morung* played a significant role in receiving esteemed visitors to the village and overseeing the communal feasts. The individuals engage in the collection of firewood, transportation of water, and distribution of meat. During daylight hours, the *Morung* remained unoccupied, only becoming active once nightfall arrived.

The *Khekizii* establishment fulfilled several functions, encompassing both educational and residential purposes, while also serving as a site for daily leisure pursuits and amusement. The dormitory implemented specific rules and regulations to uphold discipline and foster a peaceful cohabitation characterized by tranquillity. The older adults residing at *Khekizii* exhibit important leadership responsibilities, but a notable degree of cooperation is found among all inhabitants within the *Khekizii*. The Poumai Nagas demonstrate a proclivity for transparency and sincerity in

cultivating friendships with folks of all genders. In general, male individuals commonly gather in groups to visit *Loukizii*, where they partake in various competitive activities, including the performance of traditional folk songs and engagement in indoor games.

Girls' Dormitory (*Loukizii*)

The girls' dormitory, known as *Loukizii*, was a cultural practice where adolescent girls retreat to designated sleeping quarters known as *Loukizii* until they enter into marriage. *Loukizii* serves as a significant social institution for the young women residing in the area. Elwin Verrier in his book, *The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century*, discusses the Nagas' dormitory system, which he describes as a notable feature in numerous communities. Additionally, they hold significant ceremonial significance. (Elwin, 1969). *Loukizii*, serves as an educational environment where young females acquire knowledge pertaining to various seed types, optimal planting times, nursery establishment techniques, cotton spinning and thread twisting methods, color dyeing processes, and fiber conversion into supple threads. The process involves harvesting the plants often referred to as *Khailoube*, *Siiloube*, *Doloube*, and *Nguloube*, followed by the extraction of their fibrous bark. Subsequently, the bark is subjected to a cooking process involving the addition of ashes and a specific plant species called *Vah Khai*, which is maintained for a duration of three to four hours. The recommended procedure involves utilizing a grooved wooden beater to strike the boil bark, followed by rinsing it under a continuous flow of water. This process should be continued until the appropriate coloration is achieved. The girls additionally acquired knowledge and honed their skills in other domains, including vocal performance, dance, self-control, collaboration, traditional storytelling, and various domestic responsibilities often associated with women. The female individuals provide assistance to the landlord of *Loukizii* by participating in the transportation of firewood on a minimum of two occasions annually. The young females engage in the musical practice of playing the "*Chii*," a specific type of mouth organ. Each girl acquires the necessary skills by receiving instruction from their more experienced peers or individuals who possess exceptional proficiency in playing the *Chii*.

In the past, courtship was observed in the area of *Loiikizii*. The male individuals regularly frequented the *Loukizii* during the night-time hours for the purpose of engaging in recreational activities and engaging in courtship rituals with them. During ancient times, the practice of courtship lacked the level of privacy observed in contemporary society. It was common for young men to engage in group outings to *Loukizii*, a social gathering where numerous young women were also in attendance. The sole means of expressing interest in a female individual was limited to non-verbal

actions and the exchange of melodious compositions with romantic themes. A considerable number of young individuals acquire expertise in the performance of romantic folk tunes. Others engage in the act of presenting love songs to others of their affection, whether they be of the opposite or same gender. It is through this reciprocal exchange that romantic feelings are cultivated and love is established. The male and female individuals exhibit a high degree of openness and enjoy each other's company, but incidents of molestation and immoral behavior are rarely reported.

The Advent of Modern Education

The assertion that the *Morung* are entirely extinct within contemporary Naga society may not be entirely equitable. However, it is imperative to recognize that evolving conditions have exerted an influence on Naga livelihoods, leading to ongoing transformations that have adversely impacted the *Morung*. In contemporary times, when engaging with Poumai tribe villages, specifically *Liyai* village, it is observed that a significant portion of the younger generation continues to adhere to traditional religious practices. The enduring importance of community life remains, albeit with a gradual weakening, as individuals increasingly embrace an individualistic outlook as a result of heightened involvement in modern civilizations that are gradually encroaching upon the traditional Naga culture.

Modern education has a substantial impact on the socio-cultural aspects of individuals' lives. The implementation of modern education in Poumai villages has resulted in a significant exodus of educated individuals who have relocated to various Indian cities in search of employment. The introduction of modern education in Poumai regions has led to significant changes in occupational patterns. In the past, every single villager participated in shifting agriculture and terrace cultivation. A significant number of individuals are currently employed in both the State and Central government sectors. However, indigenous communities continue to have a strong presence, and their customary law remains intact. These laws include territorial, genealogical, and functional facets (Sen, 1992). The collective sense of belonging and unity among indigenous peoples, along with the preservation of their traditional civil liberties, is viewed as conducive to societal progress. Moreover, this unity and adherence to traditional rights are consistent with the tenets of social work education, making this framework ideal. This includes the acknowledgement of property rights and common law. The community of Poumai Naga actively preserves and adheres to the cultural practices and traditions inherited from their ancestors. The Poumai community adheres to a social structure that emphasizes modesty and the application of indigenous knowledge.

Social Work Perspectives on Indigenous Life Skills Education

The presence of universal characteristics, notably in the domain of social work education, carries substantial theoretical and practical implications for how society is organized within the Poumai Naga community. The core basis of this technique is rooted in its historical origins, where its instructional approaches remain steadfast and are passed down to subsequent generations. The acquisition of knowledge and abilities through the educational system within the Poumai Naga tribe demonstrates unique personal characteristics. The formulation of this concept aims to enhance the preparedness of the younger generation in assuming their allotted roles within the Poumai Naga communities, while also equipping them for their future responsibilities as leaders.

In current professional practice, social workers are increasingly involved in delivering life skills education programs to students, with the objective of augmenting leadership, discipline, teamwork, morality, and various other aspects of human existence. It also illuminates the strategies for preventing and managing a variety of urgent concerns, such as gender-based violence, substance abuse, bullying, and aggressive conduct, among others. The author posits that the effectiveness of current life skills education programs is subject to scrutiny, mostly due to their Eurocentric orientation and failure to integrate indigenous knowledge that is contextually relevant to the local people. The attainment of educational goals cannot be only accomplished by the provision of education alone; thus, it is crucial to complement these aims with culturally pertinent life skills education initiatives. The contemporary socioeconomic challenges and issues encountered by a substantial portion of young individuals necessitate the adoption of an innovative approach that places emphasis on the importance of indigenous knowledge, values, competencies, and practices.

The incorporation of Indigenous values into life skills education represents a potent strategy for augmenting comprehensive well-being, tackling obstacles, and fostering cooperation. Through the adoption of diversity and cultural competence, we establish inclusive educational settings that honor and appreciate the knowledge and customs of Indigenous groups. The promotion of inclusion and respect facilitates the bridging of cultural divides and the establishment of significant interpersonal relationships. By integrating Indigenous viewpoints, we expand our comprehension of the global landscape and enhance our recognition of the multifaceted dimensions of existence and knowledge. By grounding life skills education in Indigenous values, it transcends its utilitarian nature and instead offers a platform for fostering a comprehensive and culturally attuned approach to individual maturation and advancement. The proposition put forth is to adopt

Indigenous principles and facilitate the development of individuals within a society that places importance on variety, respect, and comprehensive well-being.

Conclusion

The indigenous inhabitants of the Poumai Naga community possess a local knowledge system that encompasses established patterns of collective behavior, which they have successfully maintained over time. The aforementioned veracity can be elucidated through an analysis of the Poumai Naga community in contemporary settings. Therefore, these behavioral patterns possess the capacity to act as a catalyst for creativity and the cultivation of skills that may be utilized for the overall improvement of society. One potential area for further investigation involves the exploration of local knowledge systems within various indigenous educational settings. The prioritization of the process of reconstructing local knowledge systems for indigenous populations holds significant importance, particularly within the realm of social work education. The importance of local knowledge systems for the preservation of indigenous communities cannot be overstated, as they provide the essential framework for establishing self-identity and have a profound effect on the development of individuals to become democratic and responsive in the midst of social and cultural intricacies. The integration of indigenous knowledge could serve as a valuable augmentation for conventional classroom-based education, as well as in social work practice. It has the potential to effectively address and ameliorate a wide variety of societal issues. The design of life skills education programs should place emphasis on prioritizing culturally relevant knowledge, information, and assistance, with the overarching objective of strengthening the adult competence of learners. In summary, the incorporation of Indigenous values into life skills education serves as a tool to not only demonstrate cultural reverence but also to augment the holistic well-being and empowerment of individuals and communities. Through the adoption of concepts such as respect, cultural identification, and community engagement, social workers have the capacity to develop programs that are more inclusive and efficacious, thereby catering to a wide range of diverse people. Addressing problems, engaging with Indigenous people, and conducting continual evaluations of program impact are crucial in order to assure the success of these initiatives. The incorporation of Indigenous values into life skills education has the potential to significantly reshape social work practice, rendering it a potent instrument for cultivating resilience, advancing cultural diversity, and establishing a society characterized by greater equity. Conducting a thorough examination of various cultures and giving precedence to their conservation as a valuable asset is of utmost importance. Hence, it is feasible to augment the concept within the framework of social work education.

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