

LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS

*Ruth Wallace and Alicia Boyle
Social Partnerships in Learning Research Consortium
Charles Darwin University*

Abstract

A review of the past two decades of research related to Indigenous vocational education and training (VET) in Australian contexts identified the limited degree of systemic change in Indigenous workforce outcomes. Our review of the research, did however, identify a range of projects and examples of training design and pedagogy that did have a positive impact on workforce outcomes. Making systemic and sustainable changes in Indigenous workforce and training outcomes is based on learning from the examples of good practice and developing a vision for the whole learning continuum. This learning continuum addresses systemic issues while simultaneously retaining the flexibility to be contextualized and led locally.

This paper reports on a multiple case study analysis that explored the various elements in the continuum of learning partnerships. Each project focused on different elements including community engagement, governance, cultural protocols, use of technology, embedded literacy and numeracy, enterprise development and reporting benchmarks. The paper identifies the concepts that underpin a sustainable learning partnership across the learning continuum and the aspects of policy, evaluation and funding that need consideration for sustainable and scalable VET learning partnerships to be realised in Australian Indigenous contexts.

Introduction

Learning across the lifespan is a social process that incorporates a wide range of skills and knowledge developed through formal, informal and non-formal learning (Field 2005; Scott 2001; Lave and Wenger 1991). Indigenous learners are actively negotiating the intersections between and across a range of cultural, social and professional knowledge systems. Unfortunately, their knowledge and skills are not always well understood, visible or valued (Wallace, Curry et al., 2008). Indigenous education and employment programs have had mixed and often unsustainable results due to the lack of consistency, shared vision, investment in key relationships and the changing policy and funding environments that impact on Indigenous livelihoods (Young, Guenther and Boyle 2007; Wallace, Curry et al., 2008; Boughton 1998). This paper reflects on a series of case studies that had some success and analyses the key elements that impacted on employment and education outcomes. The findings discuss the potential of developing approaches that invest in partnerships to improve a holistic and integrated approach to Indigenous workforce development. The paper outlines key features of a framework for working towards partnerships that focus on sustainable livelihoods, employment outcomes in Indigenous communities and responsive training organisations. The implications point to the need to better understand the relationship between investment and employment outcomes in Indigenous VET policy and delivery.

Literature review

Hill and Doyle (2008), in examining the issues in improving primary and secondary education of Indigenous students, identified the cross-generational effects of poor Indigenous education outcomes and clearly demonstrated the implications for labour force participation. The improvements in educational participation by Indigenous people have not translated into reductions in the gaps in participation in employment or higher education. Although the policy environment continues to focus on aligning training with 'mainstream' work opportunities, the reality however for remote Indigenous Australians is that the training effort, and policies more generally, need to support emerging and local livelihood opportunities, such as those suggested by (Altman 2007) in his reference to customary economies. Approaches to Indigenous people's learning can be evaluated by acknowledging the importance of outcomes such as increased confidence, improved literacy, and the ability to promote and facilitate family and community knowledge as well as employment. Anderson (2006) Gelade and Stehlik (2004), and O'Callaghan (2005) all support the need to address both social contextual issues and learning outcomes in Indigenous education and training contexts.

Guenther, J., Young, M., et al. (2005) identified the importance of training systems that respond to client demand rather than those driven by suppliers' interests. In regional areas, a supplier driven programme may be typified by choosing courses based on the available teachers, using generic assessment from an alien environment or being driven by funding models rather than positive learning models. Workforce, economic and community development and training programs conducted with remote Indigenous communities need to relate to a new paradigm, one that has an economic development dimension and targets previously unrecognised productive activity spin-off benefits to industries and regions beyond the Indigenous estate (Altman 2001). Some examples include land management, cultural tourism and bush tucker production that not only meet contractual obligations and build entrepreneurial skills, but also protect cultural and environmental standards. The negotiation and management of these programs involves a range of stakeholders who can work in partnership in the long-term, through their constant change and complexities.

As Young, Guenther et al. (2007) found, approaches to VET that were successful in improving Indigenous people's livelihood opportunities included a long term commitment that 'assisted in nurturing and sustaining the partnerships which were crucial to the success of the initiatives'. These partnerships were facilitated by non-government organisations that linked local people to government and other agencies through supporting effective communication and access to services. The concept of lifelong learning partnerships is a complex one that requires active partnerships to operate with Western education and training systems.

Some commonly cited key issues hindering uptake and/or achievement of successful outcomes by remote Indigenous adult learners include a lack of culturally appropriate learning approaches and learning resources utilised in VET teaching in remote communities (Miller 2005; Young, Roberston et al. 2005; Young, Guenther et al. 2007; Gelade and Stehlik 2004). Indigenous learners navigating the educational system face the unavailability of desired

courses, lack of continuity across institutions and jurisdictions, poor previous experiences and/or lack of understanding of how VET programs operate in remote locations. Many Indigenous people, organizations and non-Indigenous people working with communities may lack an awareness of the availability of VET or learning opportunities generally in that area. The available or potential work opportunities may not be identified when planning training. Educational providers, teachers and trainers may lack experience in working in Indigenous contexts, lack knowledge of the people and cultures with whom they work or have a deficit view of Indigenous learners (Wallace, Curry et al. 2006). Trainers' professional development has not necessarily included the skills sets to adapt resources, use technology or work with students who have high cultural or low English literacy and numeracy skills.

The *Djama in VET* (Henry, Arnott et al. 1998) study examined partnerships and effective practices in delivering VET with rural and remote Indigenous communities. They identified six interconnected issues in VET delivery with Indigenous communities that contribute to best practice. These resonate with Miller's findings and develop our understanding of key concepts in improving the outcomes from VET delivery in Indigenous contexts. A core issue is the risk of tokenisation of Indigenous people through a lack of deep engagement in educational design and delivery. It was found for example, that to ensure VET delivery is culturally appropriate Indigenous community culture and knowledge must be completely integrated and the relevant community must control all aspects of VET delivery. The authors note training needs to be matched with current and developing work, embedded into community and community business, and preferably taught by Indigenous trainers.

An enterprise training and development approach aligns training with the development of the learners' enterprise. This workplace based approach focuses on the needs of the learners to build their enterprise and their future place of employment. This is important for Indigenous people living in remote areas where the number of fully paid positions available in the community is limited (see Wallace et al. 2008). This approach recognises the role of Indigenous people and the different ways of enacting knowledge on Aboriginal land. Christie (2006) described Indigenous knowledge traditions from a transdisciplinary research perspective, focusing on collaboration through partnership across different knowledge systems. He stated that 'Indigenous knowledge traditions resist definition from a Western academic perspective' (Christie 2006:86) and are 'locally contextualised, responsive, active, undertaking constant renewal processes and eco-logical' and 'more as something that you do than as something you have, knowing how rather than knowing what' (Christie 2006:79).

In a partnership model, training is based on meaningful relationships between VET providers and community based enterprises where roles, practices and contexts related to training are negotiated based on mutual respect and with the intention of equitable outcomes for partners. Within this framework it is essential that the learning relationships respect, and are sensitive to Indigenous cultures and community development interests. As Campbell and Christie (2008) note in their study of improving Indigenous community engagement at Charles Darwin University, the important elements are respect that recognises Indigenous partners perspectives and priorities, has long term commitment by institutional staff and the involvement of the network of stakeholders.

Methodology

In 2008, a Reframing the Future project brought together a group of people with expertise in Indigenous enterprise development and training. These representatives from Charles Darwin University, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Territory Education, the Institute of Aboriginal Development, Indigenous enterprise operators, members of key industry and Northern Territory and Federal governments met to share, analyse and learn from good practice in Indigenous enterprise development and training. The team identified a series of projects which had achieved success in both communities and with other stakeholders. A thematic analysis (Cresswell, 1998) of the projects was undertaken as a team activity to identify the common elements across the case studies that impacted on Indigenous learners' outcomes. The analysis discussed and described how successful resolutions to some complex issues were achieved and provided examples of innovative practice within strong partnerships.

Case Studies

Case study 1: Negotiating a community-based cultural festival

The impetus for two festival projects in remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory was initiated by Indigenous community representatives who identified that skills development within the communities was required to ensure local, cultural festivals were sustainable, as well as the realisation of associated tourism, language maintenance and economic benefits. Additionally, the festivals and associated training represented real potential for Indigenous people to gain employment as consultants on a continuing basis. A partnership was initiated through an industry organisation and a training advisory body who collaborated with the interested community members. The training advisory council acted as a broker to identify the community members' interests and needs. A training approach was developed for each community that embedded literacy and numeracy into key areas of development including multimedia, screen printing, cookery & tourism, sound and music and event management. The broker negotiated an integrated training plan with registered training organisations and non-accredited industry based training organisations and sought funding through an appropriate government program.

The training plan, resources, implementation and assessment focused on:

1. Preparing for and running the festival and meeting students needs; and,
2. Mapping to nationally accredited competencies.

The plan was negotiated by the team and customised to accord with the group's suggestions. The identified skills sets and competencies were organised into a series of Vocational Training Programs (VTPs) that drew units from different training packages and provided a method for customised accreditation as an outcome. Additional funding sources provided non-capital financial support and the community provided infrastructure and festival equipment.

Case study 2: Connecting to enterprise development and cultural knowledge

A group of Aboriginal artists wanted to negotiate a better deal for enterprise development and related arts centre management employment and training. They identified potential brokers to work beside their art centre community to

realise their bigger dreams and enhance the potential of their community's artists. This partnership developed over considerable time, through periods of complex and challenging socio-political change. The brokers offered some reflections about connecting training to enterprise development and respected cultural knowledge. The engagement process is underpinned by listening to what Aboriginal people are saying about the way things must be done.

Teaching and learning was seen as a two-way process based on an exchange. For the learning exchange to occur, trainers demonstrated that they value Indigenous cultural knowledge systems in a number of ways. For example:

1. Including Aboriginal elders as teachers in peer settings who were able to direct learning in their specialist areas of knowledge and stand side-by-side with specialists with other knowledge; and,
2. Always networking across knowledge systems and contexts to provide a complex and rich view of ideas, skills and an understanding of their relationship to cultural and social lives. Through this exchange comes a shared understanding of what is achievable.

Case study 3: Implementing effective workplace training

An Indigenous man who had developed his own skills and knowledge through working in student services and information technology support, and undertaking the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, had become an information technology (IT) trainer. As he developed his practice through experience, he addressed key issues in making training relevant, engaging and culturally appropriate. He developed new resources for teaching that relied on visual resources, reduced reliance on written text and introduced students to visually-based and useful IT tools. His teaching provided individual students with a program to follow while he worked with people as required, on their area of learning need and individually, avoiding shaming them in front of others. The teaching program focused on hands-on experiences and reflected workplace realities. The program was designed to also reflect students' realities, lack of access to computers outside of hours and learners' work, family, cultural and other commitments. The course was supported by a training coordinator to work with people to determine personal training and development plans. These plans focused on responding to the skills development people wanted rather than imposing a course that ensured everyone passed an organisational requirement.

The integration and access of supporting programs such as literacy and numeracy was enhanced through involving gender specific staff. Workplace training and assessment was supported by effective trainer supervision and availability outside teaching and work hours. Implementation of training was dependent on finding out what people wanted from training and working around the cultural obligations of communities. By working with key Indigenous people in the community, the trainer was able to identify potential training spaces, relevant contexts, people who could be involved as trainers and learners and the communication networks. Traditional owners facilitated discussions about the content of the training and its connections to community workforce and enterprise priorities. It was very important for trainers to have a good background knowledge of the communities with whom they were working. The background included identifying previous provision of training, an individual's training history, work experience, life and cultural knowledge. This Indigenous trainer emphasised that communicating is different across cultures and how much this needs to be understood along with the impact different

forms of conversation have on whether learners feel included or excluded, unintentional or not.

Findings and discussion

Six themes were identified as key aspects of these successful partnerships in Indigenous VET contents. The six themes establish the value of:

- partnerships;
- drawing on cultural and corporate governance models;
- planning learning experiences as a part of community based work and life;
- recognising the different purposes that people have for participating in learning;
- understanding and working within Indigenous cultural protocols; and,
- establishing environments that promote flexibility and bridging knowledge systems.

The following discusses these themes in detail in light of learnings from the case study analyses.

***Partnerships** are about people, what they bring and what they can make together. When people and organisations come together for a shared purpose the outcomes can be very powerful.* In the case studies, the members of the partnerships had to think creatively about using their resources to support the program and their shared commitment to supporting Indigenous people to develop and run their own event for local benefit. The talk between the partners explored possibilities and encouraged creative thinking about implementation and their possible commitments to the programme. Their suggested approaches were discussed by key industry partners and brokers with the community council and in a public meeting that made explicit connections to potential participants. In these meetings the focus was on clear accessible language, what would happen and the benefits for the community and local economic development. As a result some important decisions were made, trainers with industry and remote delivery expertise were identified by industry members and agreed to be engaged by the training organisation.

*Cultural and corporate **governance** models inform stakeholder engagement when they are shared and respected.* In one case study there were difficulties around resources and contracts along the way that were not insignificant; they were managed through the partnership's commitment to make the project work. When so many sources of support need to be merged together, the complexity of managing the various systems should not to be underestimated or under-resourced. These processes involve a high level of expertise in recognising and working with different governance structures, the ability to articulate the different elements of those systems and their implications and a readiness to work for the best outcomes for participants rather than promoting one particular view, no matter what. Ongoing investment in identifying the different governance structures was a key element in the training programs' success. For example, the Indigenous trainer's understanding of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal governance models helped him to establish a series of meetings where senior Aboriginal people about what would be taught, when and how. They lead the discussion about connecting the training to important community activities and enterprise development. This helped negotiate the best way to plan and implement the training. There was a high recognition of cultural and community governance models but a low awareness of corporate

governance models by trainers, community members and enterprise owners. The next step is to develop an understanding of how enterprises are managed ethically, responsibly and financially and align this with the existing and powerful Aboriginal governance structures.

Planning is an ongoing negotiated process that shares ownership and focuses on the community context. Planning connects the whole of community to outcomes and planning is an investment for success. Finalising these projects involved debriefing with the communities, industry partners and trainers. Foundational knowledge now forms the basis for the next enterprise training project and associated partnerships. Key aspects for continued improvement are:

1. Linking the activities to other community activities like programs in schools;
2. Increasing community presence and connection to managing festival matters;
3. Including government appointed employment brokers; and,
4. Multiple sites of employment.

People and institutions have different perceptions of **purpose** and success that develop through partnership and understanding. It is important to take into account the explicit and implicit purposes of participants as it influences their engagement and motivation. Learning partnerships flourish in a cultural **environment** that promotes flexibility and links to Western and Indigenous knowledge systems. An effective approach was to involve the community representatives in the discussions about the processes for undertaking training that leads to employment outcomes. The community negotiated the best approach and discussed issues like timing, location, roles and responsibilities and the management of ongoing issues. In the different case studies, the training was conducted in blocks, onsite, in the art centre or supported by hired portable accommodation. Regular visits were further supported by an Indigenous liaison project officer with local family connections. In the festival training, event management was not taken up by participants in one community, so training focused on other relevant areas of interest. Negotiated teaching spaces, and trainers who were available all day encouraged high rates of community participation and provided safe, appropriate access to people and spaces.

Ongoing assessment occurred though and after the culminating event and assessment included digital and visual evidence collection. As a result of the program, participants have been able to demonstrate their skills in festival management and technical roles. Some women sold their artwork and now have chosen to develop sewing skills. These outcomes have ongoing enterprise potential and local community support.

The recognition of **cultural protocols** and development of processes that worked with those protocols improved the success of training programs. . Partners in learning need to consult the right way. Learning who should talk to whom, how to listen, work and negotiate in diverse contexts can have profound outcomes. Connection to a culturally-based enterprise is a conscious decision to retain control of, and to value Aboriginal knowledge and experience. This reflects in successful ways of teaching and learning. The core works as both a cultural and cross-cultural learning centre. Balancing the related knowledge systems is complex and is built through experience and partnership, often in

small steps. As this is time, energy and resource intensive, partners can only build from one project at a time. Protocols and space for appropriate interaction and adherence with governance systems needs to be achieved alongside with appropriate, supported training and ongoing opportunity for engagement. By developing an enterprise's role as a learning hub, it was vital to have a space for Aboriginal people to share together prior to sharing with others to keep their knowledge alive and growing. When the enterprise develops a strong base for working with other organisations in professional partnerships it provides potential for expansion of core business, and therefore increased enterprise outcomes.

Synthesis

The development of social partnerships can operate to embrace the contributions of local partners and external agencies, their interactions and the changes they make in the collective work of realising shared goal(s) (Seddon and Billett 2004). In Indigenous contexts, effective connections between trainers, industry and Indigenous learners in training partnerships show strong shared respect and understanding. A connected approach to learning recognises the existence of tangible and intangible knowledge and its relevance in people's lives and communities. Learners can then consider how this can be actualised in learning processes. There must be strong understanding of the governance of Aboriginal lands and spaces when having any partnership discussions about community development and associated training.

Strengths-based approaches provide parameters for the learning that emphasise learners' existing knowledge and skills. They challenge deficit models that, as Valencia (1997 p. xi) notes, has been used to blame and oppress the victim. Shared understandings are supported by industry partners' involvement and championing of individuals, communities and enterprises. In this way, industry partners become champions who connect the learners to key people and organisations and provide ways for people to engage. Good engagement involves people with the expertise to support others to get started, the ability for local customisation, identification and use of information technology, and the assessment and support of individuals or enterprises to meet their needs and aspirations.

Indigenous authority is of central importance in all aspects of the programme implementation. This is evident through the use of curriculum materials developed and tested for Indigenous communities; full participation of Indigenous Elders, employers and trainers; transparent processes and procedures to conduct the training; and, formal agreements that outline these principles and mutual responsibilities for all parties. Underlying these issues is the shared ownership of learning and relationships that underpin learning partnerships with Indigenous people. The case studies and the key issues outlined describe both partnerships that can be implemented and align with the principles outlined by Henry et al. (1998) Campbell et al. (2009), Miller (2005) and Wallace et al. (2008). An important element of these learning partnerships is Indigenous people's growing understanding of and role in negotiating training with their learning partners. The increasing critical consumerism of the training system by Indigenous people has led to discussions between industry, Indigenous people, government agencies and training organisations about the ways training programs are best delivered, assessed and negotiated in order to achieve high quality outcomes.

The creation of a framework for Indigenous VET policy and delivery is based on a learning continuum, that is a lifelong learning approach (as described by Field 2005) that extends from early childhood, to schooling, to home and community life and culture, to a relationship to national and international market forces, to work, career and study. The learning continuum in Indigenous contexts is more than the individual's learning experience; it includes the relevant learning experiences and opportunities, the community infrastructure, governance and resources. It is not based on a series of stand alone qualifications or short-term funding models; it has a long term perspective and is concerned with process as outcome. In a learning continuum, there is a commitment to investing in the relationships before, during and after a training and employment program. The best ways to implement a course is negotiated with a community and re-negotiated as new challenges arise and opportunities grow. The relationship is long term and primarily supports the aims for the community in relationship to sustainable economic, cultural and social livelihoods. Partners recognise and value the reciprocity in the learning continuum and its embedded cycles. There is a shared ownership of the learning program and its outcomes. By treating the relationship as a continuum, specific course or programs are milestones rather than start and end points that ignore the glue that connects learning opportunities and outcomes; the relationships between them.

Any investment in these relationships recognises that trust, shared commitment and vision take time and are never static; they are a work in progress. Field (2005) notes that skills are learnt through connections, which are managed by relationships of trust, confidence, tolerance, sense of self worth and cooperation. The learning continuum in Indigenous contexts consists of more than the qualification and its delivery. The learning continuum in Indigenous communities recognises workforce development as the goal of training and maps the range of elements that impact on learning. These include recognition of prior learning, potential employment or enterprise opportunities, roles of local and external mentors, experts and participants, connecting to local infrastructure and activities, assessment items that are used in the workplace, digital technologies that bridge knowledge systems, language, the worksite and classroom.

Conclusion

Training programs and policy frameworks can be developed with Indigenous people that are based on partnerships and recognise the concepts of a learning continuum. Any development of a partnership model needs to undertake the associated research to assess the actual outcomes; both social and economic of any training or workforce development program. The key investment and relationship points need to be identified and supported appropriately. The resultant economic or policy modelling may change in relation to a number of key areas such as; moving from short to long term periods or from qualifications to skills sets. The consultation with Indigenous people can change training to incorporate shared leadership, training plans that follow local business development models, the requirement to identify connection points to community priorities and infrastructure and funding models that recognise the cycles of engagement in training in Indigenous communities. The benefits of programs that connect to learners and their employment futures for educational outcomes, skills development, sustainable

workforces and funding models also need to be accurately assessed to complete this modelling.

Training partnerships between Indigenous people, industry representatives and registered training organisations have at their core a focus on developing positive training and employment outcomes for Indigenous people. They provide a process to negotiate each of the elements of training as they relate to employment, community outcomes, available resources and the training system. The elements of the learning continuum need to be negotiated and re-negotiated across the life of any training partnership, allowing spaces for improved understanding, better solutions and recognition of the knowledge and governance systems that operate. By developing expertise and working with brokers, partners are able to invest in the necessary relationships and improve the nature of the negotiations and the impact on learning and employment outcomes.

Acknowledgements

The authors value the input of the Indigenous trainers, industry representatives' participants and non-Indigenous trainers and partners who work with them. Their insight, commitment and contributions are essential to documenting a partnership model for learning in Indigenous contexts.

References

- Altman, J. C. (2001). Indigenous communities and business: Three perspectives, 1998-2000. *Working Paper No.9/2001*, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Altman, J. (2007). Alleviating poverty in remote Indigenous Australia: The role of the hybrid economy. *Topical Issue*, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra. From http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/Publications/topical/Altman_Poverty.pdf (viewed 20 January 2008).
- Anderson, R. (2006). *Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee Inquiry into Indigenous Training and Employment Outcomes*. Adult Learning Australia Inc., Canberra. From <http://www.ala.asn.au/docs/2004-08-indigenous.pdf> (viewed 18 January 2008).
- Boughton, B. (1998). Alternative VET pathways to Indigenous development. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.
- Campbell, M. and Christie, M. (2008). Indigenous community engagement @ Charles Darwin University. Report, NTUprint, Darwin.
- Christie, M. (2006). *Transdisciplinary research and Aboriginal knowledge Australian Journal of Indigenous Education*. **35**: 1-12.
- Cresswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications.
- Field, J. (2005). *Social Capital and Lifelong Learning*, The Policy Press, Bristol.
- Gelade, S. and Stehlik, T. (2004). *Exploring locality: The impact of context on Indigenous education and training aspirations and outcomes*. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.
- Guenther, J. Young, M. Boyle, A. Schaber, E. and Richardson, J. (2005). *Growing the desert: Effective educational pathways for remote Indigenous peoples*. Desert Knowledge CRC and National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.
- Henry, J., Arnott, A., Clark, T., Dembski, L., Langton, M. and Wells, J. (1998). *Djama and Vet: Exploring Partnerships and Practices in the Delivery of*

Vocational Education and Training in Rural and Remote Aboriginal Communities. Vols. I & II. Northern Territory University Press, Darwin.

Hill, R. and Doyle, L. (2008). *Our children and our future: Achieving improved primary and secondary education outcomes for Indigenous students*. AMP Foundation, Effective Philanthropy and Social Ventures Australia, Sydney. From <http://www.webcitation.org/5hdrmAoVE> (viewed 18th January 2009).

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Miller, C. (2005). *Aspects of training that meet Indigenous Australian's aspirations: A systematic review of research*. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.

O'Callaghan, K. (2005). Indigenous vocational education and training: At a glance. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.

Scott, D. (2001). Situated Views of Learning, in: C. Paechter, R. Edwards, R. Harrison and P. Twining (Eds) *Learning, Space and Identity*, 31-41 Paul Chapman Publishing, London.

Seddon, T and Billett, S. (2004). Social partnerships in Vocational Education: Building community capacity. National Centre for Vocational Research, Adelaide.

Valencia, R. R. (1997). *The Evolution of Deficit Thinking: Educational Thought and Practice*, The Falmer Press, London.

Wallace, R., Curry, C. and Agar, R. (2008). *Working from our strengths: Indigenous enterprise and training in action and research*. Proceedings Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association 11th Annual Conference, Adelaide, 3-4 April 2008.

Wallace, R., Curry, C., and Agar, R. (2006). *Make it real: Training for enterprise final report*. Department of Education Science and Training, Canberra.

Young, M., Guenther, J., and Boyle, A. (2007). *Growing the desert: Educational pathways for remote Indigenous people*. National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide.

Young, M., Roberston, P., Sawyer, G and Guenther, J. (2005). *Desert disconnections: E-learning and remote Indigenous peoples*. Australian Flexible Learning Framework and Desert Knowledge CRC, Canberra. From <http://pre2005.flexiblelearning.net.au/projects/cluster2.htm> (viewed 18th January 2009).