Exploring the Life Narrative of Kindergarten Local Culture Curriculum to Enhance Tribal and Parental Participation—Take a National Primary School Attached to a Kindergarten in Taitung County as an Example

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The researchers are now teachers and directors of a kindergarten in Taitung, which seems to be a more open environment than the Taipei Metropolitan Jungle, but teaching is the most closed traditional teaching mode. The objective of this study is: (a) to understand the impact of localized curriculum on Ami consciousness in young children; (b) understand how the school operates the localized curriculum and the benefits; and (c) understand the opinions and thoughts of parents on the localized curriculum. This study is an ethnographic approach that incorporates six years of local culture into the kindergarten curriculum. The results of the study found that: 1. The localization curriculum raises children’s awareness of the Ami ethnic group; 2. The school combines the tribe and constructs a local curriculum to achieve the common good of the garden; and 3. Support generations of parents in local courses. The conclusion of the study proposes the diffusion of concentric circles of the curriculum—the co-construction of the kindergarten curriculum to the local vision.

Keywords: local culture lessons, tribes, life narratives

Introduction

Research Background and Motivation—The Cultural Shock of Novice Teachers Stepping into Their Hometowns

As a child who grew up in Taipei and was admitted to a remote teacher, when the authors were first inspected the original classroom, they saw the teaching of the book, which was passive and one-way to impart knowledge, even if it was a theme course: still to know myself, to know the tribe, etc. Although the content includes the exploration of the children themselves and the environment, in the final analysis, it is still like a small unit approach, and most of the teachers’ instiller the concept in the curriculum, and the lack of participation of young children and parents (Chen & Zhao, 2019). Kindergartens became pre-primary schools, and they were far from tribes and communities.

The kindergarten where researchers study or practice in education is one of the top schools in early childhood education in the North, and develops a child-based curriculum based on open learning, early...
childhood and parental participation. In the remote school, the small school building with the large playground, looking out at the vast Pacific Ocean, sparkling under the sun, seems to be more open than the Taipei City Jungle environment, teaching is the most closed traditional teaching mode. Seeing where the authors are finally going to settle down, they think about what kind of future development they can bring to their children here. Improving the impact of localized curricula on children’s awareness of the Ami ethnic group is the first purpose of this study.

In addition, the population migration is serious, the traditional local culture has long been weakened in the tribe and community, the young people should be in the mainstream culture, the middle-aged people go out to work, and the elderly wear the clothes of the Ami ethnic group at the time of the festival, which can be seen to be different from the Han culture. The schools enhance tribal and parental engagement through local curricula, which is the second objective of this study.

The number of schoolchildren in remote tribes is seriously insufficient due to the decline of the number of young children due to the emigration of the population, coupled with the long distance between the villages. Therefore, most of the kindergartens are arranged in a mixed-age manner. Under such a class arrangement, the gap between age and development level is very large, coupled with poor local economic activities, most of the parents of students work in other counties and cities to earn a living, resulting in a large number of generational education and cultural stimulation unfavorable phenomenon, how to carry out effective courses is a very difficult problem for teachers. For the interaction with the family, it is mostly based on the family’s childcare and educational support, the role of the teacher is sometimes more like a family supporter than an educator, and because of the state of such a family, parents require the support of childcare and pay more attention to the learning of “seeing”, such as Zhuyin, learning list and other courses that can be actually seen, rather than looking at the subsequent benefits of education learning. How schools operate in a localized curriculum as well as benefits, this is the third purpose of this study.

But for educators, the scene of education is our field, and our professional training in education should emphasize practical action, not an abstract theory (Cai, 2000). As on-site workers, we should seek solutions to the problems we encounter in our lives, and firmly grasp the opportunities for these changes, so that the blue wisps of the road can become the nourishment for growth. In the following, the authors will use the joys and sorrows of my six years of working with young children, families, and communities in the tribe, so that this group of out-of-town children can grow up with the community with their own experience in the localized curriculum.

**Research Questions**

1. Understand the impact of localized curriculum on children’s awareness of the Ami ethnic group;
2. Understand how the school operates the localized curriculum and its benefits;
3. Understand the opinions and thoughts of parents on the localized curriculum.

**Research Methods**

**Integrate Local Culture Into the Kindergarten Curriculum**

In recent years, “local consciousness” has risen, “local-based curriculum” and “local curriculum” have received much attention (Wang, 2014), indigenous peoples (hereinafter referred to as indigenous people) are part of Taiwan’s diversified social system, but Taiwan’s long-term education axis is mainly Han, in the planning and knowledge construction of the curriculum, the neglect of the indigenous people’s life experience
and views and traditional culture, which is easy to cause the decline of indigenous students in learning and cultural identity. In addition, the indigenous culture has no written circulation; so many precious traditional cultural knowledge and experience are increasingly lost (He, 2008). In 2016, in order to implement the objectives and spirit of the school curriculum, students are encouraged to learn and use their mother tongue (this refers to Hokkien, Hakka, and Aboriginal) to promote understanding, respect, tolerance, and appreciation among various ethnic groups (Liu, 2017). In order to promote and create a high-quality environment for Taiwan’s mother tongue, the Ministry of Education promotes Taiwan Mother Tongue Day in public and private high schools and kindergartens across the country (Ministry of Education, 2006). We can also learn from the primary school curriculum, where Aboriginal languages are now included as compulsory, and ethnic language teachers are provided for Indigenous students, hoping to continue traditional culture (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2017). Seeing the government’s emphasis on indigenous peoples has become a bright light for the development of the curriculum.

In addition, the emphasis on land is also mentioned in the curriculum syllabus for kindergarten education and protection activities (Ministry of Education, 2017) issued shortly after the researchers teach, and the curriculum objectives related to multiculturalism are: “She-1-6 recognizes the pluralistic phenomenon of Chinese living environment”, “She-3-5 respects the multi-phenomenon of Chinese living environment”, “Recognize-1-3 Collect information on cultural products”, and “Recognize-2-3 Sort out the relationship between cultural product information”. The researchers hope to let the course sail into the torrent of local history and culture, and the course starts with the local culture course.

**Recover Lost Ami Memories and Improve Lost Community Awareness**

The concept of community has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the Chinese people in recent years, the concept of community will be the concept of the residential area, just like a community in the metropolitan area now, the residents in the community live together, and even have their own management committee, which is also in line with the case of multi-community research or mainly based on geographical areas (Hou & Song, 1998), but the tribal culture of the remote countryside is a completely different meaning, the whole community may represent a nation, a group of relatives and friends, because they share the culture, blood, and customs and culture, become a unique community.

So, the authors tried to think about how to improve community awareness. Or how do we bring up the sense of community in this place, maybe when this connection is pulled together, the people and things in the tribe will change, and it will be found that the more the residents of the community behave in good-neighborliness, the higher the sense of community; the higher the age, the higher the sense of community; and the higher the degree of community participation, the higher the sense of community (Huang, Xiao, & Liu, 2007). But when we will see the remote countryside where the authors are, we will find that most of the elderly are left, most of the young people leave the village, entrusting their children to their parents to take care of them, so the young people in the family are alienated from the community, losing the community supported by the Mesozoic Generation, and the community consciousness is also difficult to show. Factors affecting development are mainly due to inconvenient factors, such as transportation and education, resulting in insufficient accumulation of human capital; coupled with the unique culture that has been nurtured for a long time, it is difficult to integrate with mainstream society, so that indigenous peoples have been in a disadvantaged socio-economic position for a long time (Xie, 1998).
Integration of Parents and Tribes Into the Local Curriculum

Therefore, it can be found that if the family and the tribe are to be combined, the opportunity to involve community members, and even the resources of the elders, can invisibly raise the sense of community. For tribal communities, this has a positive effect on their community consciousness because of their residents’ kinship networks, the quality of neighborhood interactions, and the time an individual spends in the community (Li, 2010). Compared with the large-scale activities from the south to the north, the kindergarten is originally the place where they will send their children, and they can only be participants in the activities, and the mental effort paid is small. It can be seen that if the culture of a community, a tribe, and an ethnic group and its community consciousness are continued, so that people in the community and tribe can like the land and are willing to continue to participate in making the community and the tribe better, there is a way to make the whole community prosperous, so that everyone can be proud of this community, and even their own identity.

The community formed by the small tribe in the local area is itself a place where the network of relatives is very clear, and the community environment, which is mainly based on the tribe, should be able to have a very good sense of community. However, in this land, because of the distant migration of the young population, it is impossible to continue to take over the sense of community. It can be known that under the trend of globalization, multinational enterprises, international organizations, network globalization, and other products of cultural hegemony began to carry out cultural aggression around the world, resulting in the phenomenon of universal assimilation of local culture, but the flow of culture is relative to the local identity (Xia & Huang, 2000), in the display of when there is no clear local identity, coupled with the tribe itself does not have obvious work attractiveness, a large number of people who go out to work also make the tribe gradually lose the inheritance of culture, the overall sense of community. In this way, tribal culture was gradually lost. In the tribe, the authors will easily see that the loss of traditional culture will also affect the confidence of the people in the tribe.

In the face of mainstream culture, they think that they are not good enough. Traditional culture has no meaning, and then loses confidence in them. This stems from the fact that school curricula are mainly based on mainstream culture, and rarely arranged from the perspective of indigenous groups (Guo, 2001; Fu, 1999), in which it is also found that collective memory is a very important variant, which is a collective social behavior, people take memories from society, and also retrieve and reorganize these memories from society (Wang, 2004). However, as mentioned earlier, the long-term education system did not notice that the main body of education was mainly written in the mainstream Han Chinese culture, and the tribal culture was not valued or classified. Among them, ethnic imagery is an important variation in the discussion of ethnic relations, which is a belief shared by members of this ethnic group (Chen, 1997). If the local community is still negative and unconfident about its own intentions, the whole community cannot be effectively united, and under the attraction of the flower world, the sense of community is difficult to form.

Now that we understand the importance of community awareness, how can we promote community awareness at the so-called “globalization” or “in reality”, such as job opportunities, children’s education opportunities, and lack of tribal resources?

The authors think that at this time, the educational institutions in the remote countryside may be able to become the starting point for the reconstruction of community consciousness, although under the influence of population migration, low birthrate, etc., the schools in the remote villages are also facing the problem of
existence and ruin, but there is nothing wrong with it, the most able to take root in the remote villages, in addition to the local health bureaus, police stations, and residents’ activity centers, the school will be the most direct venue, and may even be the common memory of the local residents. For example, when dealing with leisure activities, the frequency of participation in dynamic leisure activities has a significant impact on community consciousness (Li, 2004). From the perspective of the definition of community consciousness, it is believed that community consciousness is a sense of belonging, and the sense of belonging comes from the common interests, services, problems, needs and living environment of community residents, and then forms a community consensus (Huang, 1994). How to increase community participation also found that the longer residents live in the community, especially in communities with experience in construction, it is easier to have a positive impact on community participation, and then it is easier to identify with the community (Wang & Huang, 2018). The connection between community awareness and leisure participation positively affects community cohesion, and when the higher the community awareness, the higher its leisure participation, the higher the community cohesion (Li, 2009). Complementary to each other, when people have a good sense of community, it also contributes to community participation, which in turn promotes the promotion of welfare community (Dai & Huang, 2012).

Looking at the above research, we understand that to be able to change the plight of the remote countryside, it is not possible to solve it from a single cultural and historical context, because the existing phenomena of communities and tribes have not been changed, or the community consciousness, community participation or community cohesion of local residents is still in a state of disintegration.

If we can start from the essence of the indigenous tribe, the original kinship relationship, ethnic identity, just like the review of the past six years, taking the school as the starting point, rekindling the spark for the community, then the child is like the lead inside, so that the community and the tribe can regain confidence, as the literature says, the community consciousness is gradually established, at this time, as the kindergarten curriculum program says, the children go from themselves to people, and finally talk about people and nature, people and society, with the child’s hand, holding the hearts of the tribe. That is to say, from the school’s participation in activities as the starting point, so that the school becomes the leader of community building, it is an important foundation for the growth of young children from the root.

Reference, Research Methods—The Life Course of Ethnographic Research

When the authors look back at the course and changes of these six years, they can indeed see that there has been a change from children, families, schools, and communities, but how to organize the huge information of these six years, and even explain the changes that have occurred between people in these six years? They use the review and the corresponding changes in people and the environment, and they need to explore layer by layer in order to be able to make a detailed arrangement of the influencing factors and the results of the changes in the dense and complex process records of the process, so they need vertical data collection to do analysis, rather than the records of a certain year that can be judged horizontally.

They searched for the existing fruits in the existing fields, sorted out the process one by one, and thought about what kind of research should be done to be able to make this journey and the transformation achieved. In this state, they asked a few questions:

How do you see the whole worldview in your research?
What kind of research can carefully and deeply describe the entire cultural context?
As one of them, how do I manage myself in my research?
How do you incorporate diverse data?

Based on such questions, ethnographic research methods are able to solve such problems. We know that the problem of education needs to understand the ins and outs of the whole event and the group, and to be able to provide the educational system and process to make its educational research more “scientific” (Wiersma, 2000), and the research method used should be able to make in-depth, analytical descriptions of specific cultural situations, incorporate them into the context of education, and provide scientific descriptions of the process (W. Wang & Z. Wang, 2010). Thus, ethnographic studies that can realistically see the state of the field can help to better understand the subsequent impact of each decision over the entire six-year process, and provide evidence under such a non-experimental design. At this time, the identity is like ethnography encouraging researchers to enter the research field, not only as participants in research objects, but also as observers, but also a good opportunity to participate in long-term participation, to collect information through interviews (Ye, 2012), and also from the perspective of local people and their cultural life, in order to grasp the social processes of local daily life (Zhen, 1990), of which the “culture” we value is also the focus of ethnographic research. This is also the difference between this research method and ordinary qualitative research (Huang, 1994). At the same time, it can be known that the reason for the implementation of ethnographic research in the education field is because education needs to be flexible, attach importance to the characteristics of context, and be able to present context-dependent.

When the rich meaning of the educational issues obtained is sorted out through research, a thick description of school teaching can be formed, and the rich information guides the possibility of solving educational problems and reforms (Y. Zhang, H. Zhang, Kang, & Chen, 2003). The use of ethnographic research can be used for in-depth investigation of the current situation of the subject and understanding of individual meaning, and can be used as a supplement to other research methods (Lu & Li, 2011). It also requires enough data and a long enough time to have thick data to conduct research. Precisely because the authors live in a local environment, the topic of discussion is the relationship between culture and education, and it is necessary to find the possible elements of these daily records through ethnographic research. For the education site, because we actually work in the field and actually experience various problems in the field, we are the discoverers who continue to explore in the field, and we are also the actual experiencers in the field. It was as if the authors were standing in front of a rice field waiting for the harvest, watching the sea breeze blowing, falling down the swaying golden ears of rice, waiting to remove the information in front of them.

Looking back at the data of these six years, it is difficult to use a simple quantitative survey to be able to put it in a word, we need to see every decision, every possible influencing factor, and piece it together to understand how to effectively guide or transfer in the education field. In past educational research, there have been ethnographic studies to care for indigenous education, and some ethnographic studies have found that there are existing cultural backgrounds between teachers, parents, and children to interpret each other’s behavior, which is misunderstood because of these “cultural differences” (Ji, 2000). This is also an illustration of the fact that curriculum research that applies ethnography to education can reflect and reflect on one’s own curriculum research and practice, self-correcting and re-seeing the blind spots of curriculum research and practice that were previously blind (He, 2010). It can be seen that the use of ethnography to do educational research is not only a record of fragments, but also an opportunity for educators to reflect on whether they are
too narrow in the process, but also an opportunity to continuously make educators more growing, even because they are closer to people, and emotions, when they want to analogize their educational fields, they can look at the relationship between people from a softer perspective, from friendship and emotion, to find more causes of itinerary changes, for educators and fields, not a good thing.

However, it is not enough to look at the field information that grows in front of you, in addition to collecting past paper information, you will also design interviews and questionnaires for the current state, understand the current state of the community, parents, and children’s thinking and feeling, and compare with the old data to analyze, find possible answers, and can be used as a verification of research results.

As a researcher, the authors also take their six-year journey as a remote teacher as the core of their research, collecting curriculum records, teacher codexes, parent feedback, and other materials from the first year, compiling the data according to the year, and doing relevant data coding, as a data analysis and use, and also for the information supplemented by interviews and other means when the data collected cannot be fully understood after coding. It is also because it is the road they have traveled, so they can write stories in the middle of nowhere through the road they have traveled.

Research Results and Discussions

Localized Curriculum to Enhance Children’s Awareness of the Ami Ethnic Group

Kindergarten teachers design a three-year local curriculum, hoping to allow children to enroll in primary classes (kindergartens) to the end of large classes, and through three to four years, learn the three basic spirits of autonomy, practice, and inheritance in order. In the first year, through the guidance of teachers, children are immersed in the school environment and curriculum activities, and they are exposed to the Ami language and culture. Let young children get used to speaking the clan language, and extend the habit of speaking the clan language to the family. Improve children’s ability to apply their own language, go into the tribe, and show their value. In the second year, through the Aramco food culture, children can feel the involvement of human beings and natural life, and feel the wisdom of their ancestors in applying environmental resources with the seasons, feel the mutual care relationship between themselves and the environment, understand the law of the cycle of symbiosis between people and the environment, and then thank the mutual favor between life. In the third year, the three-way development opportunity of teachers, young children and tribes allows children to feel the culture and find their own cultural connotation and spirit; guide children to think about motivation, let children “take the initiative” and “like” to practice the rules of culture, and be proud of their identity and culture to become a real Amis.

The School Combines the Tribe and Constructs a Local Curriculum to Achieve the Common Good of the Garden

The kindergarten team combined with tribal resources to jointly build the Ami Taloan, and hired painters to paint the campus rich in Ami imagery, fully presenting the Ami ethnic group’s “food culture”, “lifestyle”, “Changbin local scenery”, “costumes”, “rituals of the year”, “legends and stories”, “tribal migration history”, and building the campus into a tribal primary school of the Ami ethnic group, integrating the environment into teaching, and achieving subtle teaching effects. Through the renovation of the space in the classroom, the murals of campus culture, the construction of the traditional building “Taloan”, the implicit integration of the Ami tradition into the kindergarten curriculum, the organization of the Ami thanksgiving concert, participation in the ethnic language drama competition, the environmental protection drama competition, etc. By pulling the
elders in the community into the kindergarten to assist, teach, and even handle community activities, let the local culture enter the kindergarten, let the kindergarten enter the family, and enter the community, becoming an inseparable friendship and companionship, and in the process, it was found that whether it was in the care of young children, family parenting and even community building, it was more different from the past.

Self-confidence, bravery, pride in children, pride in the community, pride in the traditional culture of the Ami ethnic group, such changes have gradually taken root in the community, and the local culture from kindergartens, like a line, has led to the family, the community, and also the glory and self-confidence of the past.

These depend on educational ethics, which is related to how teachers deal with teachers, students and teaching materials in the curriculum to improve the effectiveness of teaching (Zhan, 1996). Looking back on these different past experiences to bring children, taking children out of self-confidence from the local culture, the authors always accompany children all day on weekends, and this whole day we not only practice performance, practice ethnic language, and practice culture, they also personally cook rice for them to eat, just like family, accompany and take care of children.

Support Generations of Parents in Local Courses

Even though we have lofty ideals and want to let the children go through the curriculum of discovering problems and solving problems, when we look back, we find that the road instructs teachers to touch the elephant blindly and do not understand the self-realization of the state of the children on the ground! Did not consider the development of young children, did not pay attention to the way of thinking of young children, did not notice that young children were not accompanied by thinking about problems at all, and rushed to throw down the guidance of the curriculum, but more like letting the children become hand puppets, the busy teachers pulled behind them, and finally the line was confused and tired, and also walked out of the curriculum appearance that did not really want.

Looking back on this journey, the authors know that the curriculum planning in the countryside should be indexed by the following points:

- Related to the daily life experience of the child.
- It is related to past experiences that parents may have.
- Related to the past memories and experiences of the community.
- Learning by doing, re-operating experience is more than simply passing on knowledge.

This course direction, because it is related to experience and related to the past cultural and historical context, can also make local people feel their own value.

The design of the course should be based on the aforementioned, starting from experience to gradually take shape, such a direction may be simple to make people scornful, but the biggest difficulty of returning to the basics is the need to let people see the value of simple courses, and this price is also the foundation for me to unload the shackles of Taipei people—the holding of final events. These few simple things just show the value of the remote curriculum, and it is absolutely not necessary to have exquisite course packaging, but to retrieve the memories in life, which is enough.

Reclaim the Forgotten Tribes—A New Community of Honor and Self-Confidence

After the gradual deepening and the addition of immersive mother tongue courses, we gradually find course directions in life that can be followed, which are like covering the big and small things in life, and are commonplace, but as long as the lid is lifted, you can find the treasure inside.
The emergence of these courses is not the addition to the multicultural courses mentioned earlier, but the complete transformation of the curriculum into social participation, social action, and such a social action mode, which naturally binds the kindergarten and the community together, such as the wild vegetables that joined the individual topics at the beginning, to the Amis school that gradually grew up, the tribal health praise that integrates into the community participation, etc., little by little, the little bees in the kindergarten are shuffling and collecting honey in the tribe. It is also like carrying the seeds of these flowers that have finally taken shape and sprinkled them throughout the tribe. From a little point to slowly form a face, from the small things in life, slowly grow into the past memory of the entire tribe.

I work as a caretaker at the Tribal Cultural Health Station, and every time the tribe does an event, I invite you to participate, and you invite us to your event, and everyone communicates with each other, which is really great. Probably because the courses you took had a lot to do with culture and had a lot to do with us, and every time the tribal elders saw you coming, they were very touched, after all, many of their grandchildren were out of town, and they also said that they wanted their grandchildren to come back to study!

From the feedback of parents, it can be proved that such a curriculum method can make the whole ethnic group proud, and even want their grandchildren to come back to study, and the remote countryside that was originally scattered due to lack of educational resources can use the lead of culture, like a shuttle, to pull back each other’s originally scattered experiences.

And when we began to make these memories into records, they were produced by acting, picture books, etc., the nutrients that these tribal elders brought to their bodies were formed little by little. Maybe the kindergarten curriculum is far away for them, but when the line between people is pulled together, the distance between them becomes closer, and a more confident community is achieved.

The kindergarten curriculum seems small, but when we try to do it, it can become a huge gear to promote an entire school and community, so the leader of the curriculum can not underestimate the power of their own curriculum, nor should they be discouraged, because they feel that no one participates in the curriculum at the beginning, but should be more proactive and active with the community, find opportunities for joint cooperation, and the most suitable distance.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The Co-Construction of the Kindergarten Curriculum to the Local Vision. After six years of history, the authors can indeed see the kindergarten curriculum gradually step by step into the community, but also do see the change in community consciousness, the villagers who were originally only combined in the tribal festival time, because of the activities, because of the input of the curriculum, gradually developed the habit of putting into tribal activities from the kindergarten curriculum, and such a habit also allows the tribe to see the value of the tribe in the course, activities, and even competitions, and change the atmosphere of the whole community again.

Han Teachers’ Identification With American Culture. When the authors look at the traditional clothes on my body, even if they are a Han Chinese, they feel that during this time, the blood in their body also belongs to a large part of the Ami tribe, flowing around on their body. It is important to know that unity and cooperation, and even cultural identification, is not only related to blood, but as long as you identify and work hard for
tradition, you can become a member of the tribe. At this time, because the teacher joined the tribe, naturally there are ways to link with the family and the community to achieve common good results.

**Recommendations**

**Let Go of Prejudice and Respect Different Cultures.** We can move forward with the same beliefs, or be willing to let go of our previous preconceptions, and then we can truly integrate, and not just look at the present in the superficial way we want to educate them. Take the children to discover, create this community, and become the Noah’s ark of culture, and the children will lead them forward with their own educational beliefs.

**Leverage Force and Teamwork.** In the tedious affairs, it is not so easy to find new curriculum opportunities, but only by starting to change the teaching plan, condensing the consensus of the kindergarten in the form of teaching meetings, and then lengthening the overall curriculum reform, and gaining the trust of parents with year-by-year changes, can we finally see the fruitful fruits of growth, and children can also grow in such a curriculum.

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