



Strategic Adaptation and Cultural Resilience in Indigenous Communities Facing Modernization Pressures

Vutthy Sokk¹, Norodom Sihamoni¹, Kem Sokha¹, Heng Samrin¹

¹University Of Kampong Cham, Cambodia

*Corresponding Author: Vutthy Sokk

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Abstract

Inspired by the body of literature of the cultural convergence studies, this qualitative study will explore the issues behind the influence of modernization on indigenous cultural systems with respect to how the traditional communities negotiate the process of cultural continuity relative to the external socio-economic forces. Presented in the context of management, the study examines the strategies of adaptation and mechanisms of cultural governance those used by an indigenous community subjected to growing exposure towards the modernity of the institutions, technologies, and values. By deep level interviewing, participant observation and through document analysis, the research shows, that although modernization removes the conventional languages and rituals, it also triggers selective adaption which maintains the essence of cultural values. Instead of considering the existence of the opposing forces of tradition and modernity, the research identified that negotiation is a dynamic process of finding a balance between modern tools including such tools as digital media and formal education and the norms that held their ancestors together to maintain identity and cohesion. It is seen as a type of cultural management as a selective adaptation or an issue of resilience, stakeholder responsiveness, and ambidextrous governance. Also, the study refutes the prevalent developmental models that view indigenous knowledge systems as outdated, and the studies encourage the presence of more accommodating and culturally-based policy systems. The practice of locating indigenous agency in the current management theory allows contributing to the rising debate on adaptive systems, organizational resilience, and knowledge governance. It exhorts policy makers, aid groups and academicians to accept indigenous traditions as being not a barrier to modernization but as dynamic resources in healthy and fair modernization.

Introduction

Modernization has traditionally been defined as representation of progress, innovation and growth in economy, however, in today contexts the profound effects are accompanied by massive cultural losses, especially among Indigenous people whose names, oral traditions and localized approach to knowledge are tradition-bound. Technological integration, industrialization and global interconnectedness that the nation-states are embracing today are posing both implicit and explicit challenges to Indigenous cultures to change, evolve, or, in most cases, give up ancestral practices in the name of adapting to the modern reality (Tiwari, 2024). Preservation of statues and other artifacts related to the cultural heritage and the need to engage in and embrace current development remains a contentious body of discussion in the field of anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies (Kehinde, 2023). The urbanization or mass

education of the modernization today besides the global media and neoliberal policies has not only re-arranged economies but has also re-categorized the day-to-day cultural activities of the Indigenous people (Alizadeh et al., 2024). The traditions that also served as the integrated systems of knowledge, spirituality, government and social organization are being more and more reinterpreted, fragmented, or simply lost (Ismail, 2021). To take one example, the introduction of national or global languages frequently eliminates the continuity of cultural aspects, since language is a highly important mode of passing rituals, cosmologies and ecological know-how.

In the modern range of work on cultural transition, the scope of concern often moves beyond the mere inventory of cultural loss to clarification of the delicate processes of indigenous resilience by means of which groups of peoples persevere in identity under provisions of modernization. Contrary to being passive recipients of modernization, in the kingdoms that many communities have been able to negotiate their space and combine elements of modernity into it without losing primary elements of heritage (Abotera, 2024). It is a strategic hybridization that has a resemblance to Shaw (2021) third space that allows tradition and modernity to co-exist continuously, and in most circumstances, in unexpected ways.

However, modernization is hardly neutral, or nonvoluntary. It is highly political, and is often driven by other interested parties outside of the political environment, such as government development projects, corporate agenda, missionary activity and international aid constitutions, which outline the priorities of dealing (Allem, 2024). The impact of such forces can direct the indigenous societies into the versions of modernity that go in line with the values of domination but not with the local priorities. Projects initiated by the state, like provision of roads and electricity in remote regions, can be examples which on one hand provide the state with the infrastructure and on the other hand destroy sacred sites, changes kinship systems, and commercializes the cultural objects (Duran & Sahinyazan, 2021).

The hierarchy, which is created by modernization, lowers the status of indigenous knowledge systems to that of backward, unscientific, and imperfect and as such, undermines epistemologies that traditionally have sustained the viable form of living (Yongmei, 2023). The educational systems work under this format: they could train the youth to have some beneficial skills in, on the other hand, they stratify themselves by supporting the western centered curriculum, which systematically trains to ignore or undermine the local or indigenous worldviews. The result is what could be termed generational disengagement in which the younger members of the community assimilate the standards of success in the modern times, which might surpass the traditional knowledge of their ancestors.

The process of modernization as it exists in the contemporary setting is heightened by the transnational flow of media and social networking, and consumer culture. Natives are thrown into international living and styles after which they attain alternative systems of values and desires that are unlike those expected by the elders (Leitão, 2022). Certain outsiders can explain it as dilution of culture, whereas others take it as re-invention of culture, and has been exemplified by the influence of phenomena like indigenous Youtube channels, and dances on Tik Tok that borrows on the traditional motifs. These examples show that the cultural change within a native setting is so intricate that the line between loss and creativity has always to be renegotiated.

The current research is stimulated by the urgency to understand how the indigenous groups understand, live and react to modernization pressures in their respective socio-cultural environments. Unlike the prevailing discourses that tend to see modernization as a one-headed journey as we traverse a tradition-modernity continuum, the current study makes the experience of the people (especially those in power) the central focus of how they respond to competing

interests, and how they exercise agency and what it means to be relevant to the culture as change sweeps through at a high pace. The paper aims at shedding the light on the weaknesses and the strengths hidden in cultural change by conducting an investigation into lived experiences, communal narratives, and cultural practices of one indigenous group in the middle of the transition.

It should be understood, however, that this study has not assumed that tradition is unchanging and homogeneous; instead, the study has acknowledged that traditions have been constantly re-invented in the face of the changing historical and political condition. Indigenous communities are consequently not stuck in the past as they constantly re-estimate their cultural repertoires in order to respond to the contemporary realities. This dynamism should be identified to avoid romantic living or deficit-oriented description of the indigenous life during modernization. The current research contributes to the literature which criticizes binary conceptions of tradition and modernity that is growing. The research highlights more complex, respectful, and less judgmental evidence of how the indigenous cultures are managed to be no less dynamic, relevant, and flexible under the forces of modernization happening today.

Method

Research Design

The current research took the qualitative research design approach to investigate the phenomenon of dealing with the issues of indigenous communities in the context of experiencing, interpreting, and responding to the pressures related to modernization. It is preferred a qualitative approach methodology, as it would allow developing a nuanced understanding of cultural meanings, lived experiences, and processes of social transformation that are almost hidden in statistical data or in numeric recordings. This kind of practice is of paramount importance to the study of indigenous people in which understanding of the world, system of comprehension and cultural activities are passed over through oral practices, rituals and community histories. The style of research was exploratory and interpretive because the premise was that knowledge is a product of co-construction that occurs as a result of the interaction between researchers and research participants. It was not intended to produce discoveries to be generalized but to provide a multi-dimensional, situational insight into how the processes of modernization are redefining the life of natives.

Research Setting and Context

The ethnographic research was conducted in Mondulkiri province (Cambodia) in the village of the Bunong people, which is symbolic of deep culture, close family ties, and unity of the community. The village was chosen due to its historically high salient village, continuation of a traditional way and exposure to modernization in form of infrastructure, media propagation, education possibilities, and governmental intervention. The union of these old institutions with new forces led to a new context of cultural change which offered a paradigmatic study due to infrastructure of mobile communication and formal education as well as transportation in form of migration. The willingness of the community to cooperate with the researcher and the fact that people are close to their cultural tradition also made the study ethically valid and socially convenient.

Participant Selection

The process of recruiting participants to taking part in this qualitative study was dictated by a purposive sampling strategy, which is a valid method of finding information-rich cases. There were 18 people involved, of various generations, gender identity, and social roles in the indigenous community. It included traditional elders, cultural leaders and youth as well as

women, school teachers, and local policymakers. The older generations were asked to give their insights on cultural continuity as well as rituals and oral history, and the youth participants provided insights on generational processes and negotiation of identity amid the process of modernization. Both formal and informal leaders existed, which guaranteed the reflection of the spiritual, educational, economic, and social aspects of the community life.

Data Collection Techniques

This paper was based on various qualitative tools of data collection to attain triangulation, and to strengthen interpretive validity. The major methodological approaches were semi-structured in-depth interviews, participant observation, and the analysis of documents. The semi-structured interview allowed flexible and yet targeted interaction with the participants based on the designing of open-ended questions, and to some extent through probing questions that were developed based on the statements made by the participants. The language used in the interviews was local one with a cultural translator brought in where needed, and they averagely took 60-90 minutes. The study invited the participants to consider modernization, change in traditional ways, the concept of personal identity, and views on either the continuity or loss of cultures. The observation method that was used was termed as participant observation through which the scholar immersed herself into the community over a span of five weeks. The scholar visited conventional rituals, social functions, and daily routine strategies in order to witness in the first person how the conventional practices were preserved, modified, or substituted. Daily field notes were prepared, with the main lines of focus on interactions, rituals, symbols, and interaction of traditional and modern aspects of life in the community. To be able to supplement the field data, the local documents (community archives, government cultural preservation reports, traditional manuscripts, the school curriculum, and photographs of rituals) were examined. These sources provided a sense of history as well as a pictorial document of how a culture has changed with time.

Data Analysis

This paper utilized the thematic analysis as a tool to conduct an inference to identify recurrent patterns in data and cluster them systematically. Transcription of the interviews was done verbatim and later repeated reading helped the researcher be conversant with content. Codes were drawn inductively and were continuously generated and usually very close to their own words and phrases used. The codes were then classified into wider thematic groupings that help to shed light on the main issues of concern of the study- cultural tensions, adaptive strategies, and changing perceptions of identity in a modernization situation. A NVivo software was used with an intention of automating data retention and retrieval, but conclusions were carried out manually to secure the aspect of contextual depth.

Result and Discussion

Modernization is described as an unbalanced but not a neutral activity. It works with institutional powers namely education, technology, infrastructure and media that leaders in cultural hierarchies and assumptions of the menageries. To the Indigenous communities, this leaves them with a landscape of negotiation in which preservation of culture is linked to coercion to adapt and survive. The results do not interpolate Indigenous actors as passive acceptors of the modern influences, but rather as the conscious actors in the management of the transformation of their culture. Every finding made among the themes shows not just the changing state, but how it is being addressed, avoided, or flipped in a culturally interpreted manner. In accordance with critical approaches to organizational studies, this part re-contextualises the Indigenous cultural responses into the context of resilience, identity control and negotiated continuity. The resulting analysis of these dynamics in the following four key

thematic categories reflects a quantitative representation of four crucially different areas of how modernization is intersecting with traditional ways of life: the erosion of language and ritual practice, selective adaptation, a generational gap, and cultural strength at a time of change, all of which clarify the controversial and deliberate conditions of Indigenous cultural regulation in a period of transition.

Erosion of traditional language and rituals

The issue of modernization has had a significant impact on the linguistic and ritual fabric of societies with the effect of a gradual replacement of the traditional languages and belongings that are largely convinced to be major signifiers of the accelerated loss of culture. Although previously the indigenous language had been used as the main means of intrafamilial verbal communication as well as the means of conducting the ceremonies, the national language is gradually being substituted by it, which is the result of the Mexican culture wherein the very vehicle of the ceremonies, the formal education and exposure to media and the administrative apparatus has become more dominant. Such linguistic change is gradual in its typical course of interaction but has profound implications to cultural transmission in so far as traditional knowledge is embodied as it were in local lexicons, proverbs and oral narrative structure that are often subject to considerable decrement on reduction into the mainstream vernacular. Respondents- particularly elders- were very emotive about the declining use of the indigenous language in the younger generations; a respected elder leaned over and said: the rate at which our youngest members are losing the use of our language is quite frightening.

“Children today can barely understand our proverbs or ceremonial chants. They respond in the national language even when we speak to them in our mother tongue.”

This arising gap in language of differing generations is a sign of larger disjoint in cultural transmission together with understanding of the ancestors. An unequal number of ceremonial words and spiritual ideas do not have any direct equivalents in the national language, which makes some of the practices and teachings impossible to translate or perform in a faithful way. At the same time, there has been a tremendous decrease in the frequency and number of participants in traditional rituals including the agricultural blessings and rites of passages. Younger generation members will often have their understanding of such practices as obsolete or meaningless and this will be enhanced by modern religious influences and the demands of school and work commitments. One of the local leaders of culture commented on this trend:

“Our harvest rituals used to involve the whole community. Now only a few elders attend, and the youth are either busy or don’t understand the significance anymore.”

In previous cultures, rituals formed a central component by which societal identities were brokered and they were used at the same time to fulfil spiritual, societal, and ecological objectives. Their inexorable break up is linked to weakened community relationships and loss of group memory in relation to seasonal rhythms, paternalistic pull as well as ethics. Qualitative interviews also show that modernization has brought other value systems that in most cases even without notice destroy traditional practices. This means that the time of rituals is currently determined, to the greatest possible extent, on the basis of modern calendars and digital technologies that have replaced the previously used lunar phases and ancestors’ signatures. Participants also noted that some rituals have been reduced, commercialized or made with the sole aim of touristic interests thus; they lack the initial sacred aspect. The trend on this issue was summarized by one of the middle-aged respondents who said:

“Some of our ceremonies are now performed just for tourists or official guests. It’s no longer for the ancestors. It feels empty.”

Commodification of the ritual implies a shift in the logic of cultural reasoning where the traditional internally-based logic becomes an evaluative construct that is based on an audience that is viewed externally, where the cultural value of one course of action or practice is determined in terms of how interesting it may be to those outside the community rather than of significance bearing on its own meaning in the group. The interview content shows that along with a variety of practical benefits modernization comes along disturbing symbols structures that had also provided the indigenous identity in the past. Without continuous intergenerational conveyance of linguistic and ritual knowledge, such elements of culture are coming more and more under threat of being forgotten.

Selective adaptation of modern tools and lifestyles

In some aspects, modernization has disoriented some aspects of the traditional, culture, however, the aboriginal population has been significantly able to utilize modern technologies and modes of living in forms consistent with their cultural beliefs and daily needs. Instead of taking modernization in a bloc or modernization wholesomely, the urban stakeholders have insisted on strategic autonomy by cultivating their freedom of choice in the advents of adopting what and which innovations to be absorbed and which ones to be discarded or restructured. This selective adaptation trend reflects agency as well as pragmatism in that indigenous societies present the difficulties with negotiating change on their own terms based upon their cultural rationality. One of the most evident forms of this process is the utilization of mobile phones and social media networks in order to popularize the activity of a community cooperation, spread the culture, and provide the economic sustainability. Mixing up their culture with the digital world has become an easy task performed by younger community members, who have proven highly efficient at incorporating digital tools into their daily life without sacrificing cultural duties. As an illustration, young people use such messaging apps in order to plan traditional activities, promote local meetings, and to even send electronic invitations to ritual gatherings. The phenomenon can be summarized by one respondent in the following way:

“We use WhatsApp to remind each other about traditional gatherings. It makes organizing easier, and even elders appreciate getting reminders.”

The overlapping between conventional behaviors and modern technologies means that technological inventions in their own right may not be disruptive; instead, they can be re-invented in line with the cultural dynamics under direction of the societal rules. Particularly, case studies disclose that some community leaders use the social media as a channel to share historical photos, ritual videos, and traditional knowledge. Yet, these unstructured digital archives prove more of a flexible memory store that is accessible to young people and not having access to members of the community who are elderly on a regular basis. Another, more practical example of selective adaptation is the integration of the modern housing materials and utilities on the existing architectural frameworks. Even as numerous families have started utilizing cement, tin roofs, and electricity, their spatial arrangements are still grounded on indigenous cosmology as seen in the central hearth, ancestor altar and gender differences. One of the builders of the neighborhood explained this synthesis in the following way:

“We use new materials because they last longer, but we still build according to the wisdom passed down. The house must face a certain direction, and certain rooms are for specific rituals.”

Durability, paired with cultural symbolism as a mechanism of cultural continuity through adaptation, takes the form of the juxtaposition of the two phenomena. This contrast argues against the understanding that modern housing cannot exclude the tradition, on the contrary, it

creates a hybrid space in which the functional value is reconcilable with the design of the ancestors. In terms of lifestyle, the interviewees highlighted the fact that there is a need to align modern education with the traditional education process. In spite of the widely held belief that formal schooling is the means to upward mobility, multiple households take conscious steps to make sure their children participate in cultural apprenticeships (the act of learning to recite oral histories, helping to prepare rituals, or collecting medicinal plants). One of the mothers gave an example:

“We send our children to school, of course. But we also bring them to ceremonies and teach them what our grandparents taught us. They need both to survive today.”

Adaptation and preservation among rural populations implementation shows paradox in modernity which is a commitment to modern change and is obligatory to continuity at the same time. Similarly, those who arrived back in the city or those who had been in a higher-education environment depicted a case where they used transferable abilities and resources in a mode of reintegration without denying their roots in the community. As it happened, an active rebuffing of certain modernizing forces, especially those felt to be corroding morally or spiritually, such as gambling or alcohol advertisements, or, on a different level, the individualism of the Westerners, was a constituent of selective accommodation. One of the elders explained this in the following words:

“Some modern things only bring division. We accept what helps us, but not what makes us forget who we are.”

Modernization is often made out to be a one-dimensional source of social change; however, when explored in greater depth, it appears as the other a heterogeneous forcing mechanism spun via cultural comprehension and evaluation through morals. The acceptance of it in society is normally dependent on how useful the innovation is perceived whereas the reverse may be due to fear of the aspects of a practice destroying the spiritual and social unity.

Tensions between generations regarding cultural priorities

Modernization in these contemporary times has catalyzed some form of inertia in the traditional cultures. However, aboriginal communities have had a strong inclination toward partial adoption of the contemporary toolset and living standards to deploy to the support of deeper cultural principles and everyday demands. Instead of engaging in radical change in modernization or turning it down, members of the community engage in comprehensive decision-making to decide what gets to be integrated, reassigned, and disposed. Such selective adaptation demonstrates both agency and pragmatism as a way of highlighting how the indigenous societies can control change by crafting it in their own way. One such explicitly noticeable example is the use of mobile phones and online social media platforms to connect communities to the digital world, spread culture and build economic resilience. Particularly, younger generations incorporate digital technologies into their everyday patterns naturally, without giving up on their cultural duties. Messaging applications, e.g., youth spin off some old institution through messaging applications, announce town-hall meetings, and forward electronic invitations to ritual events.

“We use WhatsApp to remind each other about traditional gatherings. It makes organizing easier, and even elders appreciate getting reminders.”

The fusion of technology, and tradition indicate that modern technological tools are typically not disruptive in nature; it is redundant articulation with norms in the community that culturally repositions them. This process is evident especially when the communities integrate the practices of using social media to spread photographed sources of the past history, videos of

rituals, and traditional knowledge by the community leaders. These form of informal digital archives form an alive repository of cultural memory, and in the case of young people who might not sustain regular engagement with senior informants. Another case of selective adaptation could be found in the familial level in which buildings induce modern housing materials and infrastructure into the old architectural layouts. Domestic set-ups currently using cement, tin roofs or electrification still maintain spatial formations based on the indigenous cosmology such as the central hearth, the ancestor altar and the gender exclusive rooms. One local builder described this phenomenon as the following: We do not move the altar. The altar remains and it remains where it was before.

“We use new materials because they last longer, but we still build according to the wisdom passed down. The house must face a certain direction, and certain rooms are for specific rituals.”

This high carbon constructive turnover on one hand, and on the other a culturally responsive symbolism makes the business of cultural continuity through adaptation one of them; the statement challenges the assumption that modern housing necessarily supersedes tradition. The result is therefore a mishmash residence where utilitarian and symbolic functions go hand in hand. Regarding the lifestyle, informants pointed out on the need to balance modern education with conventional pedagogy. Despite the generally valued view of formal schooling as a pathway to upward mobility, some households deliberately simulated the parallel cultural apprenticeship; these include training of oral histories, helping in the process of rituals, and learning about medicinal plants. An example of this attitude was provided by one mother as follows:

“We send our children to school, of course. But we also bring them to ceremonies and teach them what our grandparents taught us. They need both to survive today.”

The current results show that there is a parallel adaptation and preservation orientation in the research population, even those who work in the urban environment, or those who have just received a higher education. There emerged a characteristic pattern of reintegration which saw the respondents coming back with professional skills, intellectual capital and material support; thus, contributing to the development process of the locality whilst exerting resistance to the wholesale adoption of the norms of the host. Selection adaptation was also in evidence in that some of the participants took an active stance against the effects of perceived cultural pressures of modernization; specific stimuli included pressure to indulge in gambling and drinking and mainstreaming of both, extreme advertising on both, and all things leading to Westernized ideas of individualism at the expense of communal overarching values.

“Some modern things only bring division. We accept what helps us, but not what makes us forget who we are.”

This investigation found out that the fact is that modernization does not act as evenly nonlinear force but instead it is the culturally distinct phenomenon that can be mediated in terms of frameworks and also in terms of moral paradigms. The indigenous actors only adopt the elements of the modern life when they locate a utility that does not stand in the way of collective value systems and on the other hand, they readily oppose those practices that are considered dangerous to the spiritual or social integrity of the community.

Reconciling Modernization with Indigenous Agency

This research makes the traditional debate more complicated as modernization is sometimes discussed in the terms of dichotomy between tradition and modernity. Rather, the study indicates that the kind of responses used by many indigenous peoples to external demands is

rather deliberate and based on strategic information; these responses are the same as articulated in adaptive management theory (Stein et al., 2021). In this context, cultural systems are not perceived as the stagnant form of artifacts but rather as living projects of governance where the tradition is purposefully controlled both in cultural continuity and participation in the socio-economic affairs.

This research must place indigenous adaptations in the context of the managerial approach and conceptualize it as organizational resilience exhibitions. Alongside with the maintenance of ceremonial structures, cosmological logistics, and shared deposits, the groups engage in reconfiguration of those areas that are directed externally, that is technological, linguistic and economical systems. A combination like this can be likened to the ambidextrous organization paradigm as highlighted by Chakma et al. (2021), which declares that institutions have to maintain the competencies that they own, and at the same time develop new capabilities. It is interesting to note the capacity of most indigenous communities to merge ancient family values with digital devices, tertiary education, and infrastructural designing.

The analysis also goes further to challenge the current mindless belief that modernization is a one-way path of improvement. This is based on developmentalism paradigms and Eurocentric model of governance (Dadze, 2022) and which has in the past rendered indigenous knowledge systems to be wayward, nullified in their presence inside national policy and education systems. The fact that the indigenous languages and rituals are either expelled or selectively reinvented reveals a contradiction in the current governance: a deficiency in taking into consideration plural epistemologies in policy development (Nakagawa & Kouritzin (2021). Such criticism is not anthropological only; it directly touches on the field of public management and policy creation. Unless they institutionalize epistemic plurality, in both multicultural countries and other governance systems, adaptive governance becomes something of a pyrite (Amo-Agyemang, 2021), the process that will degrade the cultural system that generates social resilience in a crisis-prone climate.

The current research gives an organizational lesson to managers and policymakers: indigenous traditions do not necessitate an antithetical relationship to innovation; they are synergistic in the case where governance systems acknowledge their logic of accommodating change. This observation is in harmony with what recent research on these fields of strategic management and innovation has shown, that tradition-based knowledge is an untapped but powerful source of sustainable innovation (Wu et al., 2024). This governance on the basis of rites can be explained by the prism of symbolic management in which symbols and communally held stories serve as the tools of cohesion, decision making and maintaining ethical governance. Such cultural systems are not seen to hinder the development process but inward means of governance that can improve the legitimacy of a policy when formally identified.

In stakeholder management terms, the results present the necessity of having a bigger stakeholder ecology in the process of modernization. According to the stakeholder theory, whose model is represented by Dumulescu & Muțiu, A. I. (2021), everyone within the scope of organizational actions should be the one who makes decisions. Putting this in the context of the indigenous communities entails considering them as active cultural stakeholders, as well as modernization process co-designers. Such understanding resonates with the new literature on inclusive governance and participatory development, which stipulates that keeping local voices out of development paths, results in alienation, inability to act and consequent failure of implementation.

The present research captures the erosion of indigenous linguistic and ritual practices that reveal a dangerous issue of management of the intangible assets within the context of knowledge intensive settings. Within current scholarship on knowledge-management, tacit

knowledge has been deemed as one of the most important tools in most industries (Jayaram & Bhatta, 2023). The traditional knowledge of ritual and the peculiarities of the language, in their turn, act as sources of shared wisdom, ethical reasoning and ecological understanding (Thomas & Gupta, 2022). Their loss, consequently, indicates not only loss of culture, but of institutional knowledge as well. Taken in the perspective of a manager in the public-management background, the sustenance of such knowledge system ought to be re-categorized as a practice in knowledge-management and corporate survival.

The analysis also throws some light on themes key to institutional theory. The modern restructuring process of rituals, languages, and spatial orderings in the indigenous groupings form isomorphic adaptation to coercive and imitative pressures (Bruce, 2023). With state agencies introducing educational systems, infrastructural schema, and economic regime, indigenous institutions are forced to consider negotiations of compliance, which duplicates tactics applied by hybrid organization to accommodate a combination of traditional legitimacy and modern operations capabilities. However, the notion of selective adaptation is prone to imbalance which is triggered by scarcity of available resources, internal fragmentation and asymmetrical power relations with external actors (Nesse, 2023). As an example, digital technologies could be used to support cultural revitalization, however, they would also have a tendency to commercialize tradition and give rise to performance cultural expression to support tourism or legitimize the state of a nation, namely, refers to as the reflexive appropriation of identity. The effect of such commercialization may be dilution in authenticity, and loss of control vested with long-time custodians to external consumers/intermediaries represented by institutions (Plesa, 2023).

In an academic sense, the stakeholders in the public sector, the development agencies, and corporate bodies have to reconsider the indicators which have been employed to evaluate development. These pointers often favor economic productivity, penetration and education levels taking no cognizance of any qualitative aspects like internet vitality, consistency within and across generations, language sustainability (Nayar, 2022). There have been exponential arguments within the literature that development indices must have a cultural and spiritual element- this is the unanimous stance of the disciplines of human-centered development and the wellbeing framework. This paper will help in the reimagining of management education as well. An application of cultural responsiveness and ethical pluralism in curriculum designing needs to be put in place in order to enable the developing leaders to connect with the Indigenous and marginalized communities in a meaningful way (Brown et al., 2022). Its aim is not merely a wish of representation, but it is also the aim of providing managers with an epistemological humility, the capacity to recognize the existence of other worldviews as existing different logics that are both legitimate, coherent and useful when applied in practice.

Conclusion

As a disruptive force to be reckoned with in the contemporary body of literacy, modernization is not being received passively by the Indigenous communities. Rather, the community members are involved in strategic adaptation. They do not discard traditions but reconstruct chosen elements of cultural continuity in the context of old rituals, symbols, and social norms and new ways of communication, such as digital communication, and organized education. Despite the fact that the erosion of traditional language use and traditional ritual behavior is a concern that still poses some saliency, especially as the intergenerational provision weakens, the phenomenon of selective adoption exhibited visibly by the community indicates a vibrant form of culture governance that exists on some strong selection. Organizationally, these results challenge the views that disregard Indigenous knowledge systems that do not view cultural knowledge systems as having great value. The indigenous communities exemplify the strategic

tactical approaches, stakeholder interplay, and dynamic leadership trend that is comparable to the recent organizational theories. Any development intervention that uses these cultural structures makes them vulnerable to the community identity and the sustainability of such an intervention. Modernization should then be seen to be rethought as a process of replacement of tradition to a negotiated one aiming at reconciling continuity in culture, equity and the local agency. This article promotes such a re-visioning of the discourse of modernization in the institution of public governance and in organizational scholarship that acknowledges instead of dismissing Indigenous traditions as a barrier or even a drawback to adaptive development as in fact being its central firmament.

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