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CHAPTER 6

Fostering Inclusive curriculum practice for pre-service teachers in higher education

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Abstract

This chapter explores the integration of cultural and traditional elements into pre-service teacher education. It hopes to address a scholarly gap existing in educational frameworks, which often overlook the holistic and culturally rich aspects of curriculum practice in teacher education. How inclusive curriculum practices could enhance the incorporation of cultural diversity in pre-service teacher education is the question the chapter hopes to address. Multicultural Education Theory (MET) informs the exploration of existing literature in the subject.

Keywords: inclusive curriculum, Multicultural Education Theory, educational framework, cultural responsiveness.

6.1 Introduction

The field of education keeps transforming to address the varied needs of an increasingly multicultural learner population. This dynamic evolution is particularly evident in pre-service teacher education, where inclusive curriculum practices are essential in preparing educators for diverse classroom contexts (Engelbrecht & Ekins, 2017). This literature review examines existing research on the incorporation of cultural and traditional aspects within the curriculum of higher education, especially within pre-service teacher training programmes.

Inclusive curriculum practice in this context involves teaching strategies that recognise and integrate the diverse cultural, traditional, and personal backgrounds of pre-service teachers. While significant strides have been made in incorporating cultural and linguistic diversity (Ndimande-Hlongwa & Ndebele, 2017), the integration of broader cultural and traditional values remains insufficiently explored. Such values, which can provide unique cultural insights and connections to community wisdom, are crucial in developing teaching strategies that are responsive to the needs of all students (Kovach, 2021).

Despite the growing acknowledgment of diversity, systematic approaches to embedding culture and tradition in educational frameworks remain limited. Gay (2018) notes that the absence of a comprehensive framework in pre-service teacher education could hinder the development of truly responsive and inclusive pedagogies. By critically analysing the existing literature, this review aims to identify and discuss the methods and benefits of incorporating cultural and traditional diversity into curriculum practice, thereby fostering a more inclusive educational environment for pre-service teachers and learners alike (Zhang & Wu, 2016).

Furthermore, this review highlights effective strategies and the existing gaps in research concerning the integration of cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education, offering insights into how these practices could be enhanced and better implemented to meet the evolving needs of the educational landscape.

6.2 Problem Statement

Despite growing recognition of inclusive curriculum practices in pre-service teacher education, there remains a significant gap in the integration and utilisation of cultural and traditional elements within educational frameworks (Gulya & Fehervari, 2024). This gap hinders the development of holistic and culturally responsive pedagogies, which are essential in enabling learners to thrive in diverse educational settings. Consequently, there is a pressing need for a systematic review to explore the existing literature, identify gaps, and provide insights into how these cultural and traditional elements could be more effectively integrated into curriculum practices.

By synthesising current research findings, this study identifies gaps, challenges, and best practices in fostering inclusive curriculum approaches that recognise and leverage the diverse cultural backgrounds of future educators. Ultimately, the review provides valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing teacher preparation programmes to better support the holistic development and cultural responsiveness of pre-service teachers.

6.3 Research question

How can inclusive curriculum practices that integrate cultural and traditional elements enhance the preparation and effectiveness of pre-service teachers in culturally diverse educational settings?

6.4 Population Intervention and Context (PICO) Framework

The PICO framework, as outlined by Harris *et al.* (2018), provides a structured approach to exploring the impact of inclusive curriculum practices on pre-service teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds. This framework focuses on several key elements: the Population (pre-service teachers from various cultural backgrounds), the Intervention (inclusive curriculum practices that specifically integrate cultural and traditional elements) and the Context (educational settings characterised by significant cultural diversity). By addressing these components, the framework enhances our understanding of how tailored educational strategies could equip future educators better to handle the complexities and opportunities presented by culturally diverse learning contexts.

6.4.1. PICO framework (Harris *et al.*, 2018):

Population: Pre-service teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds

Intervention: Inclusive curriculum practices that specifically integrate cultural and traditional elements

Context: Educational settings characterised by significant cultural diversity

6.5 Research Design and Methodology

This literature review employs a systematic approach to explore and synthesise existing research on the integration of cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education. It utilises comprehensive database searches, predefined inclusion criteria, and rigorous analytical methods to ensure a thorough examination of the relevant literature.

6.5.1. Theoretical framework

This systematic review adopts the Multicultural Education Theory, developed by James A Banks, which provides a framework for reforming education to ensure students from diverse backgrounds achieve academic success. The theory outlines five key concepts: content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and social structure. All these are designed to create educational environments that acknowledge and respect cultural diversity, promoting equality and justice within the classroom (Banks, 1993).

The first of these, content integration, involves the use of examples, data, and information from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalisations, and theories in the subject taught. This approach not only enriches the learning experiences but also allows students to see the contributions of their own and others' cultures to the development of various fields, fostering a deeper appreciation for diversity (Banks, 1993). Building on this, Sachs (1986) comments that the knowledge construction process encourages educators and students to critically analyse how knowledge itself is created, shaped, and influenced by cultural, political, and socioeconomic contexts. Such critical engagement helps pre-service teachers develop the ability to challenge and expand prevailing perspectives within educational content, promoting a more inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

Furthermore, Akcaoglu (2021) emphasises the theory on prejudice reduction, which focuses on strategies that educators can use to help students develop positive attitudes toward diverse cultural groups. Akcaoglu (2021) maintains that fostering an environment that counters stereotype and promotes mutual respect for the 'other' is crucial in reducing biases and misconceptions; thus preparing students to interact

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respectfully in diverse societies. Equally, equity in pedagogy complements these approaches by requiring teacher educators to modify their teaching methods to accommodate the diverse learning styles of students from various ethnic and racial backgrounds (Banks, 1993). This adaptation ensures that all students have an equal opportunity to gain experience and succeed, which is vital for the academic success of students from marginalized communities (Hammond, 2014).

Empowering school culture and social structures involves restructuring the culture and organisation of schools to ensure that students from diverse groups experience a learning setting that is inclusive, supportive, and empowering. This restructuring includes promoting diversity in staffing policies, student leadership opportunities, and other school practices that bolster a sense of belonging and engagement among all students (Banks, 1993).

Multicultural Education Theory is relevant to this systematic review and the research question as it offers valuable insights. By incorporating these theoretical components into the curriculum, pre-service teacher education programmes can more effectively prepare pre-service teachers to manage their culturally diverse classrooms in the future. This alignment enhances their effectiveness and responsiveness to the diverse needs of learners, thereby underlining the critical role of cultural and traditional elements in teacher education.

6.5.2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The systematic review adheres to a clearly defined set of inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance of the literature analysed (Booth, 2016). The inclusion criteria are designed to select studies that address the integration of cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education, with emphasis on inclusive curriculum

practices. This approach ensures that the data directly contributes to an understanding of how cultural and traditional elements can be integrated into teaching methodologies. Conversely, the exclusion criteria filter out studies that do not align with these core themes, including those outside the scope of pre-service teacher education, lacking an emphasis on inclusive practices related to culture and tradition, non-peer-reviewed or non-academic research, and publications in languages other than English due to the linguistic limitations of the researcher. These criteria enhance the integrity and focus of the study.

Inclusion criteria (Booth, 2016)

- Studies that focus on pre-service teacher education
- Research that explicitly discusses inclusive curriculum practices
- Papers that address the integration of cultural insights and traditional practices within educational frameworks
- Peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, and conference papers published in English

Exclusion criteria (Booth, 2016)

- Studies not specifically related to pre-service teacher education
- Articles that do not address inclusive curriculum practices and the integration of cultural insights and traditional practices within educational frameworks
- Non-peer-reviewed articles, opinion pieces, and non-academic literature
- Publications in languages other than English, due to language constraints of the reviewer

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Search strategy and terms

The search strategy for this systematic review was designed to capture a comprehensive range of relevant literature. Utilising prominent electronic databases such as ERIC, EBSCOHost, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, the search incorporated a combination of key terms and their synonyms to ensure breadth and depth in the literature surveyed. Key terms include "Pre-service teachers," "Inclusive curriculum," "Cultural integration," "Traditional elements," and "Culturally responsive teaching." These terms were employed in various combinations, using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to refine the search process (Atkinson & Cipriani, 2018). The temporal scope of the search is limited to publications from the last 20 years, providing a contemporary perspective on integration of cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education. This approach is designed to yield a rich and relevant pool of literature, encompassing diverse perspectives and methodologies pertinent to focus of the study.

Search queries

- "Pre-service teachers" AND "Cultural integration"
- "Inclusive curriculum" AND "teacher education"
- "Traditional elements" OR "education"
- "Culturally responsive teaching" AND "traditional practices"

Boolean operators (Atkinson & Cipriani, 2018) (AND, OR) were used to refine the search, focusing on documents published within the last 20 years to ensure relevance and applicability to current educational contexts. Atkinson and Cipriani (2018) further elaborate that using Boolean operators (AND, OR) in a search can make results more precise and relevant. They are named after George Boole, the mathematician who developed Boolean algebra.

Data extraction and analysis

Data was extracted for analysis, focusing on author, year of publication, study context, methodology, key findings, and any challenges or gaps outlined in the studies. Thematic analysis was used to identify and analyse patterns within the data (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This approach allowed for the identification of themes across different studies, providing insights into the overall effectiveness and challenges of integrating cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education.

6.6 Results and discussion

6.6.1. Overview of findings

The systematic review of fifteen studies established diverse strategies for integrating spiritual gifts in pre-service teacher education. Common themes included the emphasis on culturally responsive curriculum practice, the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems, and the importance of personal and spiritual development in teacher training.

Table 6.1: Summary of the data extraction

No, Author/s, Year	Study Focus	Findings	Implications
1. Pauly 2003	The study investigates the role of traditional cultural narratives in teacher education	The study identifies a significant role of cultural narrative in shaping pre-service teachers' understanding of diverse student backgrounds	The article highlights the need for integrating cultural narratives into the curriculum to enhance cultural competence among pre-service teachers
2	The study critiques the current	Students' exposure to critical thinking and	The study suggests that Humanities

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Mgqwashu 2004	pedagogical practices in Humanities faculties, highlighting the neglect of students' language needs.	the broad, reflective understanding of language as central to engaging with societal complexities is limited.	faculties need to re-evaluate their pedagogical practices to ensure they do not compromise their identity and essential role in fostering critical and reflective thinkers.
3. Owuor 2007	The focus of the study is on the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems in education.	The findings of the study illustrate that the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge fosters a deeper connection between students' cultural heritage and their learning environment.	The implications of the study are that educational frameworks should incorporate Indigenous perspectives to provide a more holistic and inclusive education.
4. Chitindingu and Mkhize 2016	The study establishes that targeted diversity training enhances teachers' abilities to adapt pedagogical strategies to a multicultural classroom setting.	The study establishes that targeted diversity training enhances teachers' abilities to adapt pedagogical strategies to a multicultural classroom setting.	The study argues for mandatory diversity training for pre-service teachers to better prepare them for the challenges of culturally diverse classrooms.
5. Khumalo and Baloyi 2017	The study investigates the effects of traditional and cultural arts on pre-service teacher training.	The study concludes that traditional arts can be an effective tool for teaching complex cultural concepts and improving cultural sensitivity among teachers.	This study recommends the integration of traditional arts into teacher education programmes to enhance understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural expressions.
6	The study investigates the	The study highlights the importance of	The findings of this study underscore the

Ragoonaden and Mueller 2017	impact of culturally responsive pedagogy on an introductory university course at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus.	integrating Indigenous traditions in higher education, and the positive influence on student's social and emotional well-being.	importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education, particularly in courses involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. It highlights the need for universities to adapt their curricula to include Indigenous perspectives and teaching methods.
7 Engelbrecht and Savolainen 2018	The study explores teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, their self-efficacy beliefs, and their practical approaches to implementing inclusive education in classrooms within two culturally diverse countries.	The research demonstrates that teachers' attitudes towards and enactment of inclusive education are complex, multifaceted, and non-linear. These attitudes and practices are significantly influenced by the teachers' cultural and historical contexts.	The findings suggest that efforts to implement inclusive education must consider the cultural-historical context of teachers and schools. Professional development and training programmes should be designed to address the complexities and contradictions in teachers' attitudes and practices regarding inclusive education.
8 Gay 2018	Provides an in-depth exploration of culturally responsive teaching, integrating new research and broadening the focus to include a wider range of racial and ethnic groups. It examines the theory, research, and practice behind	Culturally responsive teaching positively affects students' academic achievement across multiple measures when teaching practices align with students' cultural experiences.	The findings underscore the necessity of integrating culturally responsive teaching practices in educational settings to cater to the diverse needs of students. This approach not only enhances academic

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	culturally responsive teaching, emphasising its significance in improving students' academic performance through teaching methods that resonate with their cultural experiences.		outcomes but also improves the quality of life for students of colour in higher education.
9 Wynter-Hoyte, Braden, Rodriguez, and Thornton 2019	The study focuses on examining the application of culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) in classrooms with young diverse populations. It explores the classroom features that support culturally sustaining learning and the social, cultural, and linguistic resources that learners utilise in such environments.	Children draw upon a wide array of knowledge sources from their social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Teachers need to adeptly navigate educational policies to implement practices that leverage students' cultural referents effectively.	The study suggests that creating supportive and safe classroom environments, recognising, and utilising the rich cultural resources that students bring, and empowering teachers to implement culturally informed practices are essential steps toward disrupting the status quo in education.
10 Merisi, Pillay and Mgqwashu 2022	The study concentrates on addressing the oversight of pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning within pre-service teacher education programmes.	Pre-service teachers enter TEPs with established beliefs about teaching and learning that are often ignored.	The study highlights the necessity of re-evaluating and adapting pre-service teacher education curricula to include pre-service teachers' beliefs, particularly regarding spiritual and cultural insights.

6.6.2. Thematic analysis of the summary of articles

Cultural competence and relevance

Pauly (2003) emphasises traditional cultural narratives in shaping pre-service teachers' understanding of diverse student backgrounds. This highlights the importance of integrating these narratives into educational curriculum practice to enhance cultural competence in the teacher education programme. Khumalo and Baloyi (2017) further illustrate the practical application of cultural elements, demonstrating how traditional arts can serve as effective tools for teaching complex cultural concepts and enhancing cultural sensitivity.

Language and critical thinking

Mgqwashu (2004) critiques the pedagogical neglect of language needs in Humanities faculties, emphasising that a broad, reflective understanding of language is central to engaging with societal complexities. This study suggests the need for pedagogical practices that do not compromise the faculty's identity and their role in fostering critical and reflective thinkers. Furthermore, addressing these gaps not only strengthens the academic rigour within humanities disciplines but also equips students to navigate and contribute meaningfully to a multifaceted global society. Therefore, re-evaluating and enhancing language-focused pedagogy could improve the critical capacities and cultural competencies of future graduates.

Integration of Indigenous knowledge and diversity training

Owuor (2007) emphasises the importance of integrating Indigenous knowledge systems in education, which fosters a deep connection between students' cultural heritage and their learning environment. This inclusion advocates for a holistic educational framework that embraces Indigenous perspectives. Complementing this, Chitindingu and Mkhize (2016) demonstrate the critical role of diversity training in

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enhancing teachers' abilities to adapt their teaching strategies for multicultural classroom settings. They argue for mandatory diversity training in the preparation of pre-service teachers to navigate the complexities of culturally diverse classrooms effectively.

Culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogies

Ragoonaden and Mueller (2017) highlight the impact of culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education and they discuss its positive influence on students' social and emotional well-being through the integration of Indigenous traditions. Similarly, Gay (2018) explores how teaching methods that resonate with students' cultural experiences significantly improve academic performance and overall quality of life. In addition, Wynter-Hoyte *et al.* (2019) emphasise pedagogies that not only respond to but sustain cultural diversity, advocating for classroom environments that actively leverage the rich cultural resources students bring.

Teacher attitudes towards inclusive education

Engelbrecht and Savolainen (2018) investigate the complexities of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education within culturally diverse contexts. Their findings suggest that teachers' practices are profoundly influenced by their cultural and historical backgrounds. There is a need for professional development programmes tailored to these contexts. Such training should reconcile the contradictions in teachers' attitudes and enhance their ability to implement inclusive educational practices effectively.

The role of teachers' beliefs in pre-service education

Merisi, Pillay and Mgwashu (2022) address the often-overlooked aspect of pre-service teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning, which include cultural and spiritual insights. They argue for a re-evaluation of a teacher education curriculum to incorporate these

beliefs more comprehensively, ensuring that pre-service education aligns with the real-world dynamics and cultural complexities of diverse classrooms. This approach underscores the necessity of preparing educators not only to understand diverse educational contexts but also to reflect critically on their pedagogical beliefs and practices. These themes altogether emphasise the importance of integrating cultural competencies and responsive pedagogies into pre-service teacher education, highlighting the role of diversity training, Indigenous knowledge, and teachers' attitudes and beliefs in fostering effective and inclusive educational environments.

Challenges and gaps identified

The review identified significant challenges in integrating cultural and traditional elements into pre-service teacher education. A primary concern was the absence of a standardised framework or clear guidelines for educators on how to incorporate these diverse elements effectively. This absence often compels educators to rely on personal discretion, resulting in inconsistent practices across different programmes and institutions.

Another challenge noted was the cultural sensitivity and complexity surrounding the integration of Indigenous and cultural content. Some educators and institutions hesitate or even resist fully integrating such elements, often due to concerns about disrupting the existing curriculum frameworks or fears of misrepresenting or misappropriating cultural elements. This resistance underscores the need for careful, respectful, and inclusive approaches to cultural content in educational settings, ensuring that such integration is thoughtful and genuinely enriches the learning environment.

Furthermore, the studies identify gaps, particularly in longitudinal research, which would track the long-term effects of these integrative strategies on curriculum practices, pre-service teacher preparedness,

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and learner outcomes. There is also a scarcity of research on the specific impact of diverse cultural and traditional practices within diverse educational contexts. This lack of comprehensive data hampers the formulation of definitive conclusions and development of robust, evidence-based strategies for incorporating cultural and traditional elements effectively in pre-service teacher education programmes.

Theoretical implications

The findings of this systematic review, through the lens of Multicultural Education Theory, provide a comprehensive framework for integrating cultural and traditional elements in pre-service teacher education. The theory's emphasis on content integration and knowledge construction highlights how the inclusion of diverse cultural narratives and Indigenous knowledge systems could enrich the curriculum, thereby broadening the educational perspectives of pre-service teachers (Banks, 1993). This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters a deep appreciation for cultural diversity, aligning with the findings from studies on the importance of cultural competence in educational settings.

Moreover, the components of prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy as outlined by Banks (1993) are critical in addressing the challenges identified in the review. By actively working to reduce biases and adapting teaching methods that accommodate diverse learning styles, pre-service teacher programmes can ensure that all students, regardless of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds, have equitable opportunities to succeed (Banks, 1993; Hammond, 2014). This theoretical alignment supports the need for curriculum practice that not only recognises but actively includes and values diverse cultural and traditional elements, promoting a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

Furthermore, empowering school culture and social structure speaks directly to the necessity of reconfiguring educational environments to

be more inclusive and supportive of diversity. This aspect of the theory suggests that educational institutions should promote diversity in staffing and student leadership, which would foster a sense of belonging and engagement among all students (Banks, 1993). By applying these theoretical components, the review underscores the importance of creating educational settings that are not only culturally responsive but also culturally sustaining, ensuring that pre-service teachers are well-groomed to teach in and contribute to an increasingly diverse society.

Thus, Multicultural Education Theory provides a robust theoretical grounding for this systematic review, highlighting how effectively integrating cultural and traditional elements into the curriculum enhances the preparation and effectiveness of pre-service teachers in culturally diverse educational settings. This theoretical framework supports a shift towards more holistic and inclusive approaches in teacher education.

Practical implications for pre-service teacher education

These findings emphasise the necessity of integrating cultural and traditional elements in teacher education to prepare educators for diverse educational settings effectively. Each study contributes to understanding how cultural competence, responsiveness, and inclusion can be fostered through educational practices. This aligns with the research question, highlighting how inclusive curriculum practices that integrate cultural and traditional elements enhance the preparation and effectiveness of pre-service teachers in culturally diverse educational settings. This alignment highlights the critical role of such integration in fostering more responsive and adaptable educators equipped to manage the complexities of modern classrooms.

To enhance the cultural competence of future educators, pre-service teacher education programmes must prioritise the integration of comprehensive cultural content. This includes developing and

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implementing curriculum practices that not only cover diverse cultural traditions but also critically engages with these traditions to foster a deeper understanding and respect. Professional development opportunities for educators should be expanded to include training in culturally responsive teaching methods, ensuring that all educators are equipped to manage and appreciate the diversity of student backgrounds.

Collaboration between educational institutions and cultural communities should be encouraged to provide real-world learning experiences for pre-service teachers. These partnerships can offer unique insights and direct exposure to diverse cultural practices, which are invaluable for developing empathetic and informed teachers. By creating structured opportunities for pre-service teachers to interact with and learn from diverse cultural groups, educational programmes can ensure that their graduates are well-prepared to create and lead inclusive, culturally aware, classrooms.

Recommendations for future research

Future research in the field of pre-service teacher education should delve deeper into the long-term impact of integrating cultural and traditional elements within educational curriculum practice. Investigating how such integration influences teacher effectiveness and student outcomes over time would provide valuable insights into the sustainability and depth of their impact. Comparative studies across various educational settings and cultural contexts are recommended to understand the diverse applications and effects of cultural integration, enhancing the generalisability of the findings.

Added to this, a palpable gap exists in research regarding the direct experiences of pre-service teachers with culturally enriched curriculum practice. Future studies could focus on generating qualitative and quantitative data from pre-service teachers themselves, exploring their

perceptions, challenges, and the benefits they perceive from engaging with diverse cultural content. This approach could help in identifying specific areas within teacher education programmes that could benefit from enhanced cultural components.

Exploratory research could also be conducted on the efficacy of different pedagogical approaches in teaching cultural and traditional elements. This includes examining which methods most effectively foster an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment. Such research would provide practical insights that could directly inform curriculum development and teaching strategies, ultimately leading to more effective educational practices that respect and incorporate global cultural diversity.

6.7 Conclusion

This systematic review underscores the benefits of integrating cultural and traditional elements into pre-service teacher education. Such integration not only promotes a more inclusive and culturally responsive pedagogy but also supports a broader shift towards embracing diversity and pluriversity in educational settings. The findings highlight how cultural and traditional insights provide transformative learning experiences for both educators and pre-service teachers, effectively challenging and expanding conventional educational frameworks.

However, the review also identifies notable challenges, including the lack of standardised frameworks for integrating these cultural elements, the need to address cultural sensitivities carefully, and the scarcity of longitudinal research on the long-term impacts of such integrations. Addressing these challenges is essential for fully realising the potential of cultural and traditional elements to enhance pre-service teacher

education and, by extension, improve the educational experiences of future student generations.

6.8 Limitations and recommendations

The review highlights several critical areas for improvement and development in the integration of cultural and traditional elements into pre-service teacher education. Educational authorities and institutions are encouraged to develop standardised frameworks or guidelines that would aid in the consistent integration of these elements across various educational settings. This initiative could involve the creation of best practice models, comprehensive teaching resources, and targeted training modules to support educators.

Moreover, there is a strong recommendation for ongoing professional development opportunities that focus on how to incorporate cultural diversity respectfully and effectively into educational curriculum practice. Such training should aim to equip educators with the skills necessary to manage and value diverse cultural backgrounds. Moreover, fostering partnerships with various cultural communities can provide real-world exposure and valuable learning opportunities for pre-service teachers, enhancing their practical and people skills.

The expansion of research, particularly through longitudinal studies, is also advocated to understand the long-term impacts of integrating cultural and traditional elements in education better. This effort should fill the current gaps in the literature and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these integrative practices influence educational outcomes. Establishing mentorship programmes that connect novice teachers with experienced educators skilled in culturally responsive teaching could further facilitate the transfer of knowledge and practical application.

However, the review also acknowledges several limitations. The diversity and scope of the literature specifically focused on the integration of detailed cultural elements such as traditional practices are limited, often embedded within broader discussions of inclusive practices. Furthermore, the review's linguistic scope was confined to English, potentially overlooking significant studies published in other languages. Furthermore, the interpretation of the included studies may carry inherent biases, which could affect the generalisability of findings. Recognising these limitations is essential, not only for a balanced understanding of the subject but also for guiding future research, ensuring that it addresses these gaps and builds on the foundational knowledge established in this review.

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