

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Wingara Mangami – To Follow the Dream of Understanding

Dr Gawain Bodkin-Andrews and Professor Rhonda Craven from the Centre for Educational Research are developing an intervention program to help stop racism in Australian schools, and minimise its harmful effects on students. This research has been funded through an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Indigenous Researchers Development Grant.

‘Schools are places where our children should feel safe and not be places that foster racism and other harmful attitudes towards others’ says Dr Bodkin-Andrews. ‘Racism can have an extremely negative impact on the quality of education received by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. This research will develop an intervention scheme to be implemented in secondary schools to combat racism towards Indigenous youth, fostering safer schools that contribute to individual, local and national well-being.’

The research will be carried out at four (two urban and two rural) randomly selected schools in NSW. One urban and one rural school will be used to test the long term effects of the intervention program (the “experimental” group), and the other two schools will be maintained as a “control” and then used to measure the short term effects of the same program. The intervention will be done in conjunction with Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and NSW Department of Education and Training (DET). The control will undergo the same intervention in the third year of the project. Both sets of school will undergo a quantitative data collection (through standardized psycho-metric testing) at the beginning and middle of the second year, and the control group will undergo a third round of data collection in the middle of the third year. Qualitative data will only be taken from the experimental group and will be in the form of focus



groups and interviews with teachers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, parents and Aboriginal Education Officers. The interviews are vital to allow researchers a more in-depth analysis of the issues raised in the quantitative data.

The benefits of this research will be both social and economic for Australia. Preventing and addressing racism, promoting school engagement, providing safer school and enhancing psycho-social wellbeing are some of the expected outcomes that will offer a more substantial educational and societal benefits for Australia.

Project Title: Wingara Mangami (to follow the dream of understanding): Seeding innovation intervention success to challenge and prevent racism for Indigenous youth

Funding has been set at: \$301,698

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