Indigenous Psychologies, Fourth World Peoples and the International Literature: finding ourselves in online abstracting and indexing databases

Linda Waimarie Nikora, Bridgette Masters-Awatere, Waikaremoana Waitoki & Mohi Rua

SUMMARY: The presence and visibility of indigenous people and experience in the field of indigenous psychologies is vital to articulating existence, life, self-determination and future making. This article highlights examples of Indigenous Psychology being both absent and present at the same time in OAD (online academic databases).

KEY WORDS: Indigenous psychologies, Fourth world, Maori development, social and emotional wellbeing, indigenous psycholog*.

An important and valuable aspect of early European explorations was the mapping of unknown territories so as to be able to make later return voyages for exploitation of resources, colonisation and settlement. In 1642, Dutch explorer Abel Tasman 'discovered' Tasmania and New Zealand and enabled Captain James Cook to circumnavigate and complete the mapping of New Zealand (Beaglehole, 1968). His crew, scientists in their own right, collected plant specimens, recorded landscapes, objects, resources and the daily lives of the native peoples in pencil, watercolour and text (Beaglehole, 1968). These European explorers made our lands, resources and presence on the earth known to the rest of the world. The authors of this article are Maori, indigenous to New Zealand, living life in a nation that imports Western psychological knowledge (Moghaddam, 1987), a form of knowing that has come to dominate how psychology in our context is studied, practiced and

Linda Waimarie Nikora, **Bridgette Masters-Awatere**, **Waikaremoana Waitoki** and **Mohi Rua** are at the Maori & Psychology Research Unit, University of Waikato.
Contact author: Linda Waimarie Nikora, Maori & Psychology Research Unit, University of Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton, New Zealand psyc2046@waikato.ac.nz

understood. The field of indigenous psychology in New Zealand has made slow but steady progress in the face of Western world dominance by adopting the goals of Maori development to create psychologies that meet the needs of Maori people. Indigenous Psychology has done this in a way that maintains a unique cultural heritage and makes for a better collective Maori future (Nikora, 2007; Nikora, Levy, Masters, & Waitoki, 2006). It is a journey towards Maori self-determination, liberation and wellness.

As scholars and researchers, we regularly use online academic databases (OADs) to rapidly search for literature and research activity related to our areas of interest and research. An online academic database is a collection of information commonly used for research and writing purposes, including access to papers in academic journals. It is not unlike a map of an information world, like a card index system is to a library. OADs '… organize collections of scientific and scholarly material that is accessible through a computer network, and which is accordingly stored and delivered in electronic form' (Dukic, 2014, p173). Most university libraries in developed nations hold subscriptions to OADs that link directly to full-text articles and offer a deep and wide array of information across countless numbers of subjects giving rise to specialized OADs to support specific disciplines. Because so much information is readily available, we often come to believe that the knowledge universe is complete and at our finger-tips (Lagerstrom, 2010). As the title of Lagerstrom's 2010 article infers, 'If it's not on the web, it doesn't exist at all…' Obviously this argument is fallacious especially in light of the endeavours of researchers and scholars the world over to recognise gaps in the literature, to pose new questions, to challenge old assumptions and to produce new knowledge. However, when an OAD search turns up few or no results or 'null' sets we tend to respond by checking our search strategies or searching on different terms or simply concluding that the work of researchers in the area reside in the 'grey' literature or hard texts in turn leading to searches outside OADs. Sometimes we also conclude inactivity related to the search terms.

Researchers in emerging fields of inquiry are often confronted by OAD null result sets. In the early days of activity in the field of indigenous psychologies such results were common with better outcomes produced by focusing searches by country or by population descriptors like 'Australian Aboriginal' or 'Maori'. With more recent enthusiasm and scholarly activity, OAD search results for indigenous psychology literature now return hundreds of hits marking the existence of the field, naming and describing, and associating authors, institutions and the geographic location of research activity.

In contemplating writing a textbook on indigenous psychology for students in a graduate paper at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, the authors began to search OADs and amass the necessary foundational literature required.

In this regard, we decided to undertake a structured and intentional approach to the literature, recording keyword searches, documenting hits and scrutinizing the results. We were particularly interested in understanding the totality of the field of indigenous psychology, what authors were writing about, and gathering literature relevant to New Zealand and Australia as that is the future work context for many of our students. We were also familiar with the literature local to our context and wanted to better understand the contribution Australian and New Zealand writers were making to the broader indigenous psychology canon. Visibility of Maori and Aboriginal people within the literature communicates to indigenous students suggests: there is a receptive place for our research, writing and thinking; that there is a community of resistance active in the struggle against the dominance of Western psychology, and; that there is an accessible canon of work that can be built upon and contributed to. The existence of the field of indigenous psychology and visibility within it presents a sense of community, somewhere to belong to and where critical friends might be found. For researchers and academics, presence and visibility suggest engagement, contribution and collaboration.

The aims of this study were to:

1. Determine the extent of the indigenous psychology literature as captured by OAD searches.
2. Determine the extent to which work by indigenous researchers from Australian and New Zealand are represented in the OAD scholarly canon of indigenous psychologies.

Searching indigenous psychology records through online abstracting database services

Researchers, scholars and students have come to rely heavily on online abstracting and indexing database services as an interface between themselves, and the knowledge libraries of the world. For this study, we chose to search the following proprietary databases subscribed to by our academic institution and typically available at most other first and second World (Moghaddam, 1987) academic institutions:

a) Web of Science (WOS)
b) EBSCO
c) ProQuest
d) Scopus

In so doing, we are acutely aware that these databases are significantly inaccessible

to academics and scholars in third world countries, or with no internetivity. The playing field is not level and academics situated in first and second world countries are privileged in this regard. Our fourth world status as Maori New Zealander and Aboriginal Australian academics benefits us in this regard.

Because we were interested in research sources about Maori and other fourth world indigenous people (Nikora, 2007) as they appear in the field of indigenous psychologies and the internationally peer reviewed literature we restricted our keyword search, and therefore our working data set for this study to fields tagged 'titles', 'abstracts' and 'keywords' that contained the term 'Indigenous psycholog*'. Use of the wild character * (asterisk) returned results related to 'indigenous psychology', 'indigenous psychologies' and 'indigenous psychological'. There were no restrictions on date of publication. The records retrieved were merged, cleaned and analyzed. The respective OADs indexed between 118–157 records, the earliest appearing in 1979. Between then and 2004, an average of 2–3 articles were published in each year. From 2005, the average increased to about 11 articles per year. The trend suggests persistent industriousness of the part of scholars.

Using wild character searching ('indigenous psycholog*') captures a broader dataset than keyword searches ('indigenous psychology', 'indigenous psychologies') and different OADs present different results. When using the search term 'indigenous psycholog*', Web of Science (WOS) returned 153 hits; EBSCO, 147 hits; ProQuest, 118 hits; and Scopus, 157 hits. We merged these hits across the four OADs by exporting the records including abstracts into EndNote 7.3.1 (http://www.endnote.com). EndNote is a desktop software application that allowed us to search, sort, group, add keywords, notations, link to the full text of articles amongst other useful functions. We reduced the data set by removing duplicates and excluded books, conference abstracts, incomplete records, blank records, newspaper articles, magazines, conference calls, unpublished conference papers and non-English works. This produced a final datatset of 181 records.

As an emerging field, the overall cleaned dataset of 181 records about indigenous psycholog* lends itself to the possibility that multiple perspectives and interests of authors writing from and about different communities, contexts, histories and geographies will be included amongst the records. It is not surprising that the majority of records were 'journal articles' (n=132), precise pieces of writing that deal succinctly with a particular topic of research or theory. 'Handbook entries' (n=8) and 'book sections' (n=17) present the opportunity for broader surveys of the field and its existence, or deeper analysis of specific issues. 'Book reviews' (11) both announce the existence of a book and critically assess the contribution it makes. 'Editorials and introductions' (n=9) to special issues are important as they typically argue the importance of the collection and what needs to be done beyond the issues discussed. While not numerous, 'commentaries and

replies' (n=4) are where conversations amongst colleagues, and sometimes 'giants' in a field, exchange views and opinions on each other's work.

Locating the country of publication

Author country affiliation or focus of articles allowed us to compile a geographic index with publication counts (n=119). Determining the country of origin and focus was not always possible. In such cases the papers were removed. The United States of America had the highest number of indigenous psycholog* publications (38). The second highest sources of publications were jointly shared by Australia, South Africa and China (n=12). Slightly lower were India (11), Korea (9), Philippines (8), New Zealand and Canada (7 each). The lowest was Japan (3).

Focusing a search to indigenous New Zealanders and Australians

When searching OADs it is common to start with a broad search to capture a range of records and to then refine the search by linking with other search terms of interest. By using the 'search all fields' function in Endnote, we refined the dataset according to the country term search on 'New Zealand' and 'Australia', and then 'Maori' and 'Aboriginal' as they appeared in the titles or abstracts of records.

Of the 181 records in the dataset, 12 related to Australia (n=12) or New Zealand (n=7). Discarding those records where New Zealand was the place of conference or publication, or referred to the author's institutional affiliation being situated in Australia or New Zealand, only two records exclusively concerned Maori (Houkamau, 2010; Nikora, 2014) and six were specific to Australian Aboriginal peoples (Cameron & Robinson, 2014; Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones, & Clark, 2011; Dudgeon & Kelly, 2014; Dudgeon, Kelly, & Walker, 2010; Gillies, 2013; Westerman, 2010).

Discussion

Where researchers are dependent on OAD searches to conserve time and resources, such curiously small result sets as those found for Maori and indigenous Australians in this study, suggests, as the title of the Lagerstorm's (2010) article implies, that the object of the search does not exist at all. It is non-existent, not there. While we recognise this as far from the truth, the implication is that Maori and indigenous Australians as subject and author within the field of indigenous psychologies remain invisible. Part of this result set can be explained by being present in other ways. For example, an EBSCO search on 'social and emotional wellbeing' and 'indigenous' presents a result set of 24 articles between 2004 and 2015 exclusively concerning indigenous Australians. The term 'social

and emotional wellbeing' was adopted in response to objections by indigenous Australians to the use of the term 'mental health' and the stigma that attends to it. Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing in the Australian context is deeply psychological but is situated differently to what was captured in the OAD searches for this paper. A similar example is that of Maori development and psychology. I and fellow authors (Nikora, et al., 2006) defined indigenous psychologies as closely aligned with the Maori development agenda, the goal of which 'is to create psychologies to meet the needs of Maori people in a way that maintains a unique cultural heritage, and makes for a better collective Maori future' (Allwood & Berry, 2006a, p255). Situated in this way, efforts by Maori psychologists formed part of broader Maori endeavours and aspirations for a more prosperous Maori future. An EBSCO search on 'Maori development and psychology' results in 21 relevant articles published between 2004 and 2014. Again, an example of being absent and present at the same time.

While we in New Zealand have argued the relevance of our work to the area of indigenous psychologies (Nikora, 2007) and psychology more broadly (Nikora, 2014), it is plainly evident that we are largely invisible within OADs searches that use 'indigenous psycholog*' as a search term. Part of this is a consequence of localization, attention on particulars, and demands by indigenous communities of interest to be engaged and for research and scholars to be accountable to them. To this we can add the significant relevance of indigenous psycholog* research to other disciplines beyond psychology such as the health disciplines, applied social sciences and education. Here, the information or meta-data provided by authors in their article titles, abstracts, keywords and other fields used by OADs tend prioritise and narrow meta-data to specific topics of interest, for example, the problem to be solved, type of intervention or a particular condition. If we are to become visible beyond the communities and problems we are seeking to solve, we need to step back and position our work within broader domains of scholarship such as indigenous psycholog*.

In the last decade or so, there has been a proliferation of interdisciplinary academic journals dedicated to indigenous knowledge and research including and beyond the discipline of psychology. Examples are: *AlterNative* (http://www. alternative.ac.nz) that presents indigenous worldviews and scholarly research from native indigenous perspectives from around the world; The *Journal of Indigenous Research* (http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/kicjir/) that makes accessible to indigenous communities requests for information about research conducted among indigenous people mainly in Canada and the USA, and; The *International Journal of Indigenous Health* (http://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/ijih/about) that seeks to bring knowledge from diverse intellectual traditions together with a focus on culturally diverse indigenous voices, methodologies and epistemology. While

these journals serve to concentrate interdisciplinary research about indigenous peoples and to increase accessibility to communities of interest, they nonetheless occupy a marginal space away from the dominance of western world paradigms and have little influence. If indigenous psycholog* is to challenge mainstream thinking, it must somehow, fall within its gaze.

A strategy to achieve influence is through special or themed issues of journals defined by an already established psychological sub-discipline like *Psychology and Developing Societies* (Liu, Lawson-Te Aho, & Rata, 2014), or *Social Epistemology* (Collier, 2011), or one that is concerned to service globally diverse scholarly interests such as the *International Journal of Psychology* (Allwood & Berry, 2006b) and the *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* (Hwang, 2015). A special issue of an established journal where proposals are closely scrutinized for relevance by journal editors legitimizes efforts by indigenous psycholog* scholars, concedes competitive publication space and presents to its readership the message that authors within the special issue are presenting research and raising concerns worthy of thought and attention by its readership. Such issues also give opportunity for peer review, commentary and discussion, all important activities to aid the development of the subject of the journal and the field of indigenous psycholog*. It is with interest and frustration that we note the absence of any special issues on indigenous psycholog* from the APA stable of journals. This remains as a publication space highly regulated by a dominant western and empirical knowledge paradigm.

Also curious is the absence of any journal with the terms 'Indigenous' or 'Psycholog*' in its title, a journal that the authors of this paper have some enthusiasm for and await the emergence of. However, there are some serious considerations to be made before proceeding in this direction. Will the scope of such a journal compete or overlap with other journals? Will it have an international audience? Are there enough academic giants to champion such a journal? Will it be attractive to publishers, or entities willing to financially support the journal? Is there a wide enough scholarly community to sustain contributions? Will such a journal address the visibility of work by indigenous scholars in fourth world settings like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hawaii and the USA or will a new form of dominance emerge such as that inherent in the tensions around the different definitions of what constitutes an indigenous psychology? (Allwood & Berry, 2006a).

While the above questions remain, the visibility of fourth world indigenous peoples in the field of indigenous psycholog* requires addressing. There are a number of strategies to achieve this. The simplest approach is to assist OAD searches by contributing relevant keywords and phrases. In this respect, inserting 'indigenous psycholog*' in the meta-data fields, that is, in the title, abstract and keyword fields, will boost the number of retrieved publications. This simple

solution does require a conscious effort on the part of indigenous scholars, and necessitating a shift in perspective, away from the particulars of our disciplines, contexts and problem solving endeavours, into relationship with likeminded others in the global community. When faced with the daily realities of remaining visible and resilient within our respective academic and practice communities, the global community can seem far away and difficult to partipate in and influence. In this technological age and internet connectedness, the global is a few keyboard clicks away.

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