

Faculti Summary

<https://staging.faculti.net/indigenous-knowledge-sharing-and-botanical-literacies-in-early-childhood-education/>

This video discusses research conducted in a biodiversity hotspot in southwest Western Australia, focusing on the endemic plant life and the importance of incorporating indigenous knowledge into early childhood education. Over half of the plant species in this region are unique and many are at risk of extinction, highlighting the need for their protection and the sharing of knowledge about them.

The study aims to integrate what children and teachers know about local plants and how indigenous perspectives can enhance the curriculum. The indigenous population in the area has faced significant decline in language and cultural transmission due to colonization, leading to a loss of vital ecological knowledge encoded in traditional stories.

The research involved working with two schools in different geographical locations—Bush Hills Primary School and Banksia Beach Primary School—over a year. Elders from the local indigenous community shared their extensive plant knowledge with the children, emphasizing the interconnectedness of humans and nature.

Through hands-on activities and storytelling, the children's understanding of plants deepened, encouraging them to engage with the local ecosystem more actively. The research highlights shifts in children's behavior: they moved from naming plants to understanding their ecological roles and uses.

The study concluded that embedding indigenous knowledge in education enriches learning and fosters a more meaningful connection with the environment. It emphasized the need for authentic partnerships with indigenous communities rather than tokenistic inclusion. Ultimately, the research showcases the potential for successful integration of diverse knowledge systems to promote sustainability in education.