



Original Article

Indigenous Culture and Educating Life Skills for University Students

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Received 11 November 2022

Revised 06 July 2023; Accepted 15 November 2023

Abstract: To integrate and succeed in an era of globalization with sufficient professional knowledge, students need essential skills such as communication and information technology skills, thinking skills, and working skills. In particular, life skills help students have the ability to adapt to global society, especially the issue of understanding cultural diversity. It is the foundation for a comprehensive and sustainable development process, minimizing cultural conflicts. In the northern mountainous region, Tay Bac University in particular, students come from mountainous provinces with different languages, cultures, and living standards. Therefore, for this indigenous culture to be respected, preserved, and integrated while still retaining its own identity, the research, and analysis of its impact on students in culturally diverse universities is becoming increasingly important becomes more and more. The paper analyzes the influence of indigenous culture in educating life skills for students at universities with cultural diversity through a survey of 151 students in preschool education and 22 teachers at Tay Bac University.

Keywords: Indigenous culture; Cultural diversity; Globalization; Life skills.

1. Introduction

Life skill education is essential, ensuring comprehensive education of Vietnamese students and students into global citizens and international integration. We allow students to provide tremendous success when they are well-equipped with life skills. So, what are life skills? Several definitions can define life skills.

Life skills enable individuals to engage in adaptive and positive behavior. It helps them cope with the events and challenges of everyday life. And enter the new challenging modern world, dealing with everything from interacting with others to identifying and processing emotions.

It promotes positive micro-personal activities, social adaptation, citizenship, and attitudinal activism at work. The importance of having life skills in a person's life lies in his ability to adapt to all circumstances and succeed in the renaissance and prosperity of society.

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<https://doi.org/10.25073/2588-1159/vnuer.4720>

One of the most critical problems that demand immediate attention and solutions these days is the lack of life skills for the new generation. It is because there is a lack of life skills in the output of educational institutions. Due to a lack of necessary life skills, many people have failed in their careers and personal lives.

Life skill education helps students build communication skills and collaboration skills. Please give them the tools they need to thrive, find new ways of thinking, and solve problems. It also provides methods for socializing, making new friends, and recognizing the impact of actions and behaviors [1].

The indigenous culture of the Vietnamese people is vibrant and of high value. Among the shared cultural values of each region, the region has indigenous cultural values bearing the imprint of the place, the province, the district, and the commune. The national identity is the typical value that reflects each culture's appearance, character, qualities, and bravery. In Vietnam, culture and national identity are expressed in patriotism, independent spirit, solidarity, consciousness, compassion, tolerance, and morality. Emotional, diligence, creativity by work, sophistication in behavior, and simplicity in lifestyle [2]. There is a diversity of ethnic groups in the university, making students happy. Living in that environment will give you more understanding and know-how to live together to respect and appreciate the values of your nation for confidence and development.

The author is a lecturer of the Thai ethnic group, born and raised in Son La, and has been operating for more than ten years at Tay Bac University, which is a university in the northern region with a unique cultural diversity. Therefore, I am thinking and looking for ways to make the most of this unique culture in my mission of teaching and educating students in life skills to support students. Students integrate with the development of society in the region and around the world but still retain the unique cultural features of their nation and expand their understanding of multiculturalism. In this article, the author will analyze a picture of life

skill education for students affected by indigenous culture to have the best orientation for students ready to enter and adapt to the development of society.

2. Research Methodology

i) Methods of investigation: In the research scope of this article, the author uses questionnaires via a Google form, an in-depth interview method, and an observation method;

ii) The research sample is 151 students (students in the North-west region, with different backgrounds, from many ethnic groups) and 22 (lecturers with seniority in the profession from 5 years or more, all of whom are of Kinh and Thai ethnicity) from the Department of Primary - Preschool, Tay Bac University on the google form for the student and lectures;

iii) Research content: Find out and point out the influences of Thai ethnic culture on life skill education for students at universities with cultural diversity.

3. Results and Discussion

Life Skill Education

Life skills also assist students in taking action when their parents or teachers are unavailable and encourage them to take responsibility for their actions instead of blaming others. According to the Partnership for 21st-century Learning (P21), 21st-century skills are divided into three main areas: Learning and innovation skills, digital skills, and career and life skills, as defined by the Association for Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills (AT21CS) and AES Education.

Group 1: Learning and innovation skills. P21 has conducted research to identify the Four Cs (4Cs) of the 21st century, which include critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

Group 2: Digital literacy skills, including information literacy, media literacy, and information and communication technology (ICT).

Group 3: Career and life skills, such as flexibility and adaptability, proactivity and self-direction, social interaction and

multiculturalism, productivity, responsibility to individuals, family, and community, and environmental awareness.

Teaching life skills and 21st-century skills to students is an urgent requirement that necessitates changes in the content and methods of knowledge transmission in education systems. These changes are necessary to ensure that students graduate from university equipped with solid knowledge, professional expertise, creativity, and other essential skills that will contribute to the sustainable development of the country in the future [3].

UNICEF defines life skills as a behavior change or development approach that addresses the balance of knowledge, attitude, and skill. International organizations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO have identified ten core life skills: self-awareness, critical thinking, creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, empathy, coping with stress, and coping with emotions.

Life skills training/education encompasses psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that empower students to make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and manage their lives healthily and productively. WHO defines life skills as the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life [4].

Indigenous culture and its value for life skill education for students in culturally diverse universities

Indigenous culture is the cultural values that have been drawn up in the place where the community lives. Because it has a distinct location, sometimes there are particular values in a small area such as a province, district, or even a commune, not just a regional culture [5]. Indigenous culture recognizes the expertise that people have in living their daily lives. People bring a wealth of knowledge to their activities - where to buy the freshest meats, how to

machine a part within a thousandth of an inch, when to move the infield closer to the plate for a bunt, what types of patterns go well with each other, how to reach consensus on a cooperative's committee. Indigenous culture recognizes that people's daily knowledge comes from shared life experiences and information transmitted to them by family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Indigenous culture has connections to all aspects of the curriculum, including:

- i) Art, music, theater;
- ii) Geography, history, sociology, economics, political science, psychology, anthropology, folklore;
- iii) Reading, writing, speaking, listening;
- iv) Foreign languages, English as a second language;
- v) Media and technology, international education;
- vi) Natural history and environmental education;
- vii) Family and consumer education.

We create and share local culture as part of our lives in specific places-urban and rural. The common factor is the place, yet each discipline investigates place in a different way [6].

Black Thai ethnic culture in Son La

Culture is the endogenous strength of the country's development, the hidden power in every human being. In life skill education for students, teachers need to know how to exploit the values of the local culture to promote the hidden strength in each student's important task.

Among the diversity and uniqueness of the Vietnamese people, the North-west Thai culture is lasting and brilliant. Living in the poetic and majestic North-west mountains and forests, with a pure, rustic, and compassionate soul, the Thai people soon created a unique cultural treasure for their nation. As an ethnic minority in Vietnam but the majority in the northwest, the Thai culture has a significant influence on the culture of the people in the North-west region. Their concept (according to ancient Thai documents) is that the three-stone mountain (In ancient Thai script, it is written as:

(แม่น้ำโขง), Nine Rivers (แม่น้ำแควน้อย), and the Estuary of the Da River - Thao River (แม่น้ำแควใหญ่) [7].

Information about Tay Bac University with cultural diversity [8].

Tay Bac University was established according to Decision No. 39/2001/QĐ-TTĐ dated March 23, 2001, of the Prime Minister based on the northwest Pedagogical College, formerly known as Secondary School of Pedagogy in the Thai - H'Mong Autonomous Region was established in 1960.

Tay Bac University is a public university directly under the Ministry of Education and Training in Quyet Tam ward, Son La City, Son La province. The school has its legal status, its seal, and account. Tay Bac University has the following tasks:

- i) Training human resources with undergraduate and graduate degrees;
- ii) Professional training for officials and civil servants;
- iii) Scientific research, technology transfer, and implementation of technical services serving the socio-economic development of the northwest region.

Tay Bac University is a multidisciplinary training school and has attracted a lot of students across the country, but students from

the northern mountainous provinces with diverse ethnic groups. According to statistics in the past five years, Tay Bac University has 16 ethnic groups, of which students from the Thai ethnic group account for 70%, the rest are from other ethnic groups). With such ethnic diversity, the majority are Thai. Therefore, the article would like to analyze the influence of the local culture (Thai ethnic culture in Son La) on the life skill education process for students.

According to statistics on the number and quality of students from Tay Bac University from 2017 onwards, students include 17 ethnic groups, of which Thai ethnic students account for 54% (<https://utb.edu.vn/dao-tao.html>). Most of the students are ethnic Thai (a province with 12 ethnic groups, the Thai ethnic group also accounts for 53%). Therefore, understanding the influence of indigenous culture here on life skill education is meaningful [9-11].

Indigenous Culture and life skills education activities for Students: Tay Bac University case

This study shows us the relationship between life skills, students of Primary preschool and preschool faculty students from many different ethnicities and regions, local culture (Thai ethnic culture), and teaching tasks. Life skill education of lecturers of Tay Bac University.

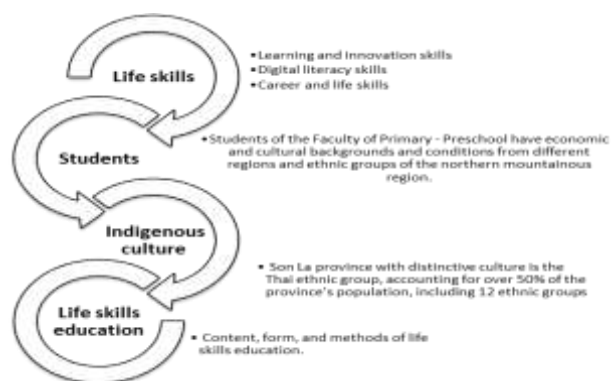


Diagram 1. The relationship between Indigenous culture (Thai ethnic culture in Son La province) for life skill education for students.

Through Diagram 1, it is possible to see the influences and relationships between the local culture (Thai culture in Son La) on students' life

skills and the life skill education of students at Tay Bac University. Specifically, the survey results below will clarify diagram 1:

3.2. Perception of Students and Lecturers about Life Skills and Indigenous Culture

We have surveyed over 151 students and 22 lecturers about their perception of what life

skills and indigenous cultures are and obtained the following results:

Question 1: Do you understand what life skills are?

Table 1. Lecturer and Students' perception of the concept of "life skills"

Do you understand what life skills are?	Students		Lecturer
	Quantity	%	Quantity
Life skills are skills that help people perform effective activities	4	2.6	2/22
Life skills are the ability to match one's behavior and change with positive behavior so that people can control and manage effectively the demands and challenges of daily life.	133	88.1	17/22
Life skills are people's ability to participate in all social activities and relationships.	3	2	2/22
Life skills are the minimum human skills for survival.	8	5.3	0/22
Life skills are qualities and abilities of people living in so society.	2	1.3	1/22
Opinion one more	1	0.7	0/22

Through Table 1, the perceptions of students and lecturers about choosing the most appropriate concept of life skills have similar results, both choosing to understand that life skills are the abilities that make behavior and Their changes are consistent with positive behaviors that help people effectively control and manage the needs and challenges of daily

life. However, the little difference between students such as 133/151 (88,1%) and (lecturers: 17/22). Thus, both students and lecturers have the right perception of "life skills," which is also the foundation for better life skill education for students.

Question 2. Do you understand what the local culture is?

Table 2. Lecturers and students awareness of the concept of indigenous culture

Do you understand what the Indigenous culture is?	Lecturer	Students	
	Quantity	Quantity	Quantity
Indigenous culture is the cultural values that have been drawn up in the place where the community lives.	6/22	23	15.2
Indigenous culture is a very unique value in a small area such as a province, district, or even commune, not just regional culture.	3/22	38	25.2
Indigenous culture is the cultural identity of that locality.	1/22	6	4
Indigenous culture is understood as the culture of a community or ethnic group in a certain locality, region, region, or region.	10/22	77	51
Indigenous culture acknowledges the expertise that people have in their daily lives.	0/22	7	4.6
Opinion one more	0/22	0	0

If lecturers and students have a similar perception of understanding, the concept of "indigenous culture" is different from life skills. Table 2 shows that 4.6% chose the concept "Indigenous culture acknowledges the expertise that people have in their daily lives", and teachers did not choose this concept. The results of the lecturers about the concept chosen the most, accounting for 51%, were "Indigenous culture is understood as the culture of a community, a people in a certain locality, specific region or region" and students chose only 10/22 the same. The above results give us one more piece of information that students are not fully aware of the local culture.

When being interviewed by a third-year student, L. T. Q said, "I have been away from home since middle school, so I do not often come into contact with the culture and traditions of my family, so I do not know about the culture of my nation. So, it understood the

local culture as the cultural identity of that locality." Indigenous culture is the cultural values that have been accumulated in the place where the community lives" Also, 25.2% of students chose the concept "Indigenous culture is a unique value in a small area like a province, district or even commune, not just regional culture". Thus, students do not have a correct and complete awareness of the concept of "indigenous culture", which also means that students are not aware of the role of indigenous culture in their lives.

3. The Reality of Students' Self-Perception and Lecturers' Assessment of Students Life Skills

Question 3. How would you rate your current life skill performance? (for students). Teachers, please evaluate the degree of application of life skills in practice by students of Tay Bac University (for lecturer) (Table 3).

Table 3. Students self-assess the level of application of life skills

Life Skill	Not good		Good		Excellent	
	Quantity	%	Quantity	%	Quantity	%
Critical thinking	34	22.5%	112	74.2%	5	3.3%
Problem-solving	42	27.8%	99	65.6%	10	6.6%
Communication and cooperation	31	20.5%	110	72.8%	10	6.6%
Creativity and innovation	63	41.7%	78	51.7%	10	6.6%
Information Knowledge	41	27.2%	100	66.2%	10	6.6%
Media knowledge	45	29.8%	97	64.2%	9	6.0%
Information and communication technology (ICT)	64	42.4%	79	52.3%	8	5.3%
Flexible and adaptive	16	10.6%	112	74.2%	23	15.2%
Proactive and self-directed	30	19.9%	106	70.2%	15	9.9%
Social interaction and multiculturalism	24	15.9%	117	77.5%	10	6.6%
Responsibility	3	2.0%	112	74.2%	36	23.8%
Productivity	33	21.9%	106	70.2%	12	7.9%

Table 3 indicates that students self-evaluate their life skills at a reasonably high level (74.3%), with an outstanding level at 3.3% and a less satisfactory level at 22.5%. However, students rate Creativity and Innovation as the

weakest skill at 51%, while other skills score above 60%. It is crucial for students to recognize the life skills in which they may need improvement and actively work on enhancing their creativity and innovation skills. These

skills are increasingly valuable in today's rapidly changing and competitive job market, and can significantly improve a student's capacity for critical thinking and creative problem-solving. By acknowledging areas for improvement and taking steps to develop these skills, students can better equip themselves for future success. On the other hand, lecturers' assessments show that the ability to apply life skills in a university environment is lacking, with only 2/22 lecturers rating students as demonstrating proficiency in application, 13/22 lecturers rating students with the ability to apply having no experience, and 7/22 lecturers evaluating that students do not know how to apply life skills in learning and training activities. These results show that there is a difference between students' self-assessment and teachers' assessment of life skills. While students appreciated their life skills, instructors did not. For example, in the Productivity skill, lecturers rate a small number of students as being able to apply it well (6/22 lecturers rate it), but only 15.8% of students rate themselves as proficient in applying this skill. This shows that there is a need for a life skills education plan, especially focusing on "creativity and innovation". This highlights the difference between students' self-awareness and their assessment of their actual life skills. The gap between students' self-concept and faculty's assessment of life skills can hinder students' success in the workforce and beyond. Tay Bac University needs to solve this problem by implementing programs and initiatives that focus on developing life skills, especially in areas where students are lacking. By closing this gap, students will be better equipped to overcome the challenges of the modern workforce and reach their full potential.

Table 2 shows that the students' self-assessments are the same, most of which they already know how to apply life skills in real life but are still confused when using these skills. However, the level of good application in students is that they can perform well in all skills. However, teachers have critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication thinking

skills that teachers do not appreciate. The inconsistent and inconsistent perception of students and faculty can be a challenge in educating students on life skills. It is an issue that needs to be studied and explored further.

In this survey, we use the Mentimeter application with the question: Can you tell us about the positive effects of local culture on life skill education? (Figure 2). Please tell us about the negative influences of local culture on life skill education (Figure 3).

When examining the issue of whether "the influences of Thai ethnic culture have positive or negative effects" in Figure 2 (good influences) and Figure (bad influences), it was found that cuisine, costumes, and effective communication skills positively impact students' life skills. However, in Table 3, language also has a negative effect. Why is there such an overlap? Does the language have both positive and negative sides? To clarify this issue, the author met and discussed it with L.T. H, the 4th year student. She mentioned that the Thai language has a significant impact on both aspects. It is rich and diverse, mainly evident in the Thai language, but also serves as a barrier to integration with popular languages like Kinh.

The complexity of the Thai language poses challenges for non-native speakers, making it difficult to fully integrate with other languages. However, its richness and diversity also contribute to its beauty and cultural significance, making it a valuable asset for those who take the time to learn and appreciate it.

4. Assessment of Students and Lecturers on the Influence of Thai Culture on Life Skills and Life Skill Education for Students

The positive side of the language is that the Thai people are ethnic minorities but have their language and script, thanks to which the Thai people have a vast treasure of folklore handed down through the ancient Thai script. However, the mother tongue language is also a disadvantage for students in communicating in Vietnamese.

Quite a lot of students speak especially students in remote areas without an effective communication environment fruit. Therefore, lecturers need to know the advantages and limitations of each local culture to improve and practice better and better life skills for students. In addition, the positive influences of costumes and cuisine are advantages that all students affirm. When talking with Thai ethnic students, they feel very proud and proud-news to share

about it. Therefore, when teaching life skills to students, it is necessary to pay attention to this content organized in the form of festivals and festivals to nurture, preserve, and promote these cultural beauties, and help other ethnic people have more experiences and new knowledge of Thai people.

Question 4. Could you please tell me the importance of educating students in life skills in connection with the local culture?

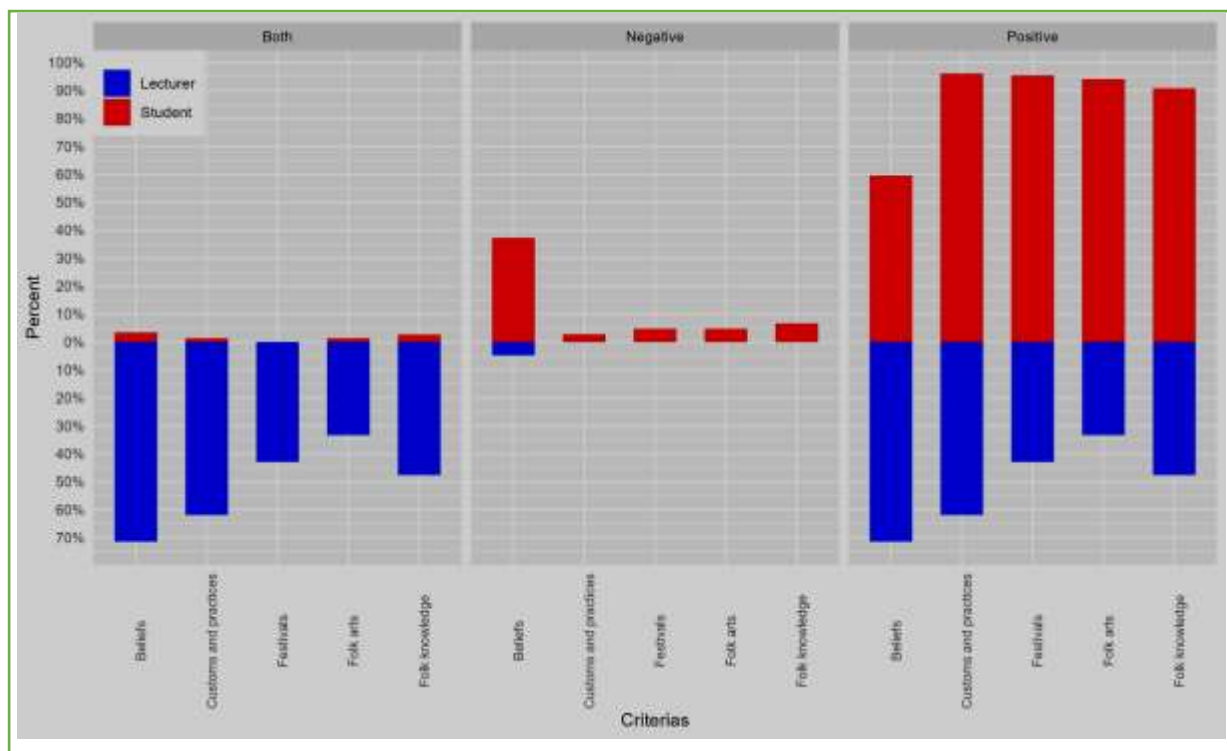


Figure 1. The lecturer's opinion on the importance of local culture in educating students on life skills and the student's opinion on the importance of local culture in educating students on life skills.

Figure 1 shows that there is a difference between the opinions of lecturers and students once again. All indigenous cultures, such as customs, practices, beliefs, religions, festivals, folklore, and indigenous knowledge, influence the task of life skill education is born-perceived as having a positive influence and not having and choosing not to influence both sides. The lecturer said that there are both positive and negative influences, especially on customs and festivals; they only select one answer, which

affects both positive and negative sides. Lecturer D. T. T., a young lecturer, is often interested in extra-curricular activities and is the president of the "Beautiful Living Club" shared: "Whatever it is, it is duality. The side of an issue and the local culture will always bring about positive and negative influences. Therefore, as lecturers, we must know how to choose the good values of those indigenous cultures for students to exploit those values to educate students on life skills".

Question 5. Teachers, please give the frequency of participation in life skill education programs and activities for students of Tay Bac University.

Most of the lecturers are very interested in the education of life skills for students, primarily through extracurricular activities and activities of the Union. Among them, there are activities that teachers choose to organize with the highest frequency, such as Union - Association movement activities (57.1%) and Integrated in Teaching (5.4%). The participation of lecturers in teaching life skill education modules for students has the lowest frequency (never), with 14.3% of lecturers not participating. Integrating life skill education tasks during classroom hours is used most often by teachers, with 100% of teachers using this approach. Furthermore, there is a scarcity of educators who specialize in teaching life skills, accounting for just 5.6%. Thus, the lecturers must grasp the core

values of the local culture to integrate them into each lecturer's subjects.

The reality shows that few lecturers specialize in teaching life skills to students. Thus, the school needs to focus on strengthening and preparing resources to meet the development trend of society, helping students graduate with the confidence to integrate and thrive.

The reality shows that few lecturers specialize in teaching life skills to students. Thus, the school needs to focus on strengthening and preparing resources to meet the development trend of society, helping students graduate with the confidence to integrate and thrive. The school should consider integrating life skills into the curriculum, providing workshops and seminars on topics such as financial literacy, communication, and problem-solving.

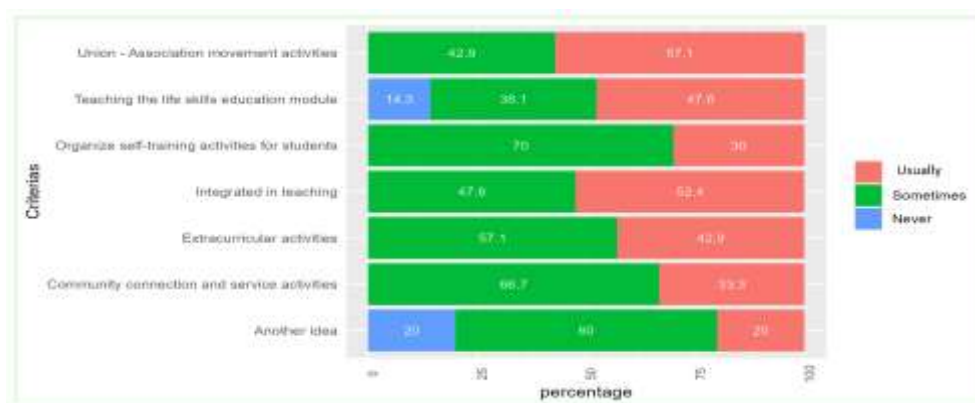


Figure 2. Level of participation in and organization of life skill education activities for students.

By doing so, students will be better equipped to navigate the challenges of the real world and make a positive impact in their communities. The school needs to prioritize the holistic development of students, preparing them for success beyond the classroom.

5. Conclusion

The above research results show that each indigenous culture has specific values and

limitations, and these indigenous cultures influence each individual. Therefore, in life skill education for students, teachers need to know how to exploit the values of the local culture to maximize the students' abilities, such as creating conditions for life skills to develop. Make full use of students' strengths. Indigenous culture has direct influences (both positive and negative) on life skill education for students. Therefore, universities with cultural diversity need to pay attention to the indigenous culture

of each ethnic group in that school to use it as a means of supporting life skill education for students. Ethnic minority students help students confidently participate in integration with global development so that students clearly understand the indigenous culture of their nation so they can understand, accept, and respect other national cultures. From there, we can integrate and develop together while preserving the identity of each nation and developing.

To achieve better results, teachers and school administrators need to pay attention to the following issues:

i) The university should use a set of criteria to assess students' life skills, combining conversation and conversation to understand the reality of students' life skills to have an appropriate educational plan and achieve the best results;

ii) Managers need to create conditions to build cultural clubs of ethnic minorities to practice and practice life skills to improve the quality of students' life skills following the native culture of the place they work in the future;

iii) Lecturers regularly change and diversify forms, contents, and methods of life skill education under students' cultures.

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