



Key Components of Indigenous Pedagogies – Literature Review

This literature review explores how Indigenous pedagogies are implemented in teacher education programs across Canada to support Indigenous students pursuing careers in education.

KEY COMPONENTS OF INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY



Relationality

The interconnected relationships between people, the land, animals, ancestors, and future generations. In education, it means teaching all students about the balance and influence of these relationships.



Intergenerational Learning

Intergenerational learning comes from Elders passing down culture and language across generations. Elders have long been, and continue to be, the experts in Indigenous pedagogies.



Experiential Learning

Experiential at their core, grounded in learning by doing, observing, reflecting, and acting. Courses that include methods like talking circles, land-based activities, and story-sharing offer ethical engagement with this way of learning.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY



Dual Role of Faculties of Education

Responsible for needs of Indigenous students and preparing pre-service and practicing teachers to carry on similar work. This includes reconceptualizing historical narratives in schools by inviting settler teachers to understand the role they play.



Systematic Barriers in Indigenous Education

Racism remains a major barrier in Indigenous education, contributing to low graduation and attainment rates. Indigenous pedagogies often replaced with “culturally-based” lessons, rather than fostering ethical engagement and true knowledge transference.



Limitations for Indigenous Pedagogy

Policy reform needed, as education is provincially regulated and dependent on school division support. When unsupportive of Indigenous pedagogy or cultural responsiveness, it limits what educators can teach and leads to student disengagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND DELIVERY



Including Indigenous Perspectives

Unpacking and disrupting settler narratives, while including Indigenous perspectives in teacher education is essential to delivering Indigenous pedagogy. Without decentering settler-dominant discourse, these perspectives remain pushed to the periphery and reduced to narratives of marginalization and tragedy.



Centering Indigenous Pedagogical Practices

Creating space within teacher education for culturally responsive pedagogy allows Indigenous educators to leave with applicable knowledge. This approach validates students’ cultures and helps restore Indigenous nations as storytellers through curricula grounded in their own teachings and practices.

