



Hijagang as Heritage Pedagogy

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Abstract

This article discusses Hijagang, the traditional boathouse of the Meitei boat tradition of Manipur, as a pedagogical resource to heritage education. The article considers Hijagang as a living educational text which can be used to facilitate inquiry, value formation, historical imagination, ecological sensitivity and interdisciplinary learning, rather than seeing Hijagang as a cultural monument or tourist site. The discussion associates Hijagang to the culture of Hiyang Hiren boats, Hiyang Tannaba, craft knowledge, symbolic representation, oral memory and community participation. It claims that local heritage can be made academically significant when teachers employ it in the form of observation, questioning, contextualization, creative expression and critical reflection. The paper is based on the framework of culture and arts education provided by UNESCO, the concept of intangible cultural heritage, the National Education Policy 2020 in India, the National Curriculum Framework of School Education 2023, art-integrated learning, object-based learning and place-based education. It implies a classroom model of the application of the heritage of Hijagang in school and teacher education without reproducing any picture. The article finds that local heritage education must result in cultural confidence, evidence-based knowledge and democratic respect. It is not when an object of heritage is merely viewed, but when learners get to learn to read it with curiosity, empathy and critical care.

Keywords: Hijagang; Heritage Education; Hiyang Hiren; Object-Based Learning; Place-Based Education; Art-Integrated Learning; Intangible Cultural Heritage.

[1.]Introduction

Education becomes meaningful when learners can connect classroom knowledge with the history, culture and environment of their own place. Hijagang, the traditional boathouse associated with Meitei boat culture in Manipur, offers such a possibility. It is not only a structure

connected with boats; it is also a cultural space where craft, ritual, social memory, animal symbolism, mythology, community participation and festival practice interact. When Hijagang is used as a learning resource, teachers can help learners understand heritage as a living text that carries stories, skills, beliefs and values across generations.

Hijagang has a significant educational value in the current policy environment. According to UNESCO, culture and arts education is the learning about, with and through culture and the arts in formal, non-formal and informal contexts [1]. The convention on intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO also acknowledges the fact that living heritage encompasses practices, expressions, knowledge, skills, instruments, objects and cultural spaces that communities recognize as part of their heritage [2]. This implies that a boat, a boathouse, a race, a ritual song or a local story can be used as an educational resource provided it is approached in a respectful and critical manner. Heritage education is not confined to well-known monuments, but can have its starting point in a local site, an oral tradition or a community object.

The National Education Policy 2020 in India focuses on experiential learning, local context, art integration, multilingualism and respect of the diverse cultural heritage of the country [4]. The National Curriculum Framework of School Education 2023 also attaches significance to holistic learning and meaningful relationship between knowledge and life [5]. These policy directions are aimed at encouraging teachers to go beyond rote learning and create learning experiences based on the environment of the learner. Hijagang is a helpful example of such an approach since it enables students to learn about history, art, environment, language, science and citizenship using one local heritage theme.

This article does not attempt to produce a complete cultural history of the Meitei boat tradition. Its purpose is to show how Hijagang can be interpreted as a pedagogical example of heritage education. The central question is how a local cultural resource can be transformed into a meaningful classroom and teacher-education experience. The article first presents the conceptual background, then interprets the educational meanings of Hijagang, and finally proposes a practical model for curriculum use.

Research gap and rationale: Heritage education, though spoken about a lot in context of museums, monuments and national cultural sites, classroom level pedagogical treatments are lacking for smaller living heritage spaces from North-East India. It is often stated that Hijagang is linked to Meitei boat culture and Hiyang Tannaba, but its potential as a structured interdisciplinary learning resource is not adequately translated into lesson design for teachers. This paper thus aims to fill a pedagogical gap. This does not intend to reconstruct Hijagang's full past. More particularly, it looks at how a local heritage resource can be transformed into an inquiry-based, ethical and culturally respectful learning experience for school education and teacher education. Heritage pedagogy becomes self-fulfilling only when the local cultural knowledge of a community becomes connected with observation, questioning, evidence, creativity, and democratic reflection.

This concern is also consistent with the Datta and Mete study that looks at school-community collaboration for cultural heritage, which explains that schools and communities may together strengthen the learners' awareness and appreciation of local culture [13].

Objectives of the study

1. To understand Hijagang as heritage-learning theme relating to object, place, craft, ritual, ecology, symbolism and community memory.
2. To Be Enable to Lawyers the Educational Use of Hijagang with the UNESCO Frameworks, NEP 2020, NCF-SE 2023, Art-Integrated Learning, Object-Based Learning and Place-Based Education.
3. The aim of this project is to come up with a classroom model so that hijagung can be used for observation, inquiry, contextualization, creative expression and reflection.
4. Recognizing the ethical limits is the goal here. What ethical precautions should one take to use living community heritage in classroom and teacher-education settings?
5. To propose evaluation, actions and future research directions for heritage pedagogy based on local cultural resources.

Research questions

RQ1: In what ways can hijagung be understood as a resource for interdisciplinary learning?

RQ2: Which teaching strategies could aid audiences in gradually understanding and interpreting the monument's symbolic message?

RQ3: In what ways can teachers professionally integrate hijra culture into the school-based subjects and teacher-education programmes without trivializing or simplifying the tradition?

RQ4: What safeguards can be put in place to ensure living heritage and community knowledge, when used for education, will be ethical?

[2.]Conceptual background

Heritage education refers to the learning through cultural, historical and natural heritage of one's own or another people. The relationship between the various people, places, things and ideas helps the learners identify. Heritage education encompasses many things like monuments, museums and archives to local crafts, festivals oral traditions and landscapes. It is important not only to learn about things but also to interpret them well and empathize with them. When using heritage in this way, students do not just memorize information; they enquire about how societies remember, represent and diffuse knowledge.

The boat tradition of Hijangang which is practiced at the river by the locals of Cilegon is a cultural heritage that is highly transferable. UNESCO's work regarding the protection of intangible cultural heritage through education [3], stresses the importance of learning and teaching about and with living heritage in relevant disciplines. This technique proves useful for school education since the living heritage belongs to the social world of the learner. Students might have participated in the festivities, heard about the local legend, participated in the family

rituals, or seen the craft practices. Experiences of this kind can be connected to academics when teachers create suitable activities.

Another helpful concept is object-based learning. Using objects, images, and other artifacts or material evidence in inquiry; learning with things. Evidence suggests that objects enhance curiosity, encourage investigation, and engage students in relating abstract and general concepts to evidence [9]. A similar type of thinking can be supported even though one cannot manipulate the original object another model, drawing, map, descriptive text or field visit can. The object-based learning approach was appropriate because Hijagang was relevant to boats; design; material; symbolic motifs; public memory. A student can examine the boat's shape and decoration, the kind of wood it uses, the rowers' role and the relationship of the object with the ritual.

The next significant concept is place-based education. Place-based learning connects the learning process with the physical, cultural, and social contexts in which learners live or study. According to a recent systematic review place-based education is an approach that connects learning to the place, the community and the environment [11]. For Hijagang, 'place' isn't simply a spot mapped out on a piece of paper. It is a cultural landscape where history, water, ritual, movement, and memory are interconnected. Becoming familiar with such a place can establish connectedness while assisting learners in relating their local context to national and global contexts.

This is also relevant to art-integrated learning. According to NCERT, the concept of learning through the arts and with the arts is called art-integrated learning. Hijagang agrees with this approach as the tradition includes the design, visual symbolization, rhythm, rowing movements festivals practice and stories. Pupils could make drawings of the boat shape, prepare heritage posters, write a short story, make a model or prepare a performance in the classroom. These activities should not be considered as decorative; they are ways of thinking, expression and understanding.

Methodology and source-use protocol

The design of the study is qualitative conceptual and pedagogical analysis. The research studies Hijagang as a local heritage theme. And also examines its possible transformation into classroom learning, teacher education and value-based heritage pedagogy. Due to using documentary interpretation, and not field-based ethnography, the argument is conceived as a pedagogical model, not as a complete cultural history of the Meitei boat tradition.

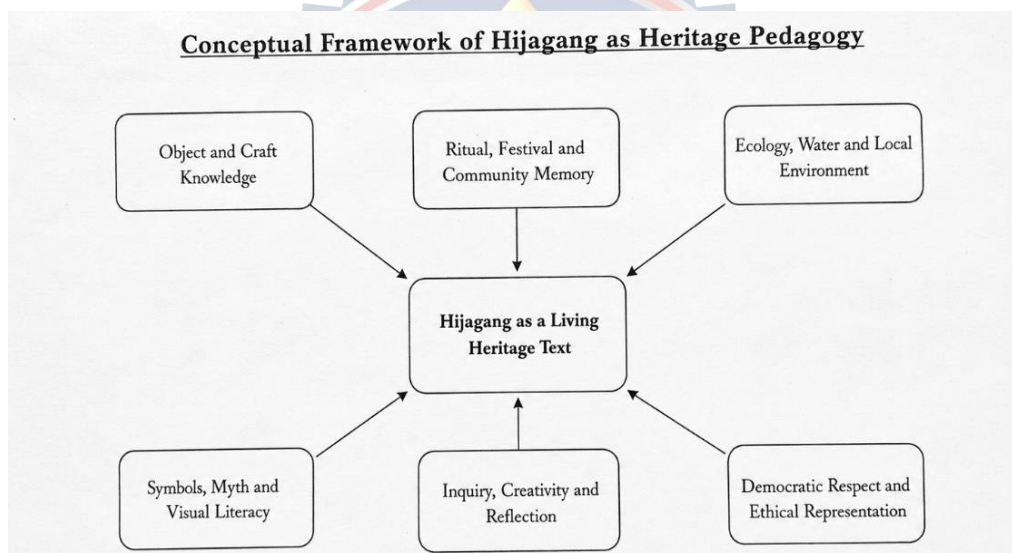
The source material that will be relied on for the project includes UNESCO documents on culture and arts education and on intangible cultural heritage, Indian policy documents such as the NEP 2020 and the NCF-SE 2023, NCERT material on art-integrated learning, Manipur tourism material on Hiyang Tannaba, and relevant academic literature on object-based, place-based and heritage education. Thematically, these sources were read under the following five

analytical categories: heritage meaning, interdisciplinary learning, classroom method, ethical representation and curricular integration.

The approach consisted of four steps. The first phase involved identifying key heritage elements related to Hijagang, such as those associated with the boat, boathouse, festival, craft, symbol, ecology and community memory. Furthermore, experts were consulted and an initial framework was developed based on the analyzed data. In addition, a classroom model of five stages was devised to convert heritage material into active learning. Finally, stereotyping, source confusion, community misrepresentation and uncritical glorification were protected against by ethical cautions.

Because the paper has a secondary and conceptual analytical basis, it does not garner personal data from the community. In future research that will be undertaken in the field, informed consent and community consultation should respect documentation and acknowledge sources and restrictions on sacred knowledge.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of Hijagang as heritage pedagogy.



Source: Conceptual framework developed by the researcher from the review of related literature and policy documents (UNESCO, 2023; NEP, 2020; NCF-SE, 2023).

[3.]Hijagang and educational meanings

Hijagang serves as a learning portal to access the cultural memory of Meiteis. It connects to Hiyang Hiren – the long traditional boats used in Hiyang Tannaba. As per Directorate of Tourism, Government of Manipur, Hiyang Tannaba is a traditional boat race that generally takes place in November at Thangapat. They believe that the Hiyang Hiren boats possess spiritual power and perform the necessary religious rites [7]. The boat custom has socio-spatial, ritual and culture formalized nature. Not only is it a sport, but it is also a kind of performance which has a symbolic meaning.

Hijagang’s first educational meaning is social organization. Roles of community are often reflected in traditional boats, races and boathouses. Boat builders, rowers, ritual experts, spectators and sponsors may include elders, youth and local authorities. The boats in some

documents pertain to the royal and commoner classes. Students may find this information helpful for discussing issues of hierarchy, public participation and social change. A critical teacher should not exalt hierarchy as something that must not be subjected to question and doubt. Instead, students could be asking: who constructed the boats, who utilized the boats, who kept the boats, who was allowed to engage, and who is remembered? The analytical and democratic nature of heritage education

The second educational significance is the knowledge of craft. The production of a traditional boat requires proper selection of materials proper measuring proper balancing and skilled work. This can start conversations about wood, forest resources, tools, water movement, buoyancy, teamwork and design. Science teachers can link floating, density and balance to the boat Mathematics teachers can talk about length, scale, symmetry and estimation. Teachers of social science can assess work, technology and local economy. Thus, Hijagang becomes an interdisciplinary theme and manifests that craft is knowledge through the hand, eye, memory and community practice.

The third is ecological awareness educational meaning. Water bodies, trees, weather seasons, local climate determine boat culture. By way of Hijagang students can investigate the environmental conditions that make a boat tradition possible. They can talk over rivers, wetlands, timber, biodiversity and festival life. The teachers can connect cultural representation to biodiversity education when local artists or boat makers use animal symbolism. Students can then grasp that environmental protection is not solely a scientific issue; it is also associated with identity, memory and culture.

Fourth educational signification is imaginative symbolism. Traditional boats may feature animal, serpent or divine symbols. Communities use a variety of symbols for values, protection, courage, fertility, victory or sacred power. The students can be trained in order to understand these as a language. They can ask questions about why a community prefers an animal or mythical creature, how form conveys meaning, and how symbolism is different to literal description. The results of these learning experiences are visual literacy and cultural interpretation. Learners can gain an insight into the difference between the functions of a myth and history. Myth and history, though similar in their structure and forms, refer to different contents. Myth refers to one kind of collective imagination or value, while history also associates with documented evidence and interpretation.

A mature classroom is capable of respecting both without mixing them up. The fifth education meaning is historical memory. Items of heritage are frequently accompanied by tales of royalty, war, alliances and community pride. These narratives are to be taught cautiously. When there is conflict in tradition, a teacher can use it to develop historical thinking and peace education rather than bias. As students carry out their projects they can compare oral tradition, museum notes, local history, official tourism description and scholarly sources. This helps them understand

historical narratives need source criticism. Heritage education becomes useful when it develops respectful and responsible behaviours.

Table 1. Educational interpretation of Hijagang as a heritage-learning theme

Heritage element	Educational concept	Possible subject link
Hiyang Hiren boat tradition	Object, craft, ritual and community memory	History, art, social science
Hiyang Tannaba boat race	Festival, teamwork, embodied learning and public culture	Physical education, civics, cultural studies
Boat design and wood use	Material knowledge, measurement, balance and ecology	Science, mathematics, environmental studies
Animal and sacred symbols	Visual literacy, mythology and biodiversity awareness	Art, literature, biology
Stories of kingship and conflict	Historical memory, source criticism and peace education	History, ethics, citizenship education

Source: Researcher's synthesis based on Manipur Tourism and heritage-education literature [1-7].

[4.]Pedagogical model for classroom use

A practical pedagogical model for teaching Hijagang may be organized through five stages: observe, question, contextualize, create and reflect. During the observation stage, learners identify visible or described features of the tradition, including boat names, materials, functions, festivals, places, symbols and participants. Observation should be guided and progressive. Students can list unfamiliar words, identify cultural terms, note subject connections and prepare a simple vocabulary list. This stage builds attention and source-reading skills.

In the questioning stage, the students change their description into an inquiry. They may ask themselves why the boats are sacred, why there is a race that is associated with ritual, what kind of wood might have been used, how many people rowed the boat, how children learned about the tradition, and how the practice has changed over time. Questioning is the key to heritage education because it does not give an opportunity to memorize something passively. It also educates the students that heritage is not just given; it is researched and understood.

During the contextualization phase, the teacher relates Hijagang to the larger themes. These can be Meitei society, Hiyang Tannaba, Lai Haraoba, local ecology, traditional craft, water culture, community festivals and Indian cultural diversity. At this level, educators may resort to maps, short reading passages, oral interviews, museum materials or official tourism material. The objective is to contextualize the heritage object in a broader context without losing its local particularity. Contextualization also assists students to shun simplistic interpretations.

During the creation phase, students demonstrate their learning by engaging in meaningful activities. They are able to produce a heritage map, concept chart, poem, model boat, timeline, comparative table, short video script, interview schedule or a reflective essay. These activities are in line with art-integrated and experiential learning [4,6]. They enable various learners to show

their comprehension in various forms. There are those students who might be good at drawing, others at speaking, writing, mapping or craft. Heritage education will be inclusive when assessment is respectful of such multiple forms of expression.

During the reflection stage, learners talk about what Hijagang teaches about community, memory, environment and coexistence. The questions that can be a part of the reflection are the following: how should we preserve local heritage? What do we do to respect a tradition without stereotyping a group? How does pride differ with critical understanding? What is it that modern education can learn in the ancient craft? This type of reflection transforms cultural data to appreciate education and citizenship education.

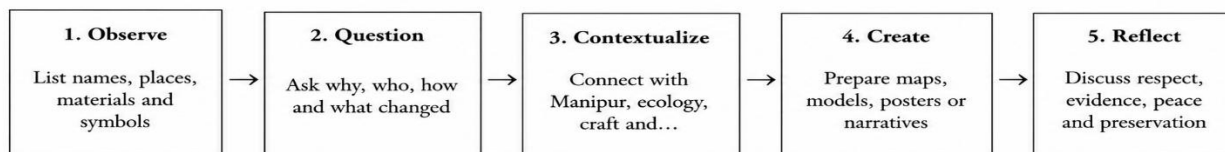
Table 2. Five-stage classroom model for teaching Hijagang

Stage	Teacher activity	Learning outcome
Observe	Guide students to list names, places, materials, symbols and practices	Careful observation and vocabulary building
Question	Ask why the boat is sacred, who participates and how the tradition is preserved	Inquiry skill and critical curiosity
Contextualize	Connect Hijagang with Manipur, Hiyang Tannaba, ecology and craft	Interdisciplinary understanding
Create	Use maps, posters, models, narratives, interviews or short presentations	Creative expression and active learning
Reflect	Discuss identity, respect, evidence, peace and preservation	Value formation and democratic citizenship

Source: Researcher’s classroom model developed on the basis of Manipur Tourism’s description of Hiyang Tannaba [7].

Figure 2. Five-stage classroom model for teaching Hijagang.

Five-Stage Classroom Model for Teaching Hijagang



Learning movement: passive viewing → active interpretation → ethical heritage understanding.

Assessment rubric for classroom use

Heritage pedagogy classroom assessment must not merely be factual recall The evaluation must test if the learners could observe well, ask meaningful questions, establish connections between their heritage and knowledge on the topic, produce evidence-based outputs and make

respectful reflections on the cultural diversity of the world. Teachers are able to adjust this evaluation rubric according to age and subject matter.

Table 3. Suggested assessment rubric for Hijagang-based heritage learning

Assessment dimension	Expected learner performance	Evidence that may be used
Observation	Identifies visible features such as place, boat, material, symbol, practice and people.	Vocabulary list, labelled sketch, observation notes
Inquiry	Frames relevant questions about origin, use, meaning, participants and change over time.	Question bank, group discussion record
Contextual understanding	Connects Hijagang with Manipur, Hiyang Tannaba, ecology, craft and community memory.	Concept map, short explanation, comparative table
Creative expression	Represents learning through map, model, poster, poem, story, performance or presentation.	Student artefact with oral explanation
Critical and ethical reflection	Shows respect for the tradition while distinguishing evidence, belief, story and interpretation.	Reflection paragraph, peer feedback, teacher observation

[5.]Curricular integration

Hijagang can be integrated within all levels of education. At the primary level, the teachers can use simple stories, drawings, vocabulary drills and map work. Words that children can learn are boat, race, wood, water, festival, community and symbol. They can create a sketch of a boat and caption it. It enhances language; observation and cultural awareness. The teacher should use age-appropriate language and avoid complex or violent ideas.

At the middle stage, students will compare Hijagang with the boat traditions of Kerala, Assam, Odisha or elsewhere. They are capable of drawing a table of similarities and differences in purpose, design, context of festivals and involvement of the community. This analogy will teach unity in diversity and train analytical thinking. Students learn about topics such as floating science or cultural social science through practical use of the steerable boat.

At secondary level, learners study heritage as evidence. Scholarly sources, oral traditions, and official descriptions may give the same practice a differing sketch and the students are able to see that. They can communicate about the difference between concrete and abstract heritage. They can also debate tourism's role in maintaining or commercializing cultures and heritage. Engaging in these actions evokes a sense of civic duty. The National Curriculum Framework focuses on holistic and contextual learning [5] which supports this kind of interdisciplinary work.

At the teacher-education level, the Hijagang can be used to teach future teachers' local resource-based pedagogy. It might be required for teacher trainees to select a local heritage site Lesson plan step, Identify cross-curricular links, Design assessment rubrics, Reflect on ethical considerations. Through these teachers would be empowered to make use of local knowledge

without watering it down to ornament. This would also prompt them to respect the voices of the community and verify their information through credible sources.

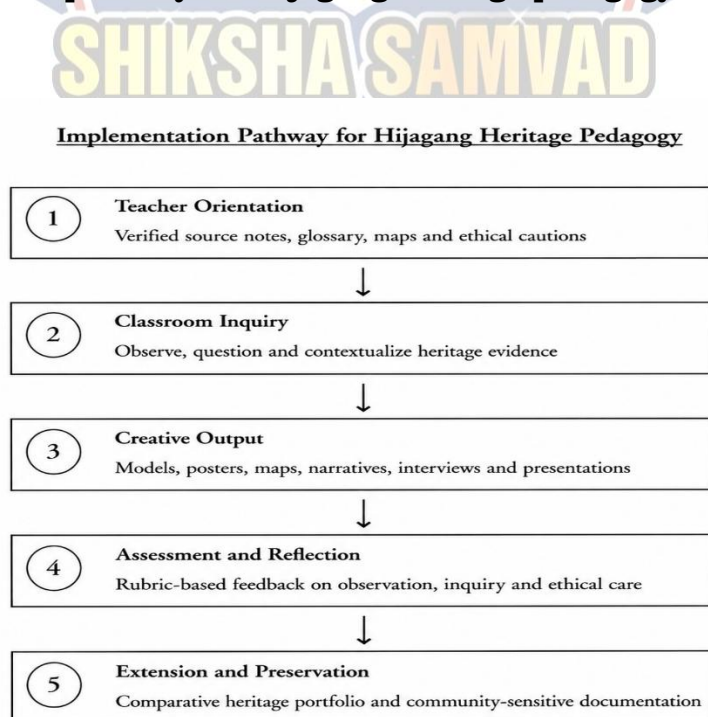
Hijagang serves as a meaningful case study in education, anthropology, history, museum studies, tourism and environmental studies in higher education courses. The students can conduct fieldwork, interview community members, research the ritual performance, record the making of a craft or analyze board display of heritage interpretation. That said, there should be an ethical dimension to this work, that is, obtaining consent from the community, representation of their lives, accessing sacred spaces with respect, acknowledgement of sources and attention to sensitive histories.

Implementation plan for schools and teacher education

Before using the plan, the educators should be oriented. Educators should receive a short background note on Hijab, verification source hyperlinks, glossary support, classroom activities and ethical warnings. Experts indicate that the issue should not be restricted to a culturally illustrative example but serves as a valuable teaching resource for an investigation.

Incorporate hijab lessons into the school curriculum through a heritage module, social science project, art-integrated or interdisciplinary club activity, lasting not more than a week. Students of the teacher training level can create lesson plans such as worksheets on heritage, a glossary in two languages, comparison of local heritage examples, and a reflection on ethical representation. Wherever possible partnerships should be made mutual with the institutions and museums cultural departments and local professionals.

Figure 3. Implementation pathway for Hijagang heritage pedagogy.



Purpose: To convert local heritage from ceremonial content into inquiry-based, ethical and interdisciplinary learning.

Table 4. Phased implementation plan for Hijagang heritage pedagogy

Phase	Main activity	Expected output
Preparation	Collect verified sources, glossary, maps and classroom reading material.	Teacher resource folder
Orientation	Introduce learners to heritage, intangible culture, source types and respectful inquiry.	Shared vocabulary and inquiry questions
Learning activity	Use observation, questioning, contextualization, creative work and reflection.	Student projects and reflective outputs
Assessment	Apply rubric for observation, inquiry, contextual understanding and ethical reflection.	Rubric-based feedback
Extension	Connect Hijagang with other local heritage examples from India.	Comparative heritage portfolio

[6.] Ethical and critical issues

Heritage education ought to be done with sensitivity as it relates to identity. Local culture should not be seen as a decorative model or exotic object by educators. Hijagang belongs to a continual culture within the world. A short description in the classroom might not fully represent it. So, the teachers should encourage humility. Students must be informed that an educational lesson is just a starting point and that community knowledge shall be respected.

Source distinction is another ethical issue. Official tourism accounts, oral history, mythologies, legends, historical assertions and scholarly texts may be used as part of a lesson on the Hijagang. These sources do not represent the same things. The teachers should help the students to understand which statement is written, which is oral tradition, symbolic belief and interpretation. This does not diminish the value of tradition in any way. Actually, it helps the learners be careful about knowledge. This is needed at a time when the information may be copied without comparing it to the original.

Another issue is inclusion. A classroom may have students from different communities, languages and religions. Heritage education must not make any learner feel excluded or inferior in any way. Historian must present conflict as history, not as an explanation of contemporary hostility to avoid nationalistic misinterpretations of his arguments. The teacher must focus on humanity, culture and harmonious living with one another. In this context, Hijagang could be associated with something similar to peace education. It may help students comprehend how communities form collective memories while simultaneously learning to live together in the present era.

The last issue relates to preservation and change. Living heritage is something that is not static rather it should not be stopped as if it belongs to the past. Scholars can question how

Hijagang and Hiyang Hiren practices are preserved today, what role youth play, how tourism alters these practices, and how digital media can record heritage responsibly. Questions like these make heritage education contemporary and future-oriented.

Safeguards for respectful heritage pedagogy

Education need to use Hijagang Five Safety Measures. First of all, documentary information, oral tradition, symbolic belief and classroom interpretation need to be clearly delineated by the teachers. Secondly, they should not show any ethnic static, exotic or backward. Discussion about heritage, they should use to build respect for diversity and not for assertion of competitive cultural pride. Before any field visit, interview or documentation activity in future, consent and acknowledgment are a must. Schools must ensure that students of all cultures participate without presuming the superiority of one culture over the other.

Because of these safeguards, heritage the pedagogy is compatible with democratic citizenship. The classroom is protected from two opposing errors: romanticizing heritage without evidence and denigrating living custom as superstition. A balanced pedagogy teaches students to respect and verify, compare and care.

[7.]Discussion

According to the Hijagong case, local heritage makes education contextual and interdisciplinary. By concentrating on one cultural theme, we are able to link conceptually various subjects – history with arts, language, environmental studies, science, mathematics, ethics and citizenship. The nation also enjoys similar merits as India features a classroom with cultural diversities which are not added in the textbook. When students are introduced in the right context, they will able to learn regional heritage that creates cultural confidence and national diversity.

The case also reminds us that heritage education must not be limited to celebrations alone. Celebration is a treasure but education is an interpretation. When examining an object, students can ask themselves: ‘What is it? Who made it? How does it work? How is it remembered? What does it mean? And do those meanings change?’ It enhances rational analysis. Learners can go from passively being proud to actively belonging.

Since high-quality educational practice does not always need costly technology, Hijagang can provide teachers with a practical model. A field trip such as an official description, a map or a drawing, a local heritage topic, an interview with an elder or a local story, could an effective resource. Using cheaper material and increasing questions, activities and reflection will add to its value.

It emphasizes improving educational documentation as an important task. Local heritage sites often provide minimal information for teachers and kids. To create and govern bilingual sheets, glossaries, child-friendly maps, teacher guides and digital archives, the schools, museums, universities and cultural departments can form an alliance. Involve locals while preparing such materials to avoid blunders, stereotypes and over-simplifications.

Ultimately, Hijagang supports democratic belonging. By way of heritage education, we can inspire a respect for diversity, sensitivity towards regional cultures, awareness of environmental issues and an appreciation for history. Students may see themselves as custodians of their culture. Just because someone guards a thought doesn't mean they ascribe to it. Caring for heritage through knowledge, respect, dialogue and responsibility.

Teacher-ready classroom activity examples

Activity 1: Heritage vocabulary wall. Students collect words such as Hijagang, Hiyang Hiren, Hiyang Tannaba, ritual, craft, water, symbol and community. They write meanings in their own language and use the words in short sentences.

Activity 2: Boat as science and culture. Students discuss why a boat floats, what materials may be used, how balance is maintained and why a community may give symbolic meaning to the boat.

Activity 3: Source comparison. Students compare a tourism description, a teacher-prepared note and an oral account. They identify which parts are factual, symbolic, interpretive or uncertain.

Activity 4: Heritage reflection card. Each student writes one thing learned, one question still unanswered and one way to preserve heritage respectfully.

Limitations and future research directions

The research is a conceptual and teaching plan. The authors do not pretend to offer an ethnographic account of Hijagang or a complete historical reconstruction of the Meitei boat tradition. This classroom interpretation based on secondary sources, helped to arrive at this discussion. Consequently, we must understand it as a template of heritage pedagogy rather than the last word on the tradition.

Further investigations must document in the field with community approvals, interview practitioners as well as custodians, trial out classroom lessons plans based on Hijagang, assess student-learning and comparative study of other boat traditions in India. Efforts made can contribute to a more effective heritage curriculum for the North-East and improved linkage between local cultural knowledge and formal education.

[8.]Conclusion

The data of place, object, story, craft, ritual, tool, community memory useful for anyone. It presents a way that is interdisciplinary as well as experiential through which one can learn and know the cultural heritage of Manipur. Students of subjects like history, social science, art, language, environmental studies and teacher education can effectively learn through the subject matter only without the picture. The relationship of Hiyang Hiren and Hiyang Tannaba shows that a boat tradition has social-spiritual-aesthetic-ecological implications.

The article indicates that local heritage is educationally effective if it is used as an object of inquiry. Students must ensure their observing questioning contextualizing creating and reflecting. Educators must incorporate heritage, evidence, sensitivity and critical care into their teaching. The direction of NCF SE 2023, UNESCO'S framework for culture and arts education,

NEP 2020 and art-integrated learning. Hijagang demonstrates how a local practice and culture can serve as a useful educational tool.

In a multicultural nation like India, education should enable students to get acquainted with local and global communities. The objective can be realized through heritage education based on hijagang. It can instill cultural confidence without creating narrowness; critical thought without creating disrespect; and community cohesion without creating conformity. Heritage Pedagogy actually seeks to achieve this balance.

Declarations

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Competing interests: The author declares no competing interests.

Ethical note: The discussion treats Hijagang as a heritage-education topic and recommends respectful use of community knowledge.

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