


Chapter 9

Towards the Application of Inclusive Indigenous Pedagogies in Tourism Education in South Africa: Indigenous–Related Case Studies

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ABSTRACT

The adoption of inclusive indigenous pedagogies in tourism education marks an important turn in the direction of a learning strategy that is more comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and sustainable. This chapter explores the efficient integration of indigenous knowledge systems, which have been suppressed in traditional education for a long time, into tourism curricula to improve students' comprehension of community-driven tourism and cultural preservation. Tourism curricula should build stronger links between students and the local contexts in which tourism functions by fusing indigenous epistemologies. The adoption of an Afrocentric approach in tourism education signifies a paradigm shift in the future direction that embraces African worldviews, values, and epistemologies. The chapter will further unpack curriculum development insights and demonstrate how the application of inclusive pedagogies can enhance tourism education and contribute to decolonizing education in South Africa.

1. INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, South Africa announced a state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to the closure of schools and universities and a commitment to social distancing measures. The adoption of remote learning, open educational resources, and online education to avert educational interruptions became essential, as noted by various governments and organisations (Mahaye, 2020). Consequently, the updated teaching approaches underscored the unfair educational system in South Africa. Thus, the incorporation of Indigenous teaching methods into tourism education has received growing acknowledg-

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ment as a way to enhance inclusivity and cultivate a richer comprehension of local cultures. Indigenous knowledge systems serve as a valuable collection of traditions, values, and practices that can enrich the learning experience and offer students distinct viewpoints on sustainable tourism. In South Africa, a nation known for its cultural and natural diversity, incorporating Indigenous teaching methods in tourism education is especially important as it can connect theory and practice through use of case studies related to Indigenous cultures, helping students understand the significance of traditional knowledge and its application in contemporary tourism.

Integrating Indigenous teaching methods into tourism education is thus not just a symbolic act of inclusiveness but a transformative approach for empowering communities, improving tourism experiences, and fostering equitable growth. Inclusive Indigenous teaching practices highlight experiential, relational, and holistic learning approaches that closely correspond with the principles of community-centered tourism. These teaching methods emphasize honouring traditional knowledge, oral narratives, and learning rooted in specific locations, which promotes a stronger bond among students, surrounding communities, and the environments they explore (McKinley, 2020). By combining these approaches, tourism education can advance beyond theoretical frameworks to facilitate practical, culturally aware solutions, and sustainable tourism development. Additionally, these methods can foster critical thinking and ethical awareness in students, preparing them to handle the complexities of the tourism sector while honouring local cultures and traditions.

This chapter seeks to enhance the discussion surrounding Indigenous pedagogies in tourism education by exploring their implementation via case studies that showcase South Africa's distinctive cultural and ecological variety. In this way, it aims to emphasize the transformative power of these teaching methods in promoting a more inclusive and sustainable tourism sector. This chapter examines the use of inclusive Indigenous teaching methods in the South African tourism education sector, highlighting the significance of Indigenous knowledge for fostering a more equitable and culturally sensitive tourism industry.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TOURISM EDUCATION

Historically, tourism education in South Africa has been shaped by Western-oriented frameworks that frequently overlook the local knowledge and input of Indigenous communities (Booyens, 2020). This exclusion has resulted in insufficient representation and recognition of the Indigenous knowledge systems that support numerous tourism assets in the country. Indigenous teaching methods highlight holistic, experiential, and community-oriented learning strategies and present an attractive alternative to traditional educational models (McKinley, 2020). The integration of Indigenous teaching methods in tourism education corresponds with worldwide demands for decolonisation and the acknowledgment of Indigenous rights, as expressed in documents like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Assembly, 2007). In South Africa, initiatives are bolstered by policies that advocate for cultural diversity and the preservation of heritage, such as the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) and the South African White Paper on Arts, Culture, and Heritage (2018). However, there are some shortcomings in the inclusivity about inadequate assessment of student perceptions and learning outcomes as well as limited integration of indigenous knowledge in tourism curricula. There is an absence of structured integration of Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) in South African tourism education.

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