



## Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) Of 1997: A Standpoint from Selected Higher Education Institutions in Nueva Ecija after 20 Years

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### Abstract

The focus of this study is to determine the awareness of employees and students of Higher Education Institutions in Nueva Ecija on the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 twenty years after its implementation. The instruments used are survey questionnaires supplemented by interview, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study found that most HEI's in the Province of Nueva Ecija are not aware on the concerns of Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs)/ Indigenous Peoples (IPs). Likewise, no suitable office or center is provided by HEIs to cater to the educational needs of the ICCs/IPs. Most of the HEI employees and students are not aware on the IPRA of 1997 as shown by the absence of mechanisms and programs intended to heighten their consciousness on Indigenous Peoples rights. The study also showed that a very low percentage of HEIs are inclined to provide education services to the IPs. In addition, HEIs in Nueva Ecija have no existing collaboration with NCIP in regard to programs designed to increase awareness and protection of IPs. The study concluded that after 20 years of IPRA, HEIs in Nueva Ecija lag behind in promoting indigenous peoples rights and protection in the Province.

**Keywords:** Indigenous Peoples; Awareness; Higher Education Institutions; Indigenous Peoples' Rights; Indigenous Cultural Communities.

### I. Introduction

Awareness of people in the mainstream on the rights of indigenous peoples is essential for social progress. Social progress is conceivable through consciousness on indigenous peoples rights since awareness builds respect and knowledge; it opens the door of development and creates an avenue of addressing issues and concerns that might be affecting indigenous peoples such as the creation of a policy. People who are conscious of others' (indigenous peoples) rights entail respect for human rights and an emblem of enlightenment. Despite limited studies related to indigenous rights awareness, the researcher offers the literatures below. Reyhner & Singh (2015) defined "indigenous", when used with education, as the first inhabitants of an area that was later colonized by another, more powerful, group of people who then forced their language and culture on the original inhabitants. The Indigenous Peoples Right Act (IPRA) of 1997 held that Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs)/Indigenous Peoples (IPs) refer to "a group of people or homogenous societies identified by self-ascription and ascription by others, who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who have, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed and utilized such territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, or who have, through resistance to political, social and cultural inroads of colonization", non-indigenous religions and cultures, become historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos. ICCs/IPs shall likewise include peoples who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, at the time of conquest or colonization, or at the time of inroads of non-indigenous religions and cultures, or the establishment of present state boundaries, who retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions, but who may have been displaced from their traditional domains or who may have resettled outside their ancestral domains.

Promoting IPs rights is promoting human rights. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education has defined Human Rights Education as "training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes which are directed to (par. a) the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and (par. c) the promotion of understanding,

respect, gender equality, and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. Henceforth, indigenous peoples' rights are universally recognized, Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) states that indigenous peoples and individuals are free and equal to all other peoples and individuals and have the right to be free from any kind of discrimination, in the exercise of their rights, in particular that based on their indigenous origin or identity. Similarly, under its Article 5, indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State. UNDRIP regenerated the rights of indigenous peoples scholarship, which covers the Declaration's scope, applicability, and implication on national law on indigenous rights (Mansell, 2011; Newcomb, 2011; Wiessner, 2008).

In the Philippine setting, since the declaration of Philippine independence in 1898, indigenous peoples found their place in the country's national framework (Section 11, Art. XV, 1973 Philippine Constitution). The provision in the Philippine Constitution was intended to authorize special treatment of those Filipinos comprising the cultural minorities in the country. The clear intent, in the context of the Constitution viewed in its entirety, is to create an exception to uniformity of treatment under law mandated under the standard of "equal protection of the laws" (Fernandez, 1983). The policy of the Government was "to integrate into the mainstream of Philippine society certain ethnic groups who seek full integration into the larger community, and at the same time protect the rights of those who wish to preserve their original lifeways beside that larger community" (Section 1, Presidential Decree 1414). The ratification of the 1987 Constitution saw the change in government policy from one of 'integration' to 'recognition' of indigenous peoples rights. As a matter of policy, the State recognizes and promotes the rights of ICCs within the framework of national unity and development (Section 22, Art. II, 1987 Philippine Constitution). In the same vein, the State shall protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social and cultural well-being (Section 5, Art. XII, 1987 Philippine Constitution). Further, it specifically states that the State shall recognize the inherent right of ICCs/IPs to self-governance and self-determination and respects the integrity of their values, practices and institutions. To this end, the Congress gives highest priority to the enactment of measures that protect and enhance the right of all the people to human dignity, reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, and remove cultural inequities by equitably diffusing wealth and political power for the common good (Section 1, Art. XIII, 1987 Philippine Constitution) that resulted to the passage of IPRA of 1997 by the Philippine Congress.

The passage of IPRA was undeniably a breakthrough; it was also the only legislation that specifically provided for the right of indigenous peoples to determine their own development. It further affirms IPs' rights and was meant to be a corrective legislation, meaning, it sought to address historical injustices perpetuated against indigenous peoples, and thus contained four significant aspects: (1) the articulation of the recognition of the right to self-governance; (2) the recognition of the bundle of rights held by indigenous peoples, (3) the establishment of a process for the formal recognition of land rights through the introduction of the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) or Certificate Ancestral Land Title (CALT); and, (4) the establishment of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), the agency mandated to protect the interest of indigenous peoples.

The NCIP is the primary government agency mandated by law to promote educational rights of IPs. It is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programs to promote and protect the rights and well-being of the ICCs/IPs and the recognition of their ancestral domains as well as the rights thereto. Specifically, the NCIP Office on Education, Culture and Health was formed which shall be responsible for the effective implementation of the education, cultural and health related rights as provided in the Act, most specifically, to administer all scholarship programs and other educational projects intended for ICC/IP beneficiaries in coordination with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (now Department of Education) and the Commission on Higher Education.

Shrivastava (2016) said that social awareness and consciousness serve as a precursor to social movement. Awareness is knowledge and knowledge is power. Cultural awareness is the ability to recognize the different beliefs, values and customs that someone has based on that person's origins and it allows a person to build more successful personal and professional relationships in adverse environment. The cultural awareness enables the individual to see the society and its issues from comprehensive historical perspectives. Cultural awareness means to know the different cultures in community and to respect and appreciate the differences. The study of Lawas and Gonzales (2012) concluded that there is a high level of awareness of the rights of the Aetas in the barangay surveyed in terms of their social, economic, and political rights. Likewise, Gabriel (2017) found in his study that the majority of Dumagat women possess knowledge of Republic Act 9262. They understand the rights covered by law and their entitlements. The majority are also capable of recognizing violation of these rights.

To develop student cultural awareness is a duty of a learning institution. Educational institution builds moral essence and ethical values to produce socially desirable behavior, personality and character which promote innovation, peace, equal opportunities and justification among individuals, society and nation. The institutions have the responsibility to promote the students' cultural awareness. The higher education has a great importance because colleges lie in the last educational level before the individual's access into the field of work. The youth at this level are characterized by maturation, realization and awareness, but this does not indicate that they all are equal in their social awareness, because there are

many variables that control the awareness. Teachers are the important sector of the society and are considered as an agent of social change (Shrivastava, 2016).

The teacher is at the heart of student's social learning and awareness. A hallmark of effective teaching is racial awareness, where recognition of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in the classroom informs teaching strategies (Sue, 2013). Gay (1994) specified the main aims of multicultural education as [being that of] equality and excellence in education, expression of values and attitudes, necessary multicultural social awareness, the acquisition of basic skills, the development of cultural and ethnic literacy as well as personal development. Given that some teachers find themselves meeting an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person for the first time as a practicing teacher (Craven, 2005), it appears paramount that additional training is offered to teachers in order to improve their knowledge of effective, culturally relevant teaching practices with Indigenous Australians. Burrige, Riordan, Aubusson, Evans, Vaughan, Kenney and Chodkiewicz (2009) also assert that professional learning opportunities improve teacher engagement with the Aboriginal community while simultaneously providing knowledge about Aboriginal cultures, societies and histories.

Despite the passage of laws protecting IPs, they remain marginalized and disadvantaged sector in society. They continuously face different issues including discrimination, poverty and human rights abuse (Torres, 2016). Indigenous participants from Mindanao of the two batches of Northern Illinois University's Philippine Minorities Program held in 2010 and the program titled "Cultural Citizens and the North-South Dialogue" held in 2008 reported several cases of violations of the rights of the Lumads. Common problems include non-representation at all levels of society, lack of education, poverty, and discrimination. Their struggles against development aggression, which lead to loss of ancestral domain and self-determination as well as to environmental destruction, are met with harassment and human rights violations, including political killings (Ty, 2010). Kyodo News in 2015 reported that despite a constitutional guarantee and the passage 18 years ago of a special law for the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in the Philippines, the marginalized group that represents 14 percent of the country's 100 million population still complains of discrimination that suppresses basic rights and development.

The marginalization of IPs is evident in the absence of access to educational opportunities. The Tebtebba (2016) said that statistics show that nine out of ten indigenous children in Mindanao have no access to education and many indigenous communities do not have schools. Hence, it recommended the increase in investment for inclusive education, ensuring that programs reach indigenous communities and areas with high poverty incidence, support for multi-lingual education and the culturally-appropriate accreditation of IP teachers. Equally, there are several government cultural programs and policies, indigenous peoples are concerned that the main program for promotion of indigenous peoples' culture is through festivals, which are not under the control of indigenous peoples and sometimes misrepresents their traditional cultural expressions. This gap between the ideal condition and actual situation of the indigenous peoples motivated the researchers to make a study on the standpoint of selected HEIs in Nueva Ecijaon IPRA of 1997. This study contends that there is limited participation of HEIs in terms of awareness campaign on the concept of indigenous peoples. Thus, there is social progress for indigenous peoples when there is comprehensive awareness of their rights.

The study, therefore, posed the following problems, to wit:

1. How may the HEIs be recognized in terms of responsiveness to Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples?
2. How may the HEI Employees and Students be described in terms of awareness on IPRA of 1997?
  - 2.1. Which provisions of IPRA of 1997 are HEI Employees and Students aware of?
3. How may the HEIs be described in terms of compliance using mechanisms to inform its employees and students on the context of IPRA of 1997?
  - 3.1. What are the mechanisms of HEIs where employees and students get information on the context of IPRA of 1997 and to what extent is/are the mechanism/s used?
4. What are the services provided by HEIs to its ICCs/IPs student/s?

## **II. Methodology**

### **2.1. Conceptual Framework**

This study is based on the concept that awareness is knowledge and knowledge is power Shrivastava (2016). Cultural awareness according to Shrivastava (2016) is the ability to recognize the different beliefs, values and customs that someone has based on that person's origins and it allows a person to build more successful personal and professional relationships in adverse environment. The cultural awareness enables the individual to see the society and its issues from comprehensive historical perspectives. Campinha-Bacote (2002) suggests that cultural competence involves being aware of the diversity that exists within cultural groups, while integrating cultural knowledge, cultural awareness and cultural skills to improve service delivery. This model demonstrates the amount of varied knowledge that is required to work

effectively with culturally diverse clients, while asserting that effective culturally-responsive services are directly correlated with practitioner cultural competence levels. According to, Champagne (2009) education is the primary means of ensuring indigenous peoples' individual and collective development; it is a precondition for indigenous peoples' ability to realize their right to self-determination, including their right to pursue their own economic, social and cultural development. Hence, based on the aforesaid concepts, awareness or cultural awareness through active involvement of HEIs is an effective tool to which this research study was based. Further, the dynamic input of HEIs for cultural awareness would result in a wider dimension of disseminating ICCs/IPs rights.

## 2.2. Theoretical Framework

The study adheres to the Functionalist theory which focuses on the ways that universal education serves the needs of society. Functionalists first see education in its manifest role: conveying basic knowledge and skills to the next generation. Durkheim (the founder of functionalist theory) identified the latent role of education as one of socializing people into society's mainstream (CliffsNotes, 2016). This theory, therefore, views that HEIs are very instrumental in transmitting awareness on the part of its employees and students concerning the rights of indigenous peoples. In this background, the study perceives that HEIs together with NCIP were unsuccessful in performing their mandated tasks.

Figure 1 presents the paradigm of the study and the relations of variables. The study believed that good association of HEIs (employees and students), continuous ICCs/IPs awareness campaign programs, and knowledge on the indigenous peoples rights would result in a wholesome social awareness on the rights of ICCs/IPs. Portion of the output of the study is the recommendation essential to social awareness on the rights of ICCs/IPs which is in the form of seminar, training, symposium, workshop, and the like.

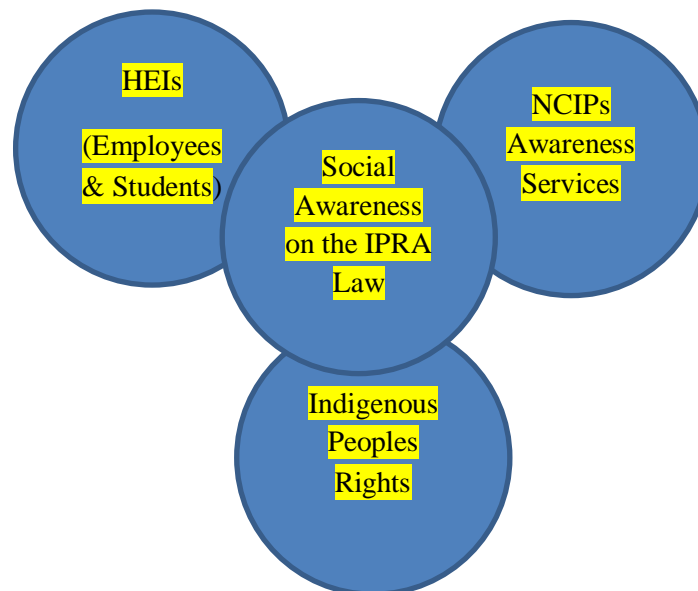
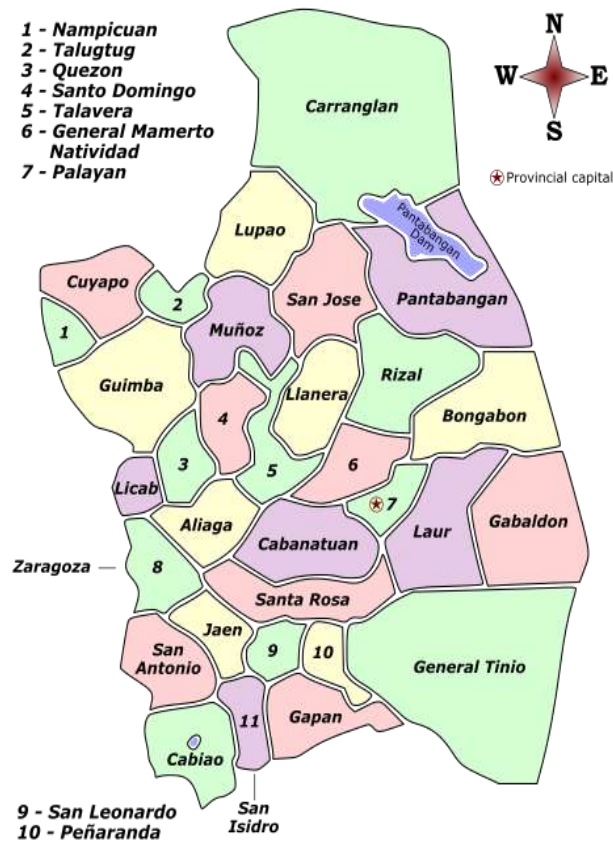


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

## 2.3. Research Locale

The study locale is in the Province of Nueva Ecija, Philippines. The archipelago consists of 7,107 islands but geographically, from North to South, it has three main islands: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Each of the main islands is divided into administrative regions and provinces (Gabriel, 2017). Nueva Ecija is a typical province in the archipelago having agriculture as the backbone of the economy. As of 2010, the province has a total population of 1,955,373 persons greater than 1,659,883 by 295,490 as of July 10, 2013. HEIs as respondents of this study are mostly located in Cabanatuan City and one in Palayan City. Most HEIs are situated in Cabanatuan City being the centermost and most developed town of Nueva Ecija. The map of the province is shown below.



Source: Google Map

## 2.4. Research Design

This study used the descriptive-quantitative methods of study. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2005), quantitative research could explain phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods. Also, Calderon (1993), said that descriptive method is a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating data about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, trends and cause effect relationships and then making adequate and accurate interpretation about such data with or without the aid of the statistical methods. Hence, descriptive-quantitative methods of study could help the researcher describe the responsiveness, awareness, and compliance of HEIs concerning the IPRA of 1997.

## 2.5. Data Gathering Procedure

There are 40 HEI Employees and 40 HEI Students as respondents. The researcher used the Simple Random Sampling method to extract the number respondents. Also, after securing the permit to conduct study from the HEIs administrators the researcher personally administered the questionnaire-checklists to both groups of respondents which was recovered after five working days. Interview of the respondents was conducted immediately after the retrieval of the questionnaire-checklists including the collection of the syllabi of HEIs that has relation to the study. The results of interview and evaluation of the syllabi was very significant to the researcher and its results was considered in the processing of data.

## 2.6. Research Instrument and its Reliability

The questionnaire-checklists was developed by the researcher and was discussed in two settings with a senior faculty researcher who is expert in research questionnaire construction for modifications and recommendations. Hence, after incorporating all the suggestions of the senior faculty researcher the questionnaire-checklists was printed and reproduced. Questionnaire-checklists was the main instrument of the research (see Appendices). The research instrument consisted of two parts, namely: Respondents' Profile and the Questionnaire-checklist that contained the specific problems chiefly anchored on the provisions of IPRA of 1997 that was answered by putting a check mark.

The questionnaire-checklist was tested using 40 HEI Employees and Students in one private college in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija which is not a respondent in the study and it was found reliable using Cronbach's Alpha.



## 2.7. Response Mode

Table 1

Response mode on extent of use on the mechanisms of HEIs where employees and students get information on the context of IPRA Law.

Semantic Differential	Verbal Description
- Always	- It is always and completely used.
- Sometimes	- It is used but not always.
- Never	- It was never used.

## III. Results and Discussions

### 1. Profile of respondents in terms of Highest Educational Attainment, Employment Position, Ethnicity, and Years of Employment for HEI employees and Year Level, Ethnicity, and Sex for HEI Students.

Table 2 shows that, in terms of Educational Attainment, most of the HEI respondents did not finish their graduate studies with a total of 19 (47.5%); in terms of Employment Position, most of the respondents are teaching personnel with a total of 22 (55%); on the aspect of Ethnicity, most are Tagalog with a total of 33 (82.5%); and on the Years of Employment, most respondents with a total of 24 (60%) are with few years of experience.

Table 2

Profile of HEIs Employees in terms of Highest Educational Attainment, Employment Position, ethnicity, and Years of Employment.

Respondent's Profile (HEI Employees)			
Highest Educational Attainment			
Doctorate Holder	Masteral Holder	BS Holder	<b>TOTAL</b>
7(17.5%)	14(35%)	19(47.5%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
Employment Position			
Administrator	Faculty	Non-Teaching	<b>TOTAL</b>
8(20%)	22(55%)	10(25%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
Ethnicity			
Tagalog	Ilocano	W/ Indigenous Origin	<b>TOTAL</b>
33(82.5%)	5(12.5%)	2(5%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
Years of Employment in the HEI			
10 Years Below	11 to 20 Years	21 Years & Above	<b>TOTAL</b>
24(60%)	10(25%)	6(15%)	<b>40 (100%)</b>

It is observed that least of the employees (teaching and non-teaching) pursue their graduate studies. Conversation with the employees revealed that they wish to proceed on their advance studies for promotion and increase in compensation purposes while majority mentioned that they don't see interest enrolling their graduate studies since it is expensive and time consuming. Employment position of respondents showed a normal tendency; most of the respondents are teaching personnel because they work in an educational institution supported by a lesser number of non-teaching employees supervise by few administrators/supervisors. Moreover, as expected, most of the respondents are Tagalog considering that inhabitants in Nueva Ecija, a province in the region of Central Luzon, belong to the mainstream. Lastly, few of the respondents belong to 21 Years & Above. Interview with respondents revealed that their co-employees 10 to 15 years back transferred to other government agencies while some went abroad for higher compensation

**Table 3**

**Table 3** disclosed that on the Year Level of respondents, senior College is dominant with a total of 13 or 32.5%; similarly, Tagalog dominated the aspect of Ethnicity with a total of 37 or 92.5%; and as to Sex, most of the respondents are females with a total of 24 or 60%.

Profile of HEI Students in terms of Year Level, Ethnicity, and Sex.

<b>Respondent's Profile (HEI Students)</b>				
<b>Year Level</b>				
1 <sup>st</sup> Yr. College	2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr. College	3 <sup>rd</sup> Yr. College	4 <sup>th</sup> Yr. College	<b>TOTAL</b>
4 (10%)	12(30%)	11(27.5%)	13(32.5%)	<b>40(100%)</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Tagalog	Ilocano	W/ Indigenous Origin	Other Ethnicity	<b>TOTAL</b>
37(92.5%)	3(7.5%)	0	0	<b>40(100%)</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Male		Female		<b>TOTAL</b>
16 (40%)		24 (60%)		<b>40 (100%)</b>

The effect of the implementation of K-12 program by the Department of Education was very visible since student-respondents from 1<sup>st</sup> Year College had a fewest percentage. As predicted, in comparison to the employees, all the student-respondents have no IP background since people in Nueva Ecija mostly are tagalog. The Philippine Population as of April 10, 2018 showed that there is a greater number of males (50.1%) as compared for females (49.9 %); ironically, the study showed that there are larger quantity of females interested in pursuing tertiary education than males.

## 2. HEIs responsiveness to Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples.

Table 4 showed that both groups of respondents mostly agree that their HEIs are not responsive to the interests of ICCs/IPs with a total of 26 (65%) for Employees while 34 (85%) for Students. However, it is notable that students have a higher percentage of perception on the unresponsiveness of HEIs than that of the employees. In support to this finding, some of the respondents (employees and students) wrote their observations which state that, “there is no appropriate office in our school purposely designed to handle or address the concerns of ICCs/IPs”.

Table 4

HEIs responsiveness to Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples.

<b>HEI Employees</b>		<b>HEI Students</b>	
Responsive	Not Responsive	Responsive	Not Responsive
14 (35%)	26 (65%)	6 (15%)	34 (85%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40 (100%)</b>	<b>40 (100%)</b>	

This implied that provision of actual and wide-ranging services as well as responding to the needs of ICCs/IPs by HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija is really hard to achieve due to non-availability of appropriate office or center.

## 3. Awareness of HEI Employees and Students on the IPRA of 1997.

Table 5 showed that both groups of respondents are mostly not aware about IPRA of 1997 with a total of 23 (57.5%) for Employees and 32 (80%) for Students. Yet again, the Students’ perception is greater as compared to the Employees. This implied that HEIs do not have or did not conduct awareness programs to its employees and students concerning IPRA of 1997. It further showed that the NCIP office, in support to HEIs, failed in piloting consciousness campaign regarding IPRA of 1997.

**Table 5**

Awareness of HEI Employees and Students on the IPRA of 1997.

HEI Employees		HEI Students	
Aware	Not Aware	Aware	Not Aware
17 (42.5%)	23 (57.5%)	8 (20%)	32 (80%)
<b>TOTAL 40 (100%)</b>		<b>40 (100%)</b>	

This finding was corroborated by 4 of the student-respondents during the interview which they stated in Tagalog dialect; “Wala naman pong nagpapaseminar sa amin dito sa eskwelahan namin patungkol sa IPRA of 1997”(No seminar concerning the IPRA of 1997 was conducted in our school), “no agencies ever came in our school to inform [us] about indigenous peoples rights, “no seminar conducted in our school regarding IP”, and “no IP seminar/orientation of any form conducted in our school”. Similarly, the employees also uncovered that there was really no IPRA of 1997 awareness campaign ever done by the HEIs or NCIP office in their respective institution.

**Table 5.1.** revealed that most of the HEI Employees are not aware of the provisions of IPRA Law but more notably on the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Right to Self-Governance and Empowerment with a total of 54 (22.5%) and Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Cultural Integrity with total of 82 (22.78%). However, HEI Students perceived that they are more unmindful on the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Rights to Ancestral Domains with a total of 9 (5.62%).

**Table 5.1.**

HEI Employees and Students awareness on the provisions IPRA of 1997.

Areas of Awareness under the IPRA of 1997.	HEI Employees	%age	HEI Students	%age
a. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Rights to Ancestral Domains.	45	28.12%	9	5.62%
b. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Right to Self-Governance and Empowerment.	54	22.5%	41	17.08%
c. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Social Justice and Human Rights.	95	29.69%	27	8.43%
d. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act in terms of Cultural Integrity.	82	22.78%	29	8.05%

On the contrary, the study of Lawas and Gonzales (2012) showed that there is a high level of awareness of the rights of the Aetas in the barangay surveyed in terms of their social, economic, and political rights. Also, Gabriel (2017) found in his study that majority of the Dumagat understand the rights covered by law (Republic Act 9262) and their entitlements. Yet, the data inferred that HEI Employees have a higher awareness on the IPRA of 1997 compared to HEI Students that could be explained by years of exposure by the former to social media, news, and social interaction but still both groups of respondents have a low awareness. Sadly, the absence or narrow awareness of both groups of respondent could endanger the people from ICCs/IPs. Kyodo News in 2015 reported that despite a constitutional guarantee and the passage 18 years ago of a special law for the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples in the Philippines, the marginalized group that represents 14 percent of the country's 100 million population still complained of discrimination that suppressed basic rights and development. Equally, Ty (2010) reported several cases of violations of the rights of the Lumads. Common problems included non-representation at all levels of society, lack of education, poverty, and discrimination. Their struggles against development aggression, which led to loss of ancestral domain and self-determination as well as to environmental destruction, are met with harassment and human rights violations, including political killings.

**4. HEIs in terms of compliance in using mechanisms to inform its employees and students on the context of IPRA of 1997.**

Table 6 showed that both groups of respondents believed that their HEIs are not compliant in utilizing mechanisms to educate their employees and students on the context of IPRA of 1997 with a total of 29 (72.5%) and 32 (80%) for HEI Employees and Students, respectively.



**Table 6**

Mechanisms of HEIs where employees and students get information on the context of IPRA of 1997.

	HEI Employees		HEI Students	
	Compliant	Not Compliant	Compliant	Not Compliant
	11 (27.5%)	29 (72.5%)	8 (20%)	32 (80%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40 or 100%</b>		<b>40 or 100%</b>	

This implied that HEI Employees and Students would remain to be blinded or be less informed regarding IPRA of 1997.

Table 6.1 showed that most of the HEI Employees and Students were informed on the context of IPRA of 1997 sometimes through Classroom Instruction, Brochure, Bulletin of Information, and seminars and training which means that HEIs used such mechanisms but not always. However, the data clearly showed that both groups of respondents got an actually slight percentage which further implied that full awareness on the IPRA of 1997 through HEIs using the aforesaid mechanisms is really difficult to attain due to the least usage of the aforementioned mechanisms. Interview of the employees (teaching personnel) disclosed that there is no identified topic concerning ICCs/IPs in their program of study which was validated through the examination of syllabus of teachers teaching General Subjects (Social Sciences). Hence, Sue (2013) said that the hallmark of effective teaching is racial awareness, where recognition of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in the classroom informs teaching strategies.

**Table 6.1.**

Mechanisms of HEIs where employees and students get information on the context of IPRA Law and to what extent is/are the mechanism/s used

Mechanisms of HEIs.	Employees (Es)	Students (Ss)	Extent of Using the Mechanism					
			Always		Sometimes		Never	
			Es	Ss	Es	Ss	Es	Ss
a. Classroom instruction.	12 (30%)	8 (20%)	4	3	8	5	0	0
b. Brochure.	11 (27.5%)	8 (20%)	1	2	10	6	0	0
c. Bulletin of information.	9 (22.5%)	8 (20%)	3	3	6	5	0	0
d. Media (Tri-Media)	9 (22.5%)	8 (20%)	7	0	2	8	0	0
e. Social Media	10 (25%)	8 (20%)	6	2	4	6	0	0
f. Seminars and Trainings	11 (27.5%)	8 (20%)	4	1	7	7	0	0
g. Others: _____	0	1 (2.5%)	0	0	0	1	0	0
h. None	0	1 (2.5%)	0	0	0	1	0	0

By the same token, Gay (1994) specified the main aims of multicultural education as being that of equality and excellence in education, expression of values and attitudes, necessary multicultural social awareness, the acquisition of basic skills, the development of cultural and ethnic literacy as well as personal development.

### 5. Services provided by HEIs to its ICCs/IPs student/s.

Table 7 presents that HEI employees view that HEIs provide Affordable education to IP students with 19 (47.5%) score while HEI students believe that Accessible education to IP students with 28 (70%) rating is the most available services for ICCs/IPs. Yet, both groups of respondents got a low percentage; hence, the data further entail that HEIs deliver narrow or inadequate services for ICCs/IPs.

**Table 7**

Services provided by HEIs to its ICCs/IPs student/s

Services provided by HEIs to its ICCs/IPs student/s.	HEI Employees	HEI Students
a. Scholarship program for IP students.	18 (45%)	11 (27.5%)

b. Entrance examination appropriate for the concerned IP students.	12 (30%)	17 (42.5%)
c. Separate or special orientation for IP students.	8 (20%)	21 (52.5%)
d. Protection of IP students against discrimination (e.g. student manual).	14 (35%)	24 (60%)
e. Accessible education to IP students.	18(45%)	28 (70%)
f. Affordable education to IP students.	19 (47.5%)	15 (37.5%)
g. Others: _____	3 (7.5%)	6 (15%)
h. None	3 (7.5%)	4(10%)

In support to this finding, Tebtebba (2016) said that statistics show that nine out of ten indigenous children in Mindanao have no access to education and many indigenous communities do not have schools. Hence, it recommended the increase in investment for inclusive education, ensuring that programs reach indigenous communities and areas with high poverty incidence, support for multi-lingual education and the culturally-appropriate accreditation of IP teachers.

## IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 1. CONCLUSIONS

- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija cannot appropriately address the concerns of ICCs/IPs students, employees, and visitors considering that there is no suitable office or center that could protect their interests. Also, the insensitivity of HEIs in the Province concerning ICCs/IPs means that discrimination, abuse of rights, oppression and the like affecting ICCs/IPs, if there are, would continue to exist; hence, its eradication is not possible.
- The negligible awareness on the context of IPRA of 1997 by HEIs means that persecution or oppression of ICCs/IPs in the higher learning institutions is possible to occur. Also, the HEIs are aware only on the general law in safeguarding the people from the ICCs/IPs but not on the IPRA of 1997.
- HEIs with limited or devoid of mechanisms to promote awareness particularly on the framework of IPRA of 1997 cannot absolutely edify its employees and students. Hence, the deprivation of the rights of ICCs/IPs would endure to exist and persist in the academic community due to the scarcity of awareness mechanisms or programs. Also, intervallic application of awareness mechanisms or programs concerning IPRA of 1997 could not ensure the protection of ICCs/IPs to the great extent in the educational institutions. Hence, domination or oppression between the people in the middle-of-the-road and ICCs/IPs would continue to occur in the HEIs.
- HEIs services for ICCs/IPs significantly contribute in educating IPs. Despite the insignificant rating by both groups of respondents, this study concluded that HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija showed interest in educating IPs. Hence, continuous but enriched education services of HEIs in Nueva Ecija for IPs would surely uplift the frequency of educated persons belonging to ICCs/IPs in the Province.
- The HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija had no proof of participation or collaboration with NCIP Office in the Provincial or Regional level with reference to ICCs/IPs awareness or protection.
- In general, in a span of 20 years, the HEIs in Nueva Ecija are quite behind in terms of its contribution in spreading the rights of indigenous peoples within Province.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija shall establish or create a separate office purposely to attend to or response to the concerns or issues relative to ICCs/IPs.
- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija shall intensify the protection of ICCs/IPs provided by IPRA of 1997 through relentless conduct of awareness programs for their employees and students.
- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija shall sustain their ICCs/IPs awareness mechanisms or programs but shall strengthen their application to their employees and students. Also, discussion of IPRA of 1997 should be espoused as part of HEIs program of study or syllabus under the Social Science subjects.
- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija shall fortify and multiply their services for ICCs/IPs; not only on education service but shall include those provided by IPRA of 1997 that are within the sphere of HEIs.
- HEIs in the Province of Nueva Ecija and NCIP office (Provincial or Regional level) shall practice teamwork, solidarity, and joint efforts in realizing the ideals of IPRA of 1997 which are academic related.



**APPENDICE**  
Republic of the Philippines  
**NUEVA ECIJA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**  
**Graduate School**  
Gen. Tinio, Cabanatuan City



November 11, 2017

**DEAR RESPONDENTS (HEI Employees):**

I, the undersigned researcher, Department Chair in the Graduate School, is currently conducting a study entitled: **Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997: A Standpoint from Selected HEIs in Nueva Ecija After 20 Years.** The output of the research would be the basis of the Department in delivering extension services to the concerned clientele. Hence, for the success of this endeavor, I respectfully seek your cooperation in answering the questionnaire-checklist below.

**I. RESPONDENT'S PROFILE:**

**Direction:** Kindly supply or put a check [ / ] on the information called for.

**1. Highest Educational Attainment**

Doctorate Holder: \_\_\_\_\_ Masteral Holder: \_\_\_\_\_ BS Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Employment Position**

Administrator (Dean/Director)/Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty : \_\_\_\_\_  
Non-Teaching : \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Ethnicity**

Tagalog: \_\_\_\_\_ Ilocano: \_\_\_\_\_ With Indigenous Origin/History: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Ethnicity (Pls. Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Years of Employment in the HEI**

10 Years Below: \_\_\_\_\_ 11 to 20 Years: \_\_\_\_\_ 21 Years and Above: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. QUESTIONNAIRE-CHECKLIST:**

**Direction:** Answer the given items below by putting a check [ / ] mark on the space provided for.

**1. How may the HEIs be recognized in terms of responsiveness to Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples?**

Responsive: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Responsive: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. How may the HEI Employees and Students be described in terms of awareness on IPRA of 1997?**

Aware: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Aware: \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is **Aware**, proceed to problem number 3. If your answer is **Not Aware**, proceed to problem number 4.

**3. Which of the following provision/s of IPRA of 1997 are you aware of?**

<b>1.1. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act in terms of Rights to Ancestral Domains.</b>	[ / ]
a. Right of Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) to Ancestral Domains.	
b. Right of ICCs/IPs to Ancestral Lands.	
c. Right of ICCs/IPs on unauthorized and unlawful intrusion upon, or use of any portion of the ancestral domain.	
d. Rights of ICCs/IPs to be recognized and respected on their ancestral domains by virtue of Native Title.	
<b>1.2. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act in terms of Right to Self-Governance and Empowerment.</b>	
a. Right of ICCs/IPs to self-governance and self-determination and respect the integrity of their values, practices and institutions.	
b. Right to use their own commonly accepted justice systems, conflict resolution institutions, peace building processes or mechanisms and other customary laws and practices within their respective communities and as may be compatible with the national legal system and with internationally recognized human rights.	
c. Right to participate fully, if they so choose, at all levels of decision-making in matters which may affect their rights, lives and destinies through procedures determined by them as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous political structures.	
d. Right to mandatory representation in policy-making bodies and other local legislative councils.	
e. Right to determine and decide their own priorities for development affecting their lives, beliefs, institutions, spiritual well-being, and the lands they own, occupy or use.	
f. Right of independent ICCs/IPs organizations to enable the ICCs/IPs to pursue and protect their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful means.	
<b>1.3. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act in terms of Social Justice and Human Rights.</b>	
a. Right of ICCs/IPs to due recognition of their distinct characteristics and identity, accord to the members of the ICCs/IPs the rights, protections and privileges enjoyed by the rest of the citizenry. It shall extend to them the same employment rights, opportunities, basic services, educational and other rights and privileges available to every member of the society. Accordingly, the State shall likewise ensure that the employment of any form of force or coercion against ICCs/IPs shall be dealt with by law.	
b. Right of ICCs/IPs for special protection and security in periods of armed conflict.	
c. Right of the ICCs/IPs to be free from any form of discrimination, with respect to recruitment and conditions of employment; and equal treatment in employment for men and women, including the protection from sexual harassment.	
d. Right of ICCs/IPs against discrimination with respect to the terms and conditions of employment on account of their descent. Equal remuneration shall be paid to ICC/IP and non-ICC/IP for work of equal value.	
e. Right of ICCs/IPs to have a special measures for the immediate, effective and continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions, including in the areas of employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.	
f. Right of ICC/IP women to enjoy equal rights and opportunities with men, as regards the social, economic, political and cultural spheres of life.	
g. Right of support of ICCs/IPs on all government programs intended for the development and rearing of the children and youth of ICCs/IPs for civic efficiency.	
h. Right to have a complete, adequate and integrated system of education, relevant to the needs of the children and young people of ICCs/IPs.	
<b>1.4. Provisions under Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act in terms of Cultural Integrity.</b>	
a. Right of ICCs/IPs to be respected, recognized and protected; to preserve and protect their culture, traditions and institutions.	
b. Right of ICCs/IPs to be provided with equal access to various cultural opportunities to the ICCs/IPs through	

the educational system, public or private cultural entities, scholarships, grants and other incentives without prejudice to their right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions by providing education in their own language, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.	
c. Right of ICCs/IPs to have a dignity and diversity of the cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations of the ICCs/IPs appropriately reflected in all forms of education, public information and cultural-educational exchange.	
d. Right of ICCs/IPs to practice and revitalize their own cultural traditions and customs.	
e. Right of ICCs/IPs to manifest, practice, develop, and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect and have access to their religious and cultural sites; the right to use and control of ceremonial objects; and, the right to the repatriation of human remains.	
f. Right to indigenous knowledge systems and practices and to develop own sciences and technologies.	
g. Right of ICCs/IPs to access on their biological and genetic resources and to indigenous knowledge related to the conservation, utilization and enhancement of these resources.	
h. Right of ICCs/IPs to a sustainable agro-technological development and shall formulate and implement programs of action for its effective implementation.	
i. Right of ICCs/IPs to receive from the national government all funds especially earmarked or allocated for the management and preservation of their archeological and historical sites and artifacts with the financial and technical support of the national government agencies.	

**4. How may the HEIs be described in terms of compliance using mechanisms to inform its employees and students on the context of IPRA of 1997?**

Compliant: \_\_\_\_\_

Not Compliant: \_\_\_\_\_

If your answer is **Compliant**, proceed to problem number 5. If your answer is **Not Compliant**, proceed to problem number 6.

**5. Which of the following mechanisms in your school do you get information from on the context of IPRA Law and to what extent is/are the mechanism/s used?**

Please check [ / ] all possible answer/s and rate the item/s using scale below:

**Always** – It is repeatedly used.

**Sometimes** – It is occasionally used.

**Never** – It is certainly not used.

Mechanisms	[ / ]	Extent of Using the Mechanism		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
a. Classroom instruction.				
b. Brochure.				
c. Bulletin of information.				
d. Media (Tri-Media)				
e. Social Media				
f. Seminars and Trainings				
g. Others: _____				
h. None				



**6. Which of the following services are provided by your school to its ICCs/IPs student/s?**

Please check [ / ] all possible answers.

<b>HEI Services</b>	<b>[ / ]</b>
a. Scholarship program for IP students.	
b. Entrance examination appropriate for the concerned IP students.	
c. Separate or special orientation for IP students.	
d. Protection of IP students against discrimination (e.g. student manual).	
e. Accessible education to IP students.	
f. Affordable education to IP students.	
g. Others: _____	
h. None	

**Nothing follows!**

Your cooperation is highly appreciated. Thank you very much.

Researcher,

**JESSTER P. EDUARDO, Ph.D.**



Republic of the Philippines  
**NUEVA ECIJA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**  
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**I. RESPONDENT'S PROFILE:**

**Direction:** Kindly supply or put a check [ / ] on the information called for.

**1. Year Level**

1<sup>st</sup> Year College : \_\_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> Year College : \_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> Year College : \_\_\_\_\_ 4<sup>th</sup> Year College : \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Ethnicity**

Tagalog: \_\_\_\_\_ Ilocano: \_\_\_\_\_ With Indigenous Origin/History: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other Ethnicity (Pls. Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Gender:**

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_ Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_**

**II. QUESTIONNAIRE-CHECKLIST:**

**Direction:** Answer the given items below by putting a check [ / ] mark on the space provided for.

**1. How may the HEIs be recognized in terms of responsiveness to Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples?**

Responsive: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Responsive: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. How may the HEI Employees and Students be described in terms of awareness on IPRA of 1997?**

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b. Brochure.				
c. Bulletin of information.				
d. Media (Tri-Media)				
e. Social Media				
f. Seminars and Trainings				
g. Others: _____				
h. None				

**6. Which of the following services are provided by your school to its ICCs/IPs student/s?**

Please check [ / ] all possible answers.

HEI Services	[ / ]
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b. Entrance examination appropriate for the concerned IP students.	
c. Separate or special orientation for IP students.	
d. Protection of IP students against discrimination (e.g. student manual).	
e. Accessible education to IP students.	
f. Affordable education to IP students.	
g. Others: _____	
h. None	

**Nothing follows!**

Your cooperation is highly appreciated. Thank you very much.

Researcher,

**JESSTER P. EDUARDO, Ph.D.**

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