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Investigating Indigenous games as Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in PETE: a systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT

This systematic literature review (SLR) investigates the enablers and constraints which impact the enactment of Traditional Indigenous Games within curriculum. SLR methodology was used to identify all potential literature within Australia and internationally, between February 2022 and April 2022. Searches were limited to peer-reviewed literature, written in English and published between 2002 and 2022. Search protocols employed to investigate relevant literature were based upon the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) model with the following databases explored: A+ Education via Informit online, AEI ATSIS, ERIC Proquest, Taylor & Francis and Sage Journals (Education). The following search terms were used: ALL FIELDS, ('Traditional Indigenous games' OR 'Indigenous games' OR Yulunga OR 'Indigenous sport' OR 'Aboriginal sports' OR 'Torres Strait Islander sports' AND 'Australian curriculum' OR 'cross curriculum priorities' OR 'Indigenous pedagogy' AND 'Indigenous perspectives' OR 'Indigenous knowledge's' OR 'Embedding Indigenous perspectives' AND 'health and physical education' OR 'physical education teacher education' OR 'health & PE' AND 'Cultural competency' OR 'cultural safety' AND 'Initial teacher education' OR 'pre-service physical education teachers'). Results suggest that culturally relevant pedagogy is a dominant enabler, whilst curriculum and teacher cultural awareness are dominant constraints which impact the enactment of Traditional Indigenous Games within curriculum.

Introduction

Coloniser-settler conflict between Indigenous[1] and non-Indigenous people has led to significant marginalisation of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within the Australian education system (Williams, 2016). Since 1788, Indigenous people have been subjected to discrimination and systemic disadvantage perpetrated by Western culture (Bodkin-Andrews & Carlson, 2016). Furthermore, 'Indigenous people have experienced displacement, been the targets of genocidal policies and practices, had families destroyed

through the forcible removal of children, and continue to face the stresses of living in a racist world that systematically devalues Indigenous culture' (Dudgeon et al., 2010, p. 38).

The gap in educational outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students is an international phenomenon. International policy flaws are identified within research from Canada (Neeganagwedgin, 2013), USA (Sato et al., 2013), Turkey (Aypay, 2016), Sweden (Barker, 2019), South Africa (Nxumalo & Mncube, 2018), New Zealand (Rata, 2012), Botswana (Lyoka, 2007), Zimbabwe (Madondo & Tsikira, 2021), Brazil (Pereira & Venâncio, 2021), UK (Santoro & Kennedy, 2016), Tanzania (Shehu, 2004) and Finland (Veintie, 2013), as well as Australia (Gray & Beresford, 2008). These policy flaws illustrate the failure to effectively embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within their respective curriculum systems (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). For example, Neeganagwedgin (2013) stated in a review of Aboriginal education in Canada, that current policy frameworks are simply designed to identify deficiencies for Aboriginal students and are counterproductive to educational success. Furthermore, Gray and Beresford (2008) suggest that policy reform is required within the current education system to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students.

This also has significance across the Asia-Pacific region, with countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam endeavouring to implement policy compliance measures (Moodie & Patrick, 2017). However, some countries such as New Zealand have managed to make positive inroads regarding the discrepancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education for Māori students through the introduction of specialised primary and secondary schools (Kura Kaupapa Māori) where Māori has become the primary language of instruction and an effective way to embed Māori knowledges and perspectives (Rata, 2012). Notably, flaws regarding curriculum have also been identified.

In September 2007, following decades of planning and preparatory work, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (United Nations (General Assembly), 2007). The UNDRIP is the most comprehensive international framework for the rights of Indigenous people (Rosnon et al., 2019). Within the Australian education system, the UNDRIP prompted positive change with a renewed focus on improving educational outcomes (Bishop, 2021). The UNDRIP supports the rights of Indigenous peoples through self-determining education through Article 14 (1) 'Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning' (United Nations (General Assembly), 2007).

The Declaration provided a new impetus for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to work together to close educational gaps (Kukutai & Taylor, 2016). Through policy enactment and Indigenous focus, educational outcomes for Indigenous students are continuing to improve (Morrison et al., 2019). However, the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within the Australian education system, is still viewed from a deficit standpoint (Burgess et al., 2022)

Historically, within Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum, inclusion of Indigenous Australian culture has been tokenistic (Whatman et al., 2017). This lack of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within curriculum is due to Australia's dependence upon sports and games steeped in colonial history, with traditional sports such as Rugby League, Rugby Union, Australian Rules Football, Cricket, Netball and basketball favoured over non-

traditional sports within the curriculum (Evans et al., 2017). This has led to conflicting priorities between curriculum agendas and the needs of Indigenous people, with critics citing limited cultural integration as being detrimental to Indigenous students (Whatman et al., 2017). Recently, advancements have been made within curriculum to include the teaching of non-traditional sports such as Traditional Indigenous Games and Sports (TIGaS) (Edwards, 2008), as well as Indigenous concepts of health (Evans et al., 2017). Resources are available to assist HPE teachers with this process such as *Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games* (Edwards, 2008). *Yulunga* provides examples of Traditional Indigenous Games which can be implemented across K-12, provided there is meaning and purpose behind the objective as opposed to a tokenistic perspective (Dinan Thompson et al., 2014).

Concerns for teachers' abilities to facilitate cultural diversity within HPE contexts have been raised for many decades (Barker, 2019; Schmidlein et al., 2014; Whatman et al., 2017). A major contributor to this has been the fact that physical education teacher education (PETE) students typically enter the profession from privileged white middle-class backgrounds (Barker, 2019). This results in a 'widening' of cultural competency needed to provide culturally inclusive teaching practices (Whatman et al., 2017), and criticism of teacher educators and PETE programs for failing to provide appropriate 'pedagogical toolboxes' to navigate cultural inclusivity (Barker, 2019).

This SLR was undertaken to understand the current scope of literature pertaining to embedding Indigenous Knowledges and perspectives from a TIGaS perspective within curriculum. The findings of this review reveal how learning outcomes can be strengthened for Indigenous students through embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. To provide an effective and inclusive education system within Australia, it is crucial that current pedagogical approaches and strategies are examined to ensure an effective and inclusive curriculum for all. In this paper, we present a systematic review of literature of TIGaS within curriculum. We identified findings which could be broadly categorised as enablers or constraints of TIGaS which included culturally relevant pedagogy identified as a prominent enabler whilst curriculum and teacher cultural awareness are investigated as prominent constraints. This paper provides a summary of results and analysis and discussion of the most prominent enablers and constraints.

Methodology

Research design

This qualitative investigation was designed to evaluate current evidence pertaining to the research question: what does the literature say are the enablers and constraints which impact the enactment of Traditional Indigenous Games (and Sports) within curriculum? To effectively address this question, a systematic review methodology (Moher et al., 2009), was used to identify potential literature within Australia and internationally. This approach was used to identify if contributing effects were constant throughout literature, as well as providing an opportunity to identify potential gaps within current literature. The PRISMA approach was utilised due to its highly effective evidence-based minimum set of items for reporting in systematic reviews, ensuring a transparent account of why the review was undertaken, the process that was followed and the results that were found (Moher et al., 2009).

Data collection

Search strategy

A systematic search of the current literature was completed between February 2022 and April 2022. Search protocols were based upon the PRISMA model (Moher et al., 2009). The following databases were explored: A + Education via Informit online, AEI ATSIS (Australian Education Index and Theses), ERIC Proquest, Taylor & Francis and Sage Journals (Education).

Searches were limited to peer-reviewed literature, written in English and published in the past 20 years (2002–2022). Additionally, search alerts were set for the search word combinations to ensure any literature published after the search date was included in the literature review and additional articles were identified via reference lists of literature located within the search. The following search key terms were used: ALL FIELDS (keywords will appear in any field; e.g. title, abstract, full text or any other field), ('Traditional Indigenous games' OR 'Indigenous games' OR Yulunga OR 'Indigenous sport' OR 'Aboriginal sports' OR 'Torres Strait Islander sports' AND 'Australian curriculum' OR 'cross curriculum priorities' OR 'Indigenous pedagogy' AND 'Indigenous perspectives' OR 'Indigenous knowledges' OR 'Embedding Indigenous perspectives' AND 'health and physical education' OR 'physical education teacher education' OR 'health & PE' AND 'Cultural competency' OR 'cultural safety' AND 'Initial teacher education' OR 'pre-service physical education teachers').

Inclusion criteria

For inclusion in the review, studies must have met the following criteria:

(1) A primary focus on Indigenous games and/or sports.
(2) Research since 2002.
(3) Research relevant to embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within curriculum.
(4) Full-text articles.
(5) Written in English.

Selection of studies

Figure 1 shows the approach taken for the systematic literature search. A total of 3155 identified articles were first stored in reference management software package (Endnote X9.2), before duplicates were removed using automated and manual screening processes. Articles were then screened by titles for keywords, followed by abstracts. Studies that contained the key terms 'Traditional Indigenous Games', 'Indigenous Games' or 'Cultural Games' within the title were retained for review. Remaining studies were then assessed based upon the inclusion/exclusion criteria. The remaining studies that met the inclusion criteria and were selected for review, were then assessed for methodological study quality. Grey literature pertinent to the research question was also investigated.
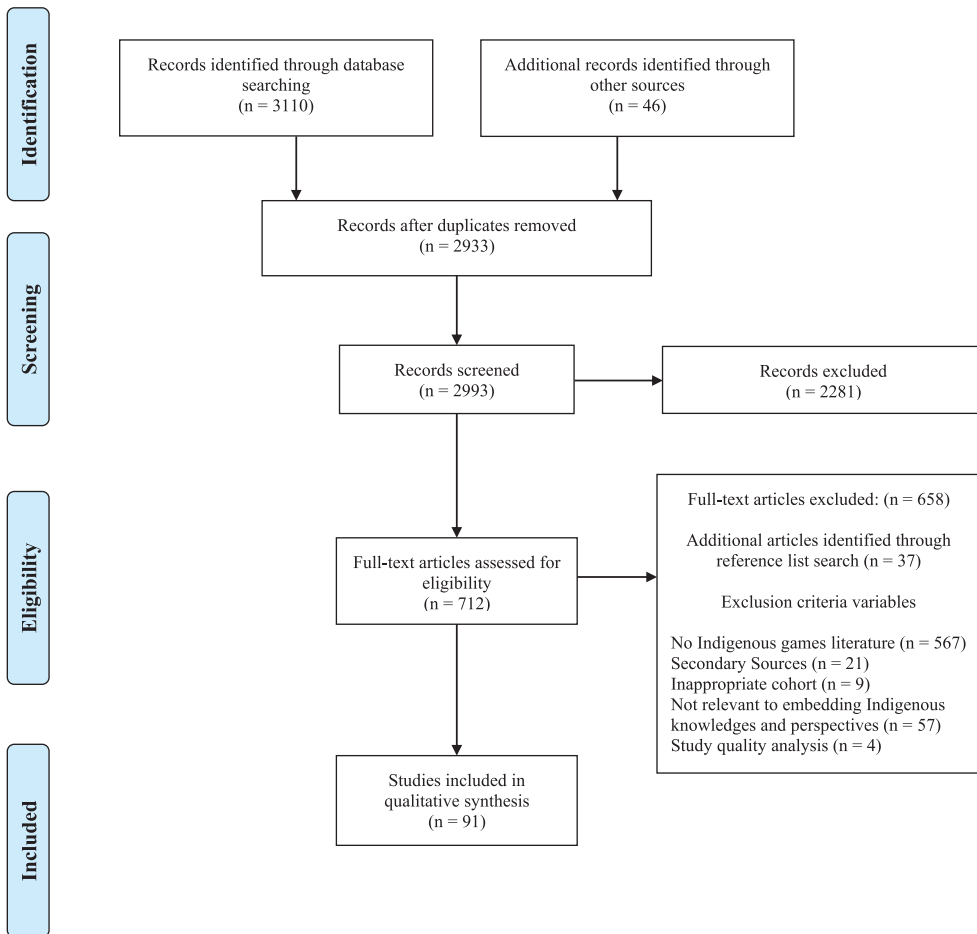
Figure 1. PRISMA search strategy for literature reporting Traditional Indigenous Games and Sports, 2002–2022. Source: adapted from Moher et al. (2009).

Assessment of methodological study quality for included qualitative studies

Methodological quality was assessed using a quality assessment tool used for qualitative studies developed by Long and Godfrey (2004) and Ryan et al. (2007). Each study was measured against six criteria (research design, sources, theoretical framework, ethical implications, methodology and contribution to the field). Each element of the six criteria was scored as either 1 if met, 0.5 if met but not well described and 0 if not met. Scores were aggregated across each criteria to provide a total score out of 6. Any studies that did not meet a total score of 3/6 were removed from the final list of included studies (Table 1).

Findings

Several key findings arose from the SLR which have been thematically sorted into enablers and constraints to implementing Traditional Indigenous Games (Table 2).

Table 1. Results of quality assessment for qualitative studies.

Study	Research design	Sources	Theoretical framework	Ethical implications	Methodology	Contribution to field	Total score (/6)
Akena (2012)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Allen et al. (2017)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Aronson and Laughter (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Aypay (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Barker (2019)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Bascuñán et al. (2022)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Baynes (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Bergeron (2008)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Biermann and Townsend-Cross (2008)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Partially met	Yes	3.5
Bishop et al. (2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Boon and Lewthwaite (2015)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Booth and Allen (2017)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Brown (2007)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4
Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4
Burnett (2006)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Buxton (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Craven et al. (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
De Plevitz (2007)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Dinan Thompson et al. (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Edwards (2009)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Evans et al. (2017)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Gay (2002)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Gray and Beresford (2008)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Hansen (2014)	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	1
Hart et al. (2012)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4
Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist (2003)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Hradsky (2022)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Sumida Huaman and Valdiviezo (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4
Kanu (2007)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Kiran and Knights (2010)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Kitchen et al. (2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Klenowski (2009)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Legge (2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Legge (2015)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5
Lewthwaite et al. (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Linds et al. (2018)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Louth and Jamieson-Proctor (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Lowe and Yunkaporta (2013)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Lowe et al. (2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Lyoka (2007)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Madondo and Tsikira (2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6

Table 1. Continued.

Study	Research design	Sources	Theoretical framework	Ethical implications	Methodology	Contribution to field	Total score (/6)
Martin et al. (2017)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Maxwell et al. (2018)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
McLaughlin et al. (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
McLaughlin and Whatman (2015)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
McLaughlin and Whatman (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Nakata (2002)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Nakata (2010)	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	2
Nakata (2011)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Neeganagwedgin (2013)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Nxumalo and Mncube (2018)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Papp (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Papp (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Parker et al. (2006)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Pereira and Venâncio (2021)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partially Met	Yes	Yes	5.5
Pill et al. (2021)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Premier and Miller (2010)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Preston (2016)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	4
Quijada Cerecer (2013)	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	2
Rahman (2010)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Rahman (2013)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	5
Rata (2012)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Rogers (2018)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Salter and Maxwell (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Salter and Maxwell (2018)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	4
Santoro and Kennedy (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Sato et al. (2013)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Savage et al. (2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Schmidlein et al. (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Shehu (2004)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Sisson et al. (2020)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Sleeter (2011)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Vass (2012)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Vass (2014)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Vass (2017)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Vass and Hogarth (2022)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Veintie and Holm (2010)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Veintie (2013)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Villegas and Lucas (2002)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Walton-Fisette et al. (2018)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Walton-Fisette et al. (2019)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Wane (2008)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	2
Watkins et al. (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5

Table 1. Continued.

Study	Research design	Sources	Theoretical framework	Ethical implications	Methodology	Contribution to field	Total score (/6)
Weuffen et al. (2017)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Whatman and Singh (2015)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Whatman and Meston (2016)	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	3
Whatman et al. (2017)	No	Yes	Yes	Partially met	No	Yes	3.5
Williams (2014)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Williams (2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Williams (2017)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Williams (2018)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Williams and Pill (2019)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Wrench and Garrett (2021b)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	5
Yunkaporta and McGinty (2009)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6

Table 2. Findings from Literature.

Levels	Enablers	Constraints
Micro level – Universities, schools, and classrooms	Culturally relevant pedagogy ($n = 30$). Indigenous educators ($n = 8$) Community ($n = 6$) Professional Experience ($n = 3$).	Curriculum ($n = 35$). Teacher Cultural Awareness ($n = 32$). Initial teacher education programs ($n = 15$). Professional development ($n = 11$). School Leadership ($n = 9$). Professional development ($n = 11$).
Macro level – National systems and policy	Examining Indigenous knowledges and perspectives through the lens of the 'cultural interface' ($n = 9$). Indigenous Voices – consulting on/ and writing policy initiatives and curriculum development ($n = 3$).	Current state of Indigenous education ($n = 12$).

Notes: Some papers describe multiple key findings.

To reduce the number of findings, only the following key results which were identified to have 30 or more hits within the literature, are discussed for enablers (culturally relevant pedagogy), and constraints (curriculum and teacher cultural awareness). These results were selected for synthesis because of the margin between findings, i.e. the next enabler ($n = 9$) and the next constraint ($n = 15$).

Enablers

Attempts to Indigenise curriculum can be perceived as developing an 'impoverished version of Aboriginal pedagogy and the promotion of corrupted understandings of Indigenous knowledge' (Williamson & Dalal, 2007, p. 51). What is required however, is an understanding of the complexities and tensions which arise when negotiating the interface between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems (Nakata, 2002; Williamson & Dalal, 2007). To address this culturally relevant pedagogy was identified as an enabler to promote effective implementation of Indigenous perspectives.

Culturally relevant pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy can be defined as an approach to teaching and learning which utilises 'cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively' (Gay, 2002, p. 106). For all Indigenous groups, Indigenous knowledge is a lived world experience which provides a construct between people and their environments and cultural identity (Pill et al., 2021). Since colonisation of Australia, Indigenous students have been severely disadvantaged by a Eurocentric schooling system which has resulted in their cultural identity being taken away from them (De Plevitz, 2007). Following what can only be described as government failure to 'Close the Gap' on educational outcomes for Indigenous students, urgent action is needed from educational stakeholders and all levels of government to address curriculum and pedagogical reform (Maxwell et al., 2018). Within the Australian education system, classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse (Williams & Pill, 2019). As such, the promotion of cultural inclusion through varying policy approaches such as the Australian Professional Standards for Teaching Leadership is welcomed, however, critics argue that policy outcomes are focused on Eurocentric pedagogies (Williams & Pill, 2019). A recent approach discussed within the SLR which has the potential to improve learning outcomes for Indigenous students is CRP. This approach is aligned with various other multicultural pedagogies and is also referred to as culturally responsive pedagogy (Boon & Lewthwaite, 2015), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) and culturally informed pedagogy (Legge, 2011).

Based upon a sociocultural understanding of learning, CRP propositions curriculum and pedagogy as culturally based, including HPE (Wrench & Garrett, 2021a). For example, Vass (2012) within his study of exploring deficit discourses within Indigenous education, advocated that curriculum and pedagogies should be diverse, socio-politically grounded and culturally responsive. Furthermore, Sleeter (2011) in her paper based upon strengthening CRP raised concerns that within school settings this could be perceived as 'tokenistic' forms of Indigenous alignment through 'ticking the box'. However, if implemented effectively, CRP can promote student achievement by facilitating a sense of belonging within the classroom (Rahman, 2013). Essentially, CRP is the ability of teachers to incorporate specific strategies that inform their pedagogical approaches to support student learning (Lewthwaite et al., 2014). Villegas and Lucas (2002), suggest that teachers can achieve this in several ways including using students' prior knowledge and cultural backgrounds to inform learning, be socioculturally conscious and have positive views of students from diverse backgrounds, understand their learners and how they construct knowledge and finally, use pedagogical approaches and strategies in the classroom that cater for the learning needs of all students.

If teachers develop appropriate levels of CRP within their teaching practices and understand the impact that this will have on students, this may provide greater avenues of alignment between culturally based curriculum and teaching practices. For example, Vass (2012) suggests that for year 5 students, only 63.4% of Indigenous students were above the national benchmark in literacy and numeracy, compared to 92.6% of non-Indigenous students. When examining TIGaS within curriculum, HPE educators who understand how to implement CRP within teaching and learning experiences, are more effective teachers with the potential to close the educational gaps between

Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Wrench & Garrett, 2021a). Therefore, it is recommended that all teachers be knowledgeable in this framework to ensure best practice teaching and learning experiences for the implementation of TIGaS as well as ensuring professional teaching standards are met (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

Constraints

Cultural barriers between Indigenous students and western education systems have resulted in disparities between lived home experiences and western ways of schooling (Evans et al., 2017). These barriers make it difficult for Indigenous students to utilise cultural capital to improve educational outcomes. This relationship is causal and while education systems are continuing to develop policy initiatives to improve educational outcomes (Papp, 2016), constraints such as curriculum and teacher cultural awareness are still contributing to this divide.

Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum (AC) has seen significant updates since its inception in 2010, with HPE introduced in 2014 (Macdonald et al., 2018). Within the HPE landscape, the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (AC: HPE), has been considered a gateway to embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives (Whatman et al., 2017) and mobilising the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures (Pill et al., 2021). The latter is a welcome inclusion which has the potential to benefit Indigenous students however, Nakata (2011) suggests proceeding with caution with objectives potentially viewed as tokenistic, within overarching priorities of an AC satisfying the needs of all stakeholders. Further concerns suggested a tokenistic approach is in place rather than meaningful and valued approaches (Williams, 2016). The concerns of Nakata (2011) and Williams (2016) are valid if the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures is not viewed as a positive reform to embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives.

According to the AC, the CCP 'provides an opportunity for all young Australians to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, knowledge traditions and holistic world views' (ACARA, 2016). Williams (2018) study of Aboriginal games indicates that this policy agenda may not result in a greater focus of social justice issues within HPE. For example, he and Pill et al. (2021) have raised concerns with teachers' ability to implement the CCP. Evans et al. (2017) further support this notion by suggesting that many teachers are reluctant to try and teach Indigenous perspectives for fear of 'cultural trespass' and simply because they do not know how. Contradictions appear to have emerged with 'priorities' to embed CCP's, but often with little regard to how those CCP's should be implemented (Booth & Allen, 2017; Salter & Maxwell, 2016). It is suggested that CCP's should be embedded where educationally relevant (ACARA, 2016). However, within AC: HPE, exactly where Indigenous knowledges and perspectives can be embedded is still open for debate (Evans et al., 2017; Whatman & Meston, 2016). This results in a key constraint because teachers are unaware of how to position TIGaS within curriculum. Some might regard open possibilities to include TIGaS to be an enabler, but research into teacher

agency (Johnson et al., 2015), particularly early career teachers, shows that teachers want more explicit guidance about what to teach and when – hence why it can be seen as a constraint.

Bodkin-Andrews and Carlson (2016) within their study exploring the legacy of racism for Indigenous people within education, argue that the Westernised curriculum, contributes to 'cultural extermination' for Indigenous people. However, it has been reported that a 'revival' of TIGaS (Williams, 2016), has allowed HPE teachers the opportunity to embed CCP's. Literature gaps appear to exist regarding how Indigenous knowledges can be represented and embedded within HPE teaching and learning experiences (Pill et al., 2021). Within the current HPE landscape, the consensus amongst educators suggests that the inclusion of TIGaS in HPE classes has the potential to facilitate the embedding of Indigenous perspectives (Williams, 2016). Evans et al. (2017) states the importance of HPE being a viable option to embed TIGaS as this is a key learning area that allows both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students the opportunity to actively engage with Indigenous culture. Therefore, if the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures is not actively embedded within HPE, there is the possibility that it may not be embedded within the curriculum at all.

The role of curriculum is ambiguous and constraining as curriculum directives are not explicit in the development of CRP for teachers resulting in curriculum gaps which are being exploited by teachers (Evans et al., 2017). The constraint is that not all teachers can identify where TIGaS should be positioned within curriculum. However, if it were more explicit teachers may be required to have a greater understanding of cultural awareness and be more inclined to seek out further opportunities to embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within curriculum.

Teacher cultural awareness

Preparing culturally aware teachers who can provide effective teaching and learning experiences for all students is the fundamental focus for educational stakeholders (Turner, 2007). Teacher cultural awareness (TCA) requires competence to enhance teaching and learning experiences for students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Sarraj et al., 2015). The embedding of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives is complex and although stipulated in numerous curriculum documents and professional standards, it is still easy to avoid for teachers (Booth & Allen, 2017). Curriculum changes present opportunities for Indigenous culture to be expressed through teaching and learning experiences but only if teachers have the necessary cultural capital (Evans et al., 2017). Teachers who have not yet developed cultural awareness, inadvertently promote marginalisation (Aronson & Laughter, 2016), and incorporate pedagogical strategies within their teaching which actively promote epistemologies deeply embedded in white settler colonial discourses (Bascuñán et al., 2022). As a result, a distinct lack of cultural awareness inhibits teachers' understanding and motivation to cater for the needs of diverse learners when implementing TIGaS within curriculum. Developing teacher cultural capital needs to be a priority for all educational stakeholders because allowing teachers to engage in meaningful discussions develops their cultural awareness and alleviates concerns within classrooms to provide greater learning outcomes for all students (Baynes, 2016).

Discussion

The focus on these enablers and constraints provides insight into the complexities of enacting TIGaS within curriculum to support policy and framework objectives such as the UNDRIP. This research aligns with the UNDRIP principles to promote the advancement of educational outcomes for Indigenous students. It was identified that the role that teachers play at a personal cultural capital level, has a significant impact upon facilitation of TIGaS within curriculum. This was evident with all dominant enablers and constraints identified at a micro level (universities, schools and classrooms). For example, McLaughlin et al. (2014) suggest within their paper, which explores the embedding of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives for future curriculum leaders, that pre-service teachers need to be given the support and opportunity to develop cultural capital to develop into effective teachers. Furthermore, Papp (2016) in her paper exploring teaching strategies to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students, suggests that school leadership plays an integral role in underpinning improved outcomes for Indigenous students. This suggests that at the core of embedding TIGaS within curriculum, responsibility lies with teachers, teaching staff and senior leadership. A key feature reported found culturally relevant pedagogy to be the dominant enabler which suggests that teachers who engage and understand CRP conceptual frameworks, are more likely to provide culturally appropriate teaching and learning experiences for students (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). However, TCA, which is integral to CRP, is a major constraint.

Warren (2018) suggests CRP and TCA are the same phenomenon, the difference lies in whether it is viewed from a deficit perspective. Educators who enact CRP can provide more effective teaching and learning experiences for students. Likewise, educators who lack cultural awareness may not be able to identify cultural gaps in curriculum and are not effective in identifying where TIGaS should be positioned within curriculum. This tension is further exacerbated (Booth & Allen, 2017), by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), standards '1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' and '2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians' (AITSL, 2017). These standards imply all teachers should have a pre-requisite level of cultural awareness to facilitate effective implementation of the standards although, the constraint suggests otherwise. Since initial teacher education is accredited by its compliance with AITSL standards, a flaw or deficit in understanding how to implement the standards may potentially perpetuate a lack of understanding of CRP approaches. For example, McLaughlin et al. (2014) stated that pre-service teachers who undertook a 4-year Bachelor of Education, were not adequately prepared to embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. Additionally, Hickling-Hudson and Ahlquist (2003), suggest to effectively prepare teachers to embed Indigenous knowledges and perspectives authentically, they must be provided with a teacher education program which facilitates alternative epistemologies and varying pedagogical approaches.

A potential limitation of this study was that although study quality was assessed using a quality assessment tool used for qualitative studies developed by Long and Godfrey (2004) and Ryan et al. (2007), the study did not assess the quality of the journals from which those papers were published. Additionally, the date ranges from which the literature was investigated (2002–2022), may be a further potential limitation of this study.

Conclusion

How 'enablers and constraints' impact the enactment of Traditional Indigenous Games (and Sports) within HPE curriculum will play a role in shaping the future of Indigenous education. In addressing how enablers and constraints are currently positioned within curriculum, including the tensions and complexities of the crossover between enablers and constraints, future investigation is needed to identify how educational stakeholders and policymakers consider changes at both micro and macro levels to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students. The recent focus on embedding Indigenous knowledges and perspectives within curriculum, must continue to be a priority for educational stakeholders. Future generations of Indigenous students must have their cultural identity respected through a supportive HPE curriculum.

Notes

1. The term 'Indigenous' is used as a collective term to refer to all Indigenous cultural groups examined within the literature including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The author acknowledges the diversity of people, encompassed in this term.

Disclosure statement

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Marie's curriculum expertise forms a strong part of her research focus on health and physical education curriculum, curriculum change and assessment literacy. In more recent times Marie has engaged in research on Indigenous games and their cultural significance to stakeholders.

Marie's learning and teaching expertise has led to senior management roles at James Cook University. From 2017 to 2020 Marie undertook the Dean, Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement, and followed to the DVC Students role in 2020. Marie's research interests on curriculum, assessment, student success, and health promotion provide foundation to valuing students, valuing educators and enabling capability building.

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