



Talanoa Ako

Pacific
Talk about
Education
and Learning

Acknowledgments

Mālō lava to Judy Oakden (Pragmatica Limited), Moe Sa'u (Director, Programme Delivery), Gabrielle-Sisifo Makisi (Manager, Strategy and Integration, Programme Delivery), and the authors: Tagaloatele Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, Dr Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga, Dr Martyn Reynolds, Dr Ivy Abella, and Dr Fuapepe Rimoni (Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington).

We acknowledge and value the voice of the Pacific parents, families, learners, and community who talked about education and learning.

Fa'afetai tele lava
Soifua



Rose Jamieson

Deputy Secretary: Parent Information and Community Intelligence (PICI),
Ministry of Education
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Foreword

Mālō le soifua, mālō e lelei, kia orāna, talofa nī, fakaalofa lahi atu, ni sa bula vinaka, tālofa, mauri, noa'ia, kia ora, tēnā koutou katoa. Warm Pacific greetings to all.

I have always been committed to transforming outcomes for Pacific communities in Aotearoa. Strong partnerships and reciprocal relationships between families, communities, and schools are critical in supporting Pacific learners to achieve success.

Aotearoa has a large, dynamic Pacific community – almost 66 percent of us were born here – a significant and increasing number. It's time for the education system to strengthen how it supports Pacific learners and their families to reach their aspirations by adopting an “as and by Pacific” approach.

Over 1,800 parents, families, learners, and community leaders shared their experiences of the PowerUP and Talanoa Ako programmes from 2016 to 2019. They shared stories and told us how these programmes have impacted their lives, aspirations, and wellbeing. They told us what works for Pacific in Aotearoa – now the challenge is for us to listen and act.

To all of those who have shared their stories and experiences, I wish to acknowledge and thank you. Talanoa Ako: Pacific Talk about Education and Learning has been built from your voices.

This resource supports Pacific practices, teaching, and learning. It will help schools reflect on their own practices and inspire teachers and leaders to walk alongside Pacific families and communities. Perhaps more importantly, schools and teachers will understand what “culturally safe spaces” look and feel like, and what is important culturally to Pacific learners and families.

Pacific families and communities play an important role in supporting our children and young people. It is my hope that this resource continues to drive change and innovation across the education system, and supports Pacific learners, families, and communities to be an integral part of any solution.

I speak of Pacific youth as the Generation 6Bs – Brown, Beautiful, Brainy, Bilingual, Bi-cultural, and Bold. I have every confidence that teachers and school leaders will step up to the mark for this generation.

Hon. Aupito William Sio

Associate Minister of Education (Pacific Peoples)



About this resource

TALANOA AKO: PACIFIC TALK ABOUT EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Talanoa Ako is a Ministry of Education programme delivered in Pacific communities by community groups, Pacific churches, trusts, health providers, Pacific teachers, Board of Trustee collectives, and schools.

The programme grows parents, families, and community educational knowledge so they can champion and support their children's learning journeys and form partnerships with their children's schools to achieve Pacific success.

Talanoa Ako: Pacific Talk about Education and Learning is the first resource of the Talanoa Ako Guided Resources series of six. This resource has been developed from the Pacific PowerUP to Talanoa Ako Evaluation findings and learnings. (2016–2019).

Author: Judy Oakden (Pragmatica)

This first resource contains three reports:

- » Talanoa Ako: Pacific parents, families, learners, and communities talk education together – Pacific Powerup to Talanoa Ako 2016–2019 (2021).
Author: Tagaloatele Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop
- » Talanoa Ako: From Pacific PowerUP to Talanoa Ako, AS and BY Pacific case studies (2021).
Author: Tagaloatele Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop
- » Talanoa Ako: Pacific education literature review of key findings of the Pacific PowerUP evaluations 2016–2018 (2021).
Authors: Dr Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga, Dr Ivy Arbella, Dr Martyn Reynolds, and Dr Fuapepe Rimoni (Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington)

Several short vignettes (videos) will also be available:

- » Talanoa Ako Community Voice: Talking about Education and Learning vignettes – filmed with Pacific learners, parents, teachers, principals, and community leaders in 2021 talking about education and learning from their own lived experiences.

THE REMAINING FIVE TALANOA AKO GUIDED RESOURCES

The remaining five Talanoa Ako Guided Resources will be released monthly. They will include a resource which supports the building of Board of Trustees Pacific capability, a Talanoa reporting cycle, a literacy booklet for families based on the PISA results, a resource to support school governance and school leaders to develop a Pacific strategy, and a resource of examples of best practice for Pacific learners and families occurring in schools presently.

THE TALANOA AKO DIGITAL APP

<https://www.education.govt.nz/news/talanoa-ako-digital-app-now-available/>

The Talanoa Ako digital app is another resource that supports Pacific parents, families, and communities.

It takes families through NCEA information, literacy and numeracy, learning pathways, careers and vocational pathways, school reporting, parent interviews, goal setting, and time management.

The content is in plain English and ten Pacific languages ('Gana Tuvalu, Gagana Sāmoa, Gagana Tokelau, Gasav Ne Fāeag Rotuām, Lea Faka-Tonga, Na Vosa Vakaviti, Solomons Pijin, Taetae ni Kiribati, Te Reo Māori Kūki 'Aīrani, and Vagahau Niue.)

Each Pacific language is also available in audio and has visually impaired functionality.



Talanoa Ako

Talking about Education
and Learning

PACIFIC EDUCATION LITERATURE
REVIEW ON KEY FINDINGS OF THE
PACIFIC POWERUP LONGITUDINAL
EVALUATION 2016-2018 HEARING
THE VOICE OF PACIFIC PARENTS

Report Information

Prepared for Rose Jamieson

Deputy Secretary: Parent Information and Community Intelligence (PICI), Ministry of Education

Authors: Dr Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga, Dr Martyn Reynolds, Dr Ivy Abella, and Dr Fuapepe Rimoni
(Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington)

Acknowledgments

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Victoria University of Wellington's specialist librarian Grace Faletutulu, Pasifika Navigator, provided crucial expertise and cultural support to ensure authoritative coverage and sourcing of publications according to the timelines for the completion of the review work.

We acknowledge and respect the researchers (and their participants) who have contributed to eroding the dearth of literature and findings on Pacific education. Much of the work has come from the motivation to infuse educational literature with new ways of understanding of the lives of Pacific learners, their families, and communities.

Fa'afetai tele lava, māuruuru roa, and thank you.

Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga

Ivy Abella

Martyn Reynolds

Fuapepe Rimoni

2021

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
POSITIONING THE LITERATURE REVIEW	7
Review process	11
Inclusion of Publications in the Review	11
Publication Timeframe for Review Materials	11
Search Process and Terms	11
Titles and Framing of the Themes.	12
Pacific and Māori in Research	12
The Term Pacific	13
RATIONALE FOR THE LITERATURE REVIEW	15
CROSS-THEME PREFACES	19
Parents, Families, and Communities	21
Education Professionals as Partners	22
Cross themes and PowerUP	22
THEME ONE: PACIFIC VISIBLE	23
Visibility of Pacific Success as a Wide Concept	27
Home-school and Teacher-student Relationships	31
Institutional Structures to Support Success	34
Alignment to Encourage Success	36
Peer Relationships and Success	38
Relational Spaces	40
Appreciative Mentoring for Success	42
Barriers to Success	43
THEME TWO: IDENTITIES, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES	45
Understanding Identity	49
Language and Identity	51
Leadership to Support Culture and Identity	52
Home-school Relationships and Identity Construction	54
Teacher-student Relationships and Identity Construction	55
System-level Relationships and Identity	56
Processes of Identity Construction	58
Specific Educational Sites of Identity Formation	59

THEME THREE: PACIFIC WELLBEING	61
Holism and Wellbeing	64
Parental Involvement	66
Identity and Community-level Relationships	68
Readings of Resilience as an Aspect of Pacific Wellbeing	70
Culturally Informed Measures of Pacific Wellbeing	71
Culturally Framed Wellbeing: Mentoring and Peer Support	74
Shame and Pacific Wellbeing	76
THEME FOUR: 'AUALA IN - ACCESS	77
Parent and Community Access to Education	80
Institutional Culture and Access	82
System-level Considerations	84
Access and Educational Relationships	85
THEME FIVE: CULTURAL BIAS AND RACISM	89
Cultural Bias, Equity, and Racism	91
Structural Features	95
Direct Experiences of Racism	95
CONCLUSION	97
REFERENCES	99

Executive Summary



Executive Summary



This literature review explores key thematic findings from the Pacific PowerUP Longitudinal Evaluation 2016–2018 (Oakden, 2017, 2019; Oakden and Kennedy, 2018; Oakden and Kennedy, 2019). Pacific parents, families, communities, and learners over the three-year talanoa identified five main areas they felt needed further consideration to support Pacific educational achievement. These themes are discussed below.



Pacific visible

how Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are acknowledged by, and are in equitable partnership with, education. Pacific visible is also apparent in the presence of community-sourced Pacific concepts through which Pacific education is understood.



Identities, languages, and cultures

how Pacific learners' developing identities are upheld by educational experiences that provide support for Pacific culture(s), language(s), and practices that value the contributions of Pacific parents, families, and communities through equitable and honourable partnerships.



Pacific wellbeing

how the wellbeing of Pacific learners is understood in education in holistic Pacific terms and supported by effective partnerships between Pacific parents, families, and communities, and education.



'Auala in – Access

how Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are helped to gain access to, and be welcome in, education such as through the curriculum, use of pedagogy, and consultation.



Cultural bias and racism

the attitudes, processes, and practices in education that limit the flourishing of Pacific learners', parents', families', and communities' visibility, identity, language, culture, wellbeing, and access.

These five themes form the challenge of the Pacific people's "voice" from the various talanoa as a next step to supporting Pacific achievement from a parent, family, community strength-based discourse. This literature review examines the research around these themes and draws on other literature in the field of Pacific education. Its sources are generally taken from the period 2009 to 2019.

The review begins by acknowledging the voices of Pacific learners, their parents, and communities more widely and by providing a summary of the Pacific PowerUP Longitudinal Evaluation 2016–2018 (Oakden, 2017, 2019; Oakden and Kennedy, 2018, 2019). It offers two prefaces to the main themes relating to parents, families, and communities on the one hand, and educational professionals on the other. Together, these prefaces frame a discussion that understands Pacific education as a partnership. The review reveals that Pacific people have many ideas, beliefs, values, and practices, including language, relevant to education that are sometimes recognised, valued, and supported by professionals but at other times are ignored.

The literature also reveals links between education that is achieving the goals of Pacific people and Pacific learners and creating positive experiences in areas such as wellbeing, identity, and access to high-quality education. Educational achievement is one goal of Pacific people, but this should be understood in conjunction with others. These include being visible through continuation in education; being visible through success as a Pacific person, which involves recognition and validation in education and the community; and the effective maintenance of a balance between two (or more) cultural worlds. The literature also points to how Pacific concepts, such as success and wellbeing, should be appreciated as holistic and interconnected and not tidily mapped against English-language rendered European-origin counterparts.

The review depicts factors that contribute to situations where optimal environments and practices likely to benefit Pacific parents and their children are not in place. These factors include the exclusion of parents, families, and communities from various aspects of Pacific children's education; the de-valuation of aspects of Pacific culture and practice, such as language, beliefs, and experiences; and a lack of understanding and support for the negotiations Pacific students perform to be successful in the cultural spaces they inhabit.

Recommendations include further research attention to the potential and actual contributions of parents, families, and communities to Pacific education; ways of facilitating the contributions of Pacific people to education; the learning of teachers to be responsive to Pacific learners and their families; the role of language in Pacific identity and how education can support this; and ways of eradicating cultural bias and racism. Research that focuses on Pacific parents, families and communities, and their children and that does not aggregate populations without contextual justification is to be encouraged, as is research grounded in Pacific ideas, epistemologies, methodologies, and motivations. The literature review contains much of promise. The challenges are to implement more fully what is already known and to extend knowledge so Pacific education can fulfil its role in the migrant dream, responding to the voices of parents, learners, families, and communities and distilled from the talanoa gifted to the Pacific PowerUP evaluations.

Positioning the Literature Review



Positioning the Literature Review



The Pasifika success compass (*Pasifika Education Plan 2013–2017*, Ministry of Education, 2013b) visibly places parents, families, and communities at the centre of Pacific success with their children. PowerUP was developed as a platform to help this become a reality.

Pacific PowerUP is an education programme that sits within Pacific communities. It is operated by Pacific people for Pacific people, to build the knowledge of Pacific parents, families, and communities about education and schools to support Pacific children's learning journeys. The PowerStations, or sites for Pacific PowerUP, provide academic support for learners from early learning to Year 13. They also provide culturally safe spaces that the Pacific PowerUP evaluations reveal to be resources that let parents and families champion their children and be more demanding of the education system. The PowerStations also foster significant changes within families so education as it exists in Aotearoa New Zealand becomes a priority that can be actioned.

Parents are asked by schools to form partnerships with them. Pacific PowerUP helped parents express their inability to partner effectively with schools without knowledge and understanding of education and learning.

Evaluations of Pacific PowerUP were conducted over 2016 to 2018 (Oakden, 2017, 2019; Oakden and Kennedy, 2018, 2019). Case studies from the evaluations show the positive effect of Pacific parents, families, and communities who support the education of their children. The structure of PowerUP was designed to provide a climate in which the risk taking that is the engine of learning becomes a positive challenge in a supportive environment, meaning good progress can be made. By contrast, at times, schools do not provide such environments; progress is restricted where student participation is muted.

The partnership of parents, learners, community members, and teachers fostered by PowerUP provides learning opportunities for all: learners progress their learning; parents learn about the education system and the kinds of learning valued in it so they can better support their children; and teachers learn about the full potential of Pacific learners when given an appropriate learning environment.

As a result, relationships are reconfigured in positive ways so that respect and expectation inform how those involved interact: parents and children, teachers and learners, schools and Pacific communities. Thus, building the capacity of those involved in Pacific education, especially through developing the capability, voice, and knowledge of parents, families, and communities, emerges as a significant contribution of PowerUP.

A consequence is the acceleration of visible Pacific educational success and the way this success is understood. This review particularly looks at the Pacific voice and the Pacific concepts that underpin that voice to draw attention to the potential of Pacific people to articulate, define, and participate in education that focuses on the young members of their communities.

As a way of positioning this literature review, we examined the key thematic findings from the Pacific PowerUP Longitudinal Evaluation 2016–2018 (Oakden, 2017, 2019; Oakden and Kennedy, 2018, 2019). These themes have been developed from the voices of Pacific parents and children from over 1,200 in-depth talanoa. The talanoa were the main part of the 2016 to 2018 evaluations and took place primarily in the culturally safe space of a PowerStation or the family home or church. The talanoa were spaces where Pacific people expressed their perceptions and experiences of education. They shared how, through PowerUP, as their educational knowledge grew, they were able to support their children's learning journeys, form authentic, equitable, and reciprocal

relationships with schools and teachers, and change the way they, as Pacific people, operated in their families and homes to make education and powerful education conversations a priority.

The premise for the PowerUP evaluation was to delve into the experiences and perceptions of parents, learners, families, and communities who were involved with the PowerUP programme. The evaluation was a collaborative, coordinated talanoa-infused approach to gathering quality research-based knowledge with the intention of improving Pacific presence, engagement, and achievement in education.

The five themes that emerged from the PowerUP evaluation are an important starting point for establishing research and Pacific education priorities. The themes are as follows.



Pacific visible – how Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are acknowledged by, and are in equitable partnership with, education. Pacific visible is also apparent in the presence of community-sourced Pacific concepts through which Pacific education is understood.



Identities, languages, and cultures – how Pacific learners' developing identities are upheld by educational experiences that provide support for Pacific culture(s), language(s), and practices that value the contributions of Pacific parents, families, and communities through equitable and honourable partnerships.



Pacific wellbeing – how the wellbeing of Pacific learners is understood in education in holistic Pacific terms and supported by effective partnerships between Pacific parents, families and communities, and education.



'Auala in - Access – how Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are helped to gain access to, and be welcome in, education such as through the curriculum, use of pedagogy, and consultation.



Cultural bias and racism – the attitudes, processes, and practices in education that limit the flourishing of Pacific learners', parents', families', and communities' visibility, identity, language, culture, wellbeing, and access.

Following in the footsteps of early policy (Ministry of Education, 1996), the first iteration of the Pasifika Education Plan (2001–2005) was launched in 2001 (Ministry of Education, 2001), and 17 years later a navigation document titled *Tapasā* (Ministry of Education, 2018) was published. This builds on the fifth iteration of the Pasifika Education Plan and advises educational professionals on how to think about and enact Pacific visibility as success in Pacific education. As is clear from *Tapasā*, Pacific education can be understood as a partnership between Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities on the one hand, and educators working in a largely European tradition on the other. In the relational space between these partners lies the most profitable area for progress in Pacific education. This literature review acknowledges the importance of this partnership and those relationships through the presentation of two sections of commentary, one reflecting each partner. These sections guide the reader to the texts that highlight the potential contribution of each side of the partnership spread across the five main themes drawn from PowerUP evaluation findings and embedded in this review.

We also acknowledge the *Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030* (2020) and two previous Pacific education literature reviews that have set out the terrain of educational research: *Literature review on Pacific education issues: Final report* (Coxon et al., 2002); and *An analysis of recent Pasifika education research literature to inform and improve outcomes for Pasifika learners* (Chu et al., 2013).

REVIEW PROCESS

To conduct this review, we searched for materials that had relevance to the context of Aotearoa New Zealand and were generally published since 2009 (that is, from 2009 to 2019). To identify materials for the literature database, we worked closely with the librarian from Victoria University of Wellington who has specialist expertise on Pacific subjects. As a research team, we each took one or more of the themes and committed to searching the databases as well.

INCLUSION OF PUBLICATIONS IN THE REVIEW

The purpose of the review is to summarise evidence across a ten-year timeframe regarding approaches associated with five themes relevant to Pacific learners: Pacific visible; identities, languages, and cultures; Pacific wellbeing; 'Auala in – Access; and cultural bias and racism. This implies a standard or criterion for inclusion in the review as “evidence”. Our criterion for evidence is generally the internationally recognised standard of quality assurance with independent editorial peer review.

Thus, materials we reviewed included: journal articles; published conference proceedings; book chapters; books; post-graduate theses (master’s and doctorate levels); and externally reviewed published government reports that met the stated criteria. Both online and in-print publications were included, provided they met the criteria for

quality assurance and independent editorial peer review. Generally excluded were in-print or electronically available materials lacking independent editorial review and quality assurance such as self-published monographs or papers; in-house working papers; PowerPoint presentations from conferences without published proceedings; unpublished government or agency reports; and lectures from workshops or coursework at tertiary institutions. Inclusion of occasional sources that do not meet the criteria is justified through uniqueness of contribution.

PUBLICATION TIMEFRAME FOR REVIEW MATERIALS

We decided to review material from 2009 to 2019 because this ten-year period has provided a substantial collection of new research works in educational publications in the public domain. These include journal articles, book chapters, master’s and doctoral theses, government and agency reports, and so on. Where publications from outside this period are referenced, they are included as support for literature from within the timeframe.

SEARCH PROCESS AND TERMS

The process of finding research sources involved using electronic searches of relevant comprehensive databases, including ERIC, EBSCO, PsychINFO, Scopus, Proquest, Index NZ, and Google Scholar.

Key words employed in searching for relevant materials and resources included: Pacific, Pasifika, Pacific Island/er, Pacific people, Pacific education, Pasifiki, Tangata Pasifika, as well as terms for each sub-group Pacific culture (Samoan, Tongan, Niue, Fijian, and so on). Cultural group terms were used in conjunction with the following phrases: tertiary education, higher education, universities, polytechnics, wānanga, private training establishments; ā’oga ‘āmata, language nests, early childhood education

(ECE) or centres, families, 'āiga, whānau/fānau; secondary schooling; Pasifika school liaison; multicultural; alternative, diversity, English as a second language teaching; governance, leadership, mentoring, literacy, numeracy; cultural competency; culturally responsive pedagogy; language development; language maintenance, preservation of languages; teaching and learning; teacher knowledge, skills, teacher-learning pedagogy; transitions; mentoring; adult transitions; community engagement, home-school partnership; development, empowerment, and social justice.

We cannot guarantee all relevant publications were sourced and included in this review. Instead, it represents our best endeavours to include all published materials that could be located within the public domain and within the timeframe given for the work. Confidential materials not available in the public domain are, therefore, not covered by this review.

We did not include Pacific education research materials that were not directly relevant to the review's focus of Pacific visible; identities, languages, and cultures; Pacific wellbeing; 'Auala in - Access; and cultural bias and racism. Also, in a few instances, a publication was excluded if it was a non-substantive opinion piece that did not reference any evidence or documentation for stated opinions.

Full citations are included for each publication in the reference list at the end of this review.

TITLES AND FRAMING OF THE THEMES

The five themes came from groupings developed from the talanoa voice drawn from the PowerUp evaluation. Pacific visible reflects the importance of Pacific communities seeing themselves in notions of success. Identities, languages and cultures is a theme that focuses on the importance of these aspects to Pacific parents and

their children. For example, role models and mentoring are most beneficial when it is Pacific for Pacific. 'Auala (Samoan for pathway, road) - Access describes the ways Pacific people can access schools, curriculum, knowledge, and other aspects of education. Cultural bias and racism acknowledges the talanoa that described many examples of negative forces experienced by Pacific people in schools and in their interactions through Pacific children's educational journeys. For learners, this was generally a matter of talanoa about their everyday school environments and relationships with teachers. Pacific wellbeing reflects the desire by parents, families, and communities for the visibility of a more holistic view of the levers that support achievement together with an acknowledgement of increasing issues including mental health and suicide within Pacific communities.

PACIFIC AND MĀORI IN RESEARCH

Some of the research in this review reflects the experiences of both Pacific and Māori participants. In the past, the aggregation of Pacific and Māori in research may have been acceptable. However, as the literature has developed, the acceptability of this practice has been questioned. Recent literature has dealt with one population or the other, but a concerning trend is to aggregate communities that see themselves as distinct. Instead, because of the dynamic and diverse nature of Pacific ethnic communities and factors relating to post-migration generational difference, ethnic and generationally specific research is increasingly valuable. Although research must consider context, the ongoing viability of Pacific and Māori aggregation in research is limited. Pacific communities are also increasingly calling for, and participating in, ethnic-specific Pacific research (Airini et al., 2010).

THE TERM PACIFIC

The umbrella term “Pacific” has been used by the New Zealand Government, agencies, educational institutions, and academics to describe the ethnic make-up of people migrating from the Pacific Islands to Aotearoa New Zealand (Cook, Didham, and Khawaja, 2001). Bedford and Didham (2001) state that the term “Pacific” has been commonly and widely used at all levels of society, including educators, policy makers, community workers, the media, and institutions. The use of the term has often led to broad generalisations about a group of people who are extremely diverse.

A foundational research document titled the Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae et al., 2001), which was developed for the Ministry of Education in Aotearoa New Zealand, has provided one definition of Pacific people. At the time of development, it made reference to the six Pacific nations of Sāmoa, Tonga, Niue, the Cook Islands,

Tokelau, and Fiji. In this context, “Pacific people” is exclusive of Māori. In the broadest sense, it covers peoples from the Island Nations in the South Pacific and, in its narrowest sense, Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand. The research guidelines and other pieces of research work go on to clarify the issue of Pacific people as being a heterogeneous group with different inter- and intra-ethnic variations in culture. Variations include New Zealand-born and raised, island-born and raised Pacific people, and being recognised as diverse groups.

For the purposes of this review, we have used “Pacific”, rather than “Pacific Island” or “Pasifika”. We have used “Pacific” to mean people who can “trace descent to and/or are citizens of any of the territories commonly understood to be part of the Pacific (i.e., Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia)” (Davidson-Toumu’a, Teaiwa, Asmar, and Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2008, page 11). The use of the term Pacific in this way is in line with current Ministry of Education policy.



Rationale for the Literature Review



Rationale for the Literature Review



RATIONALE FOR THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Communities, researchers, and education professionals who are concerned about enhancing Pacific education are faced with a good deal of literature. This review seeks to connect Pacific people and academic research by using the talanoa themes from Pacific parents, families, communities, and children as a focus.

Researchers in particular may find the reiteration visible in this review helpful in strengthening their ongoing focus, while communities and professionals will be able to base future actions on the patterns of findings and ideas that emerge.

A particular function of a review such as this is to provide a starting point for new thinking and actions, acknowledging the way literature moves forward as a body. In this way, greater depth and effectiveness are likely in future research. For example, current literature reflects the way Pacific parents are positioning themselves in relational closeness to educational institutions, a trend that itself creates a need for up-to-date information.

For educational institutions, the literature review lets people focus on what has been shown to be effective in Pacific education so that well meaning but potentially unhelpful pathways are avoided, and resources are positively concentrated into what works for Pacific learners.

A springboard for this review was the most recent relevant directional document, *Pasifika education research priorities: Using research to realise our vision for Pasifika learners* (Ministry of Education, 2012), which was published towards the

end of the currency of the fourth iteration of the Pasifika Education Plan (Ministry of Education, 2009). Priorities identified within the 2012 document were literacy and numeracy, family and community engagement, governance and leadership, transitions and effective teaching, and learning. While none of these priorities has ceased to be relevant, the involvement of families and communities in authentic partnerships in education has emerged as a central organising feature capable of supporting positive change in Pacific education. Thus, this focus underpins the current review. Although educators and other professionals contribute to education, research that will make the most difference is that which encourages all involved to follow effective pathways to partnership.

This review also offers alternative perspectives capable of undercutting the deficit thinking that can block the effectiveness of well-meaning individuals, groups, and initiatives. We hope the review will inspire those who want to rethink and remodel Pacific education through Pacific approaches. We hope it supports policy-makers to find deeper insights that move away from simplistic actions intended to make fast gains. An approach to data that includes more than one education sector can reveal deeper patterns of entrenched and often invisible practice, and point to innovative strengths-based actions and progress that can form the basis of future policy. Finally, it is important to focus Pacific education on a reciprocal relationship through which parents, families, and communities are equal partners with policy-makers, an endeavour from which everyone can benefit.



Cross-theme Prefaces



Cross-theme Prefaces



PARENTS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES

At the core of Pacific education are learners, their parents, families, and communities as active agents in education. The literature gives an account of their involvement in multiple ways. Pacific communities have their own ideas about education, although questions remain about how visible these Pacific ideas are in educational (and research) contexts. Concepts such as success (Reynolds, 2017; Toumu'a, 2014), wellbeing (Manuela and Sibley, 2013; Verbiest et al., 2019) and giftedness (Faaea-Semeatu, 2011; Frengley-Vaipuna, Kupu-MacIntyre, and Riley, 2011) have been expressed through Pacific thinking. Pacific values provide a source of knowledge for education, for instance, in the areas of relationships (Airini et al., 2010; Māhina, 2008; Mila-Schaaf and Robinson, 2010) and how to understand education as a social resource (Fa'avae, 2017) framed by culture (Akeripa, 2017; Fa'avae, 2017; Lipine, 2010) including reference to faith (Lipine, 2010; Siopé, 2011). Pacific communities also have views about the purpose of education and how it should be conducted (Leauepepe and Sauni, 2014).

In addition, Pacific parents seek involvement in all levels of their children's education (Chu, Abella, and Paurini, 2013; Flavell, 2014; Fletcher, Parkhill, Taleni, Fa'afoi, and O'Regan, 2009; Lipine, 2010; Paulsen, 2018; Reynolds, 2017; Towner, Taumoepeau, Lal, and Pranish, 2017). Peer relationships are a salient supportive feature of Pacific visible and success in Pacific education (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2014; Reynolds, 2018b; Rimoni, 2016). Indeed, social structures in education that operate like Pacific families are also helpful to Pacific students (Chu, Abella, et al., 2013; Hunter et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2011). Throughout this literature review, relationships between parents, families, communities, and schools are ubiquitous. They are a testament to the central place of education within the migrant dream (Mila-Schaaf and Robinson, 2010).



EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS AS PARTNERS

As partners with students, parents, families and communities, educational professionals are significant in Pacific education. When professionals understand Pacific education as a partnership (Laumemea, 2018; Mitchell, 2014), progress is likely. An important factor in Pacific education is teacher behaviour that is positive and aspirational for Pacific students (Lipine, 2010; Nicholas and Fletcher, 2017; Siopu, 2011; Toumu'a and Laban, 2014).

Teachers who contextually interrogate concepts to make visible and embrace Pacific ways of thinking can develop new ways of working. In addition, educationalists who develop or participate in appropriate Pacific support programmes are of value to Pacific students (Beatson, Seiuli, Patterson, Griffiths, and Wilson, 2018; Chu, Abella, et al., 2013; Noonan, Bullen, and Farruggia, 2012; Richardson et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011). The roles of parents and communities are also honoured when schools and other institutions respectfully facilitate their increased access to learners' education (Chu, 2009; McDonald and Lipine, 2012; Mitchell, 2014) and when professionals have an appreciation of the negotiations between two worlds undertaken by their Pacific students (Lipine, 2010; Marat et al., 2011; Paulsen, 2018; Reynolds, 2017; Si'ilata, 2014). Effective tone and direction-setting educational leadership (Cardno, Handjani, and Howse, 2018; Patterson, 2012; Spee, Toumu'a, Oakden, Sauni, and Tuagalu, 2014) has an important supporting role for educational professionals in their partnership with Pacific parents, families, and communities.

CROSS THEMES AND POWERUP

The PowerUP evaluations (Oakden, 2017, 2019; Oakden and Kennedy, 2018, 2019) draw attention to the partnerships involved in Pacific education. Pacific parents, families, and communities bring their knowledge of Pacific culture including world views, language, and concepts. Teachers bring a knowledge of education that should be shared with the Pacific parents, families, and communities that support Pacific learners. Pacific students bring their developing identity, natural curiosity, and potential to learn. In an appropriate environment of well-configured respectful relationships, this partnership has the potential to provide Pacific learners with what they need to be the best they can, contributing to families, communities, schools, and the wider society of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Theme One:

Pacific Visible



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Pacific Visible





Pacific visible involves:

- » the acknowledgement and valuing of Pacific presence in education
- » the centrality of Pacific concepts through which to understand Pacific education
- » embracing Pacific concepts of success that:
 - › are holistic and therefore wide
 - › do not necessarily sit comfortably with Euro-centric ideas of success
- » understanding that Pacific success is intergenerational
- » adopting relational lenses that lead to the enhancement and visibility of Pacific success
- » effective home-school and teacher-learner relationships
- » aspects of institutional life that visibly align with Pacific practices.

However, when education does not acknowledge and value the Pacific presence in education, barriers to progress exist.



Pacific visible is a term that came from the many Pacific PowerUP evaluation talanoa. It therefore acknowledges and values the Pacific presence in education. In addition, literature that relates the Pacific voice to a wider audience of educators, researchers, and policy-makers is an act of acknowledgment that values what Pacific people have to say.

Being visible is a matter of something being seen, not just existing. For Pacific students, it means being valued for who they are. In cultural terms, it encompasses education and educators placing value on Pacific view points. Pacific people have ideas and beliefs that are relevant to education but that may not have been fully recognised or acknowledged in education or the wider society of Aotearoa New Zealand. Listening to people's voices is a way of bringing to the surface what the majority culture and discourse may act to submerge. Hearing what people have to say is an opportunity to learn what matters to them. This involves welcoming Pacific people as active participants in the education of the children of today. Pacific parents, communities, and students wish to be fully visible and valued in the education system.

For this review, as a way of articulating and focusing ideas of Pacific visible, attention to Pacific notions of success was central. Success is a subjective matter because it involves the achievement of goals. What one group may see as success, another may value lightly. In education, where success

and measurable achievement are often conflated, particularly where institutions set goals based on reportable achievement statistics, this has universalising tendencies. However, the literature of Pacific success proposes many forms of interlinked success that include, but are not restricted to, achievement. Making these visible has the effect of valuing the presence of Pacific people as participants in education. Pacific visibility in education involves understanding and valuing what is unique about Pacific people.

In the literature of Pacific education, Pacific ideas of success include achievement but are also framed as social and intergenerational, and not confined to the individual. Factors that contribute to Pacific forms of success include giving attention to home-school relationships through the recognition of the significance of culture and language, and student-teacher relationships. The importance of relationships to Pacific people can be deliberately supported by teachers learning about Pacific children, their homes, and culture, and by having high expectations of Pacific students. These factors are connected through a holistic approach to success that embeds individual students in their families and communities, and individual teachers in their institutions and systems. The literature indicates these areas are pertinent regardless of sector. Attention to relationality, the state of being related, also emerges as a consistent theme in the literature of Pacific success.

VISIBILITY OF PACIFIC SUCCESS AS A WIDE CONCEPT

The voices of Pacific learners, families, and communities are present in much of the research that deals with the visibility of Pacific notions of success. Nakhid (2003), for instance, made an early contribution to the discussion about how Pacific learners are seen and understood in education. The voices of Pacific learners in Nakhid's work clearly stated a desire for success as Pacific, for being visible. Nakhid used the metaphor of a school photograph to indicate both the desire of Pacific learners to be represented as themselves and their general absence from such images. Many writers in the field (e.g., Mayeda, Keil, Dutton, and Ofamo'oni, 2014; Naepi, Stein, Ahenakew, and de Oliveira Andreotti, 2017; Nakhid, 2003; Reynolds, 2017; Santamaría, Webber, Santamaría, and Dam, 2015) suggest the potential of critical race theory to articulate the processes that govern visibility and invisibility in cases such as that of Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The work of Anae (2010) builds on the idea of what it might mean to be Pacific in education, suggesting that a transformational agenda for the field be built on Pacific ideas. Anae discusses *teu le vā*, a Samoan reference for caring for relational spaces, in this case, the space of education cared for in part by acknowledging Pacific communities through increased visibility while embracing their complexity. This strand of literature, which enhances Pacific visibility as a result of foregrounding the Pacific concepts that constitute visibility, is growing (Airini et al., 2010; Anae, 2016, 2019; Coxon and Samu, 2010; Kennedy, 2019; Mara, 2011, 2013; McFall-McCaffery, 2010; Reynolds, 2016, 2018b, 2019; Toso, 2011). A parallel body of literature that alludes to the Tongan concept of *tauhi vā* also exists (Fa'avae, 2017; Fonua, 2018; Māhina, 2008) through which caring for socio-spatial relations takes place (Ka'ili, 2005).

A report from Treasury (2018) provides a further opportunity to appreciate and make visible the breadth of Pacific concepts of success. In the report, a wide Pacific view includes the visibility of cultural dimensions of wealth and prosperity, along with standard measures of financial success, and various broad measures such as happiness, safety, knowledge, being healthy, and faith. Significantly for this context, education is discussed in the report as a form of success that redefines "more traditional Eurocentric [sic] narratives about economic prosperity" (page 4) that have the potential to silence or make invisible Pacific accounts.

A further aspect of the breadth of Pacific success is intergenerational success. This means the visibility of success achieved not only as an individual but as part of an educational journey over more than one generation. The Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (see Tustin et al., 2012) and Theodore et al. (2018) conducted a statistical analysis of Māori and Pacific student outcomes through a lens of success as the private and social benefits of university graduation. Private benefits concern financial matters and are associated with employment; social benefits involve various forms of social capital such as helping family and volunteering. The study's intent was to inform policy by recognising ethnicity as a factor in the post-graduation distribution of both kinds of benefits.

Generally, inequities exist in national employment rates for Pacific and Māori groups. However, the overarching finding of Theodore et al. (2018) is that a New Zealand university education is associated with a broad range of benefits such that, at two years post-graduation, employment rates for Pacific and Māori graduates are comparable to other ethnicities. Pacific graduates appeared to contribute significantly to social benefits, a finding speculatively explained by the researchers as the result of cultural obligations, concepts of reciprocity and attention to collective benefit.

The significance of both kinds of post-graduation benefit is heightened by generally lower entry rates of Pacific and Māori students to universities. This means that, although benefits may accrue through study, there are restrictions on their distribution by entry.

Theodore et al. (2018) also reveal that Pacific and Māori graduates take on more state-sponsored debt than other groups to attend tertiary study and experience less comfortable financial circumstances during study. Aspects of this persist over time, extending at least two years post-graduation. One possible explanation given is the responsibility Pacific and Māori students may have for social and community support. The researchers refer to other literature that shows not all government policies support the thrust of equity funding, indicating a lack of alignment in initiatives and intents. Thus, while a significant

finding of the study is that ethnic inequities in the labour market can be reduced intergenerationally, by boosting Pacific and Māori students' success in completing higher education, a complex intergenerational reading is required to appreciate the factors that shape access, success, and consequent outcomes.

Toumu'a (2014) advocates for the recognition of a wide basket of interconnected forms of Pacific educational success in the adult sector. By combining data from a literature review, a Pacific consultation group, and a wider online survey, Toumu'a sought to find and describe collective ideas about literacy, success, and the links between these. The relationship between Pacific cultures, languages and identities, the aspirations Pacific people have of literacy and a literate person, and the contribution Pacific forms of literacy make to success as Pacific all feature in the study.



The research by Toumu'a (2014) reveals conceptualisations of literacy and success in the Pacific community to be broad and holistic when compared with internationally prevalent definitions. While reading and writing feature, these skills are insufficient to develop the kind of culturally-rich, relationally-focused, multi-modal, holistic literacy that Pacific respondents desire. In addition, a narrow range of reading and writing skills does not support a transformative, holistic, culturally-understood, family-focused understanding of success. These findings add to perspectives on economic forms of success by embracing a socio-cultural perspective. Toumu'a refers to the need to unpack constructions of success at the interface of cultures in Pacific education so the material and non-material dimensions of what it means to find success as Pacific become more widely understood. This is a call for Pacific visibility in the construction of success in education.

In the secondary sector, Reynolds (2017) also found various interconnected forms of success in Pacific education. The student voice paints a picture of success as a processual matter featuring multiple forms. These both stand alone and relate to each other in causal or directional ways. This study takes a relational lens to education and is supported by the Pacific cultural references to *vā*, a spatial metaphor of relationships, and the Tongan cultural reference of *poto*, a relational understanding of wisdom. Forms of Pacific success in the study include: being accepted for who one is as a student and cultural Pacific person; comfort, an environmental form of success informed by the quality of relationships in a space; participation in education, including by risk taking – a kind of success made more likely by a comfortable environment; relational resilience, which can be resourced by peer, family, and school relationships, particularly when these align; and academic achievement.

The model of Pacific success in Reynolds (2017) unpacks the processes that can lead to achievement and completion by focusing on the day-to-day reality of education as it is experienced by Pacific students. This perspective offers considerable agency to teachers and institutions to modify their thinking and behaviour. Teachers can, for example, monitor participation as a form of visible Pacific success on a lesson-by-lesson basis, paying attention to the way various teaching approaches promote Pacific students' participation and learning. Similarly, teachers and institutions can reimagine the relational language they use to deliberately signal the acceptance of Pacific students and high expectations of their potential, ensuring Pacific students are visible in pedagogical endeavours.

A relational understanding of education also asks questions of how schools understand and enact a focus on the individual Pacific student, peer group, family units, and the community. Reynolds (2017) suggests that, by considering success through cultural references such as the Samoan concept of *teu le vā*, schools and educators may enhance their abilities to see, understand, and support a wide basket of Pacific success. This takes a nuanced approach to recognising which relationships are significant and which kinds of care are possible to give to them.

Alkema (2014) extends ideas of Pacific success beyond the compulsory education sector in an informative way. The discussion looks at what Pacific adults understand by success. Again, this is a wide basket of related and integrated items. Alkema shows how people, places, and practices and pedagogies come together to support Pacific people in gaining the successes they seek. Educators who support Pacific people through holistic, collaborative, and relational means and most likely to be effective.



RUSSELL

HOME-SCHOOL AND TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Fletcher et al. (2009) make visible the factors that have a positive impact on Pacific students' literacy, language, and learning in the primary and intermediate sector. Using parent and teacher voices as data, this work builds on a previous study (Fletcher, Parkhill, and Fa'afoi, 2005) of Pacific students in Years 6 to 9 that revealed parental love and support, identity, high expectations from parents and teachers, and well-founded home-school relationships all contribute to Pacific educational success.

Recognition of students' first language by the school emerges in Fletcher et al. (2009) as a factor in Pacific students' success, as does the valuing and validation by teachers and schools of other aspects of students' culture. This involves the degree to which Pacific culture is visible and integrated into school programmes. In addition, both Pacific parents and teachers of Pacific children described home-school relationships as crucial in ensuring Pacific students' success in school. In these ways, the importance to education of recognising what it means to be Pacific is enhanced.

Despite these findings, the account of success offered by Fletcher et al. (2009) is conditional. Teachers report maintaining home-school relationships is not always easy; some Pacific parents keep their distance from the school; some parents value being able to approach the school in their first language, possibly through an intermediary such as a member of their church. The essence of these findings is echoed in the voices of Pacific parents in Tuafuti (2010).

With specific reference to literacy, Fletcher et al. (2009) reveal that teachers recognise the decoding of words as a strength of Pacific students that is unmatched by their capability in comprehension. Speculative explanations given by teachers for this include Pacific parents' time-heavy work and cultural commitments that restrict high-quality discourse between adults and children.

Teachers in Fletcher et al. (2009) perceive Pacific students as being risk-averse in the classroom. The researchers account for a lack of risk-taking in reading through Pacific students' unfamiliarity with content, compounded by a dislike of public exposure. Fletcher et al. (2005) report that some school environments may not provide a space where Pacific social behavioural expectations are easily accommodated. For instance, noisy classrooms may demand competition for teacher attention so quiet respectful students miss out. Despite these factors, the researchers report a consensus amongst teachers and parents that success, characterised by literacy learning, "is likely to be enhanced when Pacific values, languages, and cultural knowledge are made an implicit part of teaching and learning practices throughout the school" (Fletcher et al., 2009, page 32). Where the value placed on things Pacific is visible to Pacific learners, they are likely to flourish.

Nicholas and Fletcher (2017) found that visibly high teacher expectations of Pacific students are a significant factor in Pacific success in secondary education. Mathematics as a curriculum area in the secondary sector is of general concern. The decline in mathematics attainment in Years 7 to 8 in Pacific students is particularly problematic. To investigate this, Nicholas and Fletcher gathered data from one-on-one interviews with educators and parents associated with students deemed to have been relatively successful in avoiding this pattern of decline.

Key findings of Nicholas and Fletcher (2017) include the importance of cultural congruence between home and school, and the visible valuing of all cultures within mathematics classrooms. In addition, they report the significance of quality teaching and high expectations for all, particularly where the greatest gains are understood by teachers to be likely for low-achieving Pacific and other minority students. To make the best of Pacific students' potential in mathematics, the researchers suggest time, resources, and language support are offered when needed. These findings reveal a mix of cultural concerns, resourcing issues, including of the main resource of time, and attitudinal matters. Teacher attitudes to Pacific learners are also significant, especially when they are less successful than other students at the start of a programme. This combination is reflected elsewhere in the literature.

Lipine (2010) examined achievements of Samoan secondary students in Aotearoa New Zealand in six low decile secondary schools. The findings focus on the significance of the "āiga" or extended family to education. A model of success emerges that includes students' passion to achieve and their capacity to deal with inconsistencies in a variety of unaligned cultural understandings. This holistic approach to success is also informed by influences such as church, peer support, school influences, and recreational and sporting influences. A holistic approach to success makes visible Pacific community strengths. In addition, Pacific students' experiences of success can be affected by their teachers' approach to learning, their understanding of Samoan students, the effects of learning approaches, and policy. What it means to be Samoan, and how that is recognised and appreciated by teachers, is therefore significant.

Lipine (2010) suggests that understanding the relevance of family values in the schooling of Samoan secondary students is an educational opportunity for those

involved in education. Dealing with the often contradictory relationship between fa'asāmoa (the Samoan way) and fa'apālagi (the European way) is a unique aspect of Samoan students' education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Exploring values in this context is significant not only intergenerationally but also interculturally: teachers' cultural knowledge should be framed responsively to take account of heterogeneity among Samoan students. Lipine indicates that the interplay between culture, family, religion, and other social areas of life and the education of Samoan students deserves to be visible in education.

Fasavalu (2015) provides a counter narrative to stereotypical ideas of Pacific non-achievement in secondary education by presenting the voices of students who achieve well. An important finding is that a positive experience of education involves interaction with teachers who have a sense of their own and their Pacific students' agency. However, effective teachers who support students' cultural and academic identities are an exception, not the rule. Fasavalu points to the need for teacher education to pay attention to the importance of preparing teachers for Pacific academic success. An aspect of this is the visibility of Pacific learners in education, not just as students but as cultural people with family and community resources and potential.

A qualitative study conducted by Tait, Horsley, and Tait (2016) of five Pacific students sought to investigate the way students understand the value of tasks set at the New Zealand Scholarship (NZS) level. The NZS is a competitive examination generally sat in addition to other examinations by students studying at National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 3. The examination has a modest uptake when compared with other evaluation systems at the secondary level. Although this study has no Pacific theorisation or conceptualisation in its framework, findings suggest the value of examining what students attribute

success to but also what they see as success. The study suggests that ideas of success and failure are limited to the grade achieved in an examination, which provides an insufficient account of the complex motivations and actions of Pacific students. The study raises the question of how to make more visible those aspects of being Pacific that feed motivation in education so potential strengths are garnered and leveraged.

Tait et al. (2016) suggest alternative ideas about factors affecting Pacific success, which include the risk of public failure, the relative attributional importance of skill and hard work, and relational factors between students, teachers, and parents. For example, the interest value of NZS for Pacific students is enhanced by “strong teacher-student relationships” (page 53) in which students perceived that teachers value students’ efforts. In this context, successful relationships involve trust. Affective relational descriptors of this nature can be found elsewhere in the literature (e.g., Richardson et al., 2018). As a way of introducing Pacific epistemology into Pacific-focused research, attention to the literature of *teu le vā* is one way to bring Pacific visibility to relational matters in education.

Chu, Abella, et al. (2013) researched examples of success in Pacific education from the tertiary sector. Methodologies used included *talanoa* and appreciative inquiry (AI). Three broad themes and sets of sub-themes emerge from their work. One significant theme is the importance of family support in education. This combines a student’s personal commitment to success with institutional practices and family like structures. These embody a learning village focused on relational care and support. A second theme focuses on teaching and learning relationships that involve mutual respect, recognition of cultural identity and aspiration, provision of Pacific spaces, peer support, and high expectation. Finally, institutional commitment is important. This includes the visibility of significant Pacific role models, leadership that is effective in supporting Pacific students and Pacific oriented initiatives, and active institutional engagement with Pacific communities. These themes re-articulate the relationships between individuals, families, communities, teachers, institutions, and success found elsewhere, offering a layered and holistic understanding of how to build concepts of Pacific success that confound a narrow focus on student, teacher, or institution.

Also in the tertiary sector, Marat et al. (2011) undertook a mixed methods study involving Pacific student and parent voices to assess students' self-efficacy in learning strategies likely to lead to success in study. Marat et al. used a multi-dimensional concept of self-efficacy that involves a personal, proxy, and collective agency. Findings include high levels of efficacy reported by Pacific tertiary students. Significantly, the agency and perceptions of success they reported are often collective in nature, featuring self- and family responsibilities as arenas for success.

Marat et al. (2011) propose important forward-looking strategies. These include explicit statements by institutions of the kinds of learning strategies most useful for students. For example, visible support for goal setting, self-regulation and review rendered in culturally appropriate ways; a collective staff approach to responsibility for student achievement; the ongoing development of ways to support close home-institution links; and the propagation of culturally responsive assessment strategies that value different ways of being. Taken together, these strategies point to the value of explicit descriptions of what is expected of success in teaching and learning. For Pacific students who are seeking to live successfully in two worlds, as described by Lipine (2010) and others (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2014; Mila-Schaaf and Robinson, 2010), the shifting of important information from tacit to explicit domains can reduce disparities related to differences in background of educational access and achievement. The strategies suggested by Marat et al. offer a relational approach to Pacific students' success by understanding self-efficacy as socio-centric. This in turn suggests the adoption of a relational lens in matters of pedagogy, assessment, and the definition of success in Pacific education – a move likely to make visible the relationships that form Pacific students' resources as they seek success in education.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT SUCCESS

Institutional attempts to promote success through deliberate relational means are described in the literature. Wilson et al. (2011), for example, describe the Āwhina support programme developed by one tertiary institution as a strategy within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects to support Māori and Pacific students, many of whom are first-in-family or first-in-science at university. In programmes of this nature, Pacific visible is not limited to attendance but can also be seen in the underpinning relational values that structure the engagements that take place through the programme.

The Āwhina support programme is an on-off campus approach that includes mentoring in which students can act as mentee and/or mentor; outreach; tutoring sessions; high expectations of achievement; the cultivation of aspiration for further study; and collective senses of success and reciprocity. The Āwhina programme's intention is to provide an interface for te ao Māori, the Pacific world, and Western science within which Māori and Pacific students will flourish. Initial results suggested enrolments, completion, and student perceptions validate the approach. However, Wilson et al. (2011) signal a need to find confirmatory data to make more robust claims for the programme.

In a follow-up study, Richardson et al. (2018) report that a measurable positive outcome, an "Āwhina effect", may exist as a result of the Āwhina programme. The researchers sought to establish this through an examination of relative completion rates, but tempered any definitive claim with statistical and contextual caveats. Despite this, Richardson et al. recommend the extension of similar programmes across the tertiary sector, suggesting that culturally appropriate values-based programmes are likely to produce higher achievement rates

than other ad hoc equity programmes. This claim emphasises the need to highlight the values that underpin programme structures and activities as ways of thinking about resources and success. However, as the researchers note, more work is required in this area.

The potential of institutionally-organised values-driven group support to encourage various forms of Pacific success is also reported by Beatson et al. (2018). This small-scale study focuses on the experience of being a Pacific student in midwifery education. Findings include the challenges students face fitting into a course and institution; reticence to ask for help from potentially inappropriate support structures; the significance of determination; and the motivational effect on Pacific students of a desire to work with Pacific women. Pacific students also describe the experience of their course by referring to a support group, ākongā, as significant as a space in which to develop relationships. Other findings include a preference for face-to-face learning; the value of connections and belonging; collectivism as a way of approaching study and life in general; and, negatively, the costs of study and difficulties with modes of assessment.

Although the research by Beatson et al. (2018) is limited by sample size, it presents important themes of Pacific success. The importance of belonging, which involves the positive acceptance of a person's identity, is reported elsewhere (Fletcher et al., 2009; Patterson, 2012; Reynolds, 2018b), as is the importance of appropriate values to underpin support programmes (Richardson et al., 2018). What Alkema (2014) refers to as a learning village approach, one where relationships are crucial, is valued by students in Beatson et al. Finally, success for the three students in the study is family and community success not individual success, a strand of thinking that offers the possibility to institutions of re-linguaging and reconceptualising their approach to making Pacific success visible (Reynolds, 2017, 2018b). Research of this nature provides opportunities to make clear the cultural aspects of educational experience and motivation, emphasising the communitarian nature of successful educational experiences and of motivation for many Pacific people.

ALIGNMENT TO ENCOURAGE SUCCESS

Patterson (2012) investigated Pacific and Māori students' ideas about success in the tertiary sector. The investigation focuses on two strands: what success is, and practices by which it may be pursued. In the first strand, Patterson made visible pastoral categories of Pacific success that include feeling loved, being confident in being Pacific, being part of a community, having friends with similar academic goals, contributing through participating in the life of the institution, and making one's family proud. Academic success includes developing skills to support confidence in academic progress, positive interactions with academic staff, understanding the work, and feeling happy and safe in the institution's environment. Recurrent themes in the literature from this strand include the importance of the tone of the environment in which Pacific students study (Wilson et al., 2011), belonging (Fletcher et al., 2009; Patterson, 2012; Reynolds, 2018b), success as participation (Reynolds, 2017) and the importance of both the peer group and family (Rimoni, 2016).

The specific focus of Patterson (2012) is non-lecture contexts within the first year of a bachelor's degree course. Sixteen practices promise support to Pacific success. These include: engaging learners one to one; peer groups as an encouraging space for cultural growth and belonging; the facility of individual students to prepare for new levels of thinking; and the provision by support services of a learning space congruent with culturally valued practices. In addition, echoing Beatson et al. (2018), the availability of culturally appropriate support staff as members of the institution can be important. Appropriateness here might include Pacific for Pacific support. Thus, the potential to support success exists across academic staff, families, peers, the self, and support services. This combination highlights the idea that Pacific success is not the responsibility of one group or individual but is best seen in a

holistic way. As a consequence, alignment between the aims, intentions, and values of those people and spaces that aim to support Pacific students is at a premium. Consequently, actions to build alignment based on Pacific ideas and practices are valuable.

A holistic understanding of success also values alignment between institutions. Sanner and Deis (2009) provide an example from the United States of America of inter-school collaboration supporting the success of minority groups. Key ingredients include joint measures, such as: improving advertisement of support services; improving understanding of student demographics; the development of strategies leading to student success; deliberate attention to success; and giving students a second chance. Evaluative measures applied to these initiatives include increases in the numbers of minority students willing to access support services, the effect of diagnostic skill testing and measures to eradicate gaps, and student learning. Sanner and Deis give credit to institutional collaboration for supporting continuous institutional attention to past progress and future needs informed by input from students, staff, and administrators.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, collaborative relationships between faculties in tertiary institutions and between schools in the compulsory education sector, possibly supported by Kāhui Ako/Communities of Learning structures (Ministry of Education, 2019), may potentially leverage aligned strategies that place agency for Pacific students' success in groups of institutions. This has particular potential when collaborative institutional relationships reflect the potential learning pathways of students and are founded on Pacific visible.

Towner et al. (2017) detail ideas about Pacific success in a private training institute (PTE), a highly relevant educational context for this review because large numbers of Pacific tertiary students study in PTEs

(Ministry of Education, 2011). In accounting for success as higher than average completion rates for Pacific students, the researchers sought the student voice that focused on initiatives within the institution. Initiatives included: targeted workshops; successful senior students as study buddies; staff-supported evening study sessions; occasional whānau social celebration evenings; extra tutorials; and one-to-one student-staff sessions. Since most respondents were Tongan, this is, in effect, a single ethnicity study. Towner et al. report that students attribute educational success to support in study skills, the building of high-trust relationships, a supportive environment, and study buddies. Trust, as a key theme in this study, is centred on students' relationships with

open and approachable staff. In addition, a deep connection with the PTE through involvement in culturally familiar and acceptable events can support pride in belonging.

These findings suggest the significance of relational activity by staff, and the importance of time, opportunities, and structure are enablers for this. The study resonates with Richardson et al. (2018) in suggesting that not all equity-oriented initiatives are equally effective. The findings of Towner et al. (2017) place emphasis on understanding success in Pacific education through a focus on the individual and collective, echoing the student voice at the secondary level in Reynolds (2018b) and elsewhere.



PEER RELATIONSHIPS AND SUCCESS

Reynolds (2018b) discusses the visibility of Pacific peer groups as being important to various forms of Pacific success. In general, Pacific peer group interaction is not a focus in Pacific education research. Increased appreciation of the visibility of Pacific relational strengths expressed in peer situations is, therefore, an area with great potential. Acceptance by peers is a form of success because it validates a student for who they are as a Pacific person, and what they might achieve (Nakhid, 2003). Students in this study describe their peer body as brothers, a collective term also found elsewhere (Rimoni, 2016; N. P. Samu, 2015) as a site for acceptance of success and relational resilience.

Reynolds (2018b) reports that competing forms of success, Pacific and otherwise, in education can construct moments of choice. For instance, success in conforming to media-supported (Loto et al., 2006) negative stereotypes of Pacific people can be in conflict with Pacific success as academic prowess. In such cases, because the identity of the brotherhood and its ability to support success is affected by external representations and related negative expectations, responsibility is placed on schools to be deliberate in the way they care for their relationships with the Pacific group(s) as well as with individual Pacific students. This raises the question of the extent to which schools *teu le vā*, or care, for their relationships with the Pacific collective, and in what areas: academic, sporting, and/or cultural? In other words, the pervasiveness of factors that produce minoritisation demands that schools counter negative messages and cultivate success as acceptance of Pacific students for who they are; inaction constitutes relational disregard for the group.

Kele (2018), in a Solomon Islands study, reiterates the value to educational success of peer interaction and effective student-teacher relationships for students from Pacific Island cultures. Findings include the value of peer support to progress in mathematics; the significance of teachers listening to students about what is helpful to their learning; and the need for teachers to reflect, review, and responsively re-examine their classroom approaches. Relational matters, including peer support, appear key to mathematical progress in the Solomon Islands context, a society that, like many Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, has a communal focus. In this study, teacher behaviour that expresses care and connection, when legitimised by a role description focused on responding to students, offers students an opportunity to find their place in mathematics.

Similarly, in research set in Hawaii, but applicable to distance education in other Pacific nations, Rao and Giuli (2010) highlight the significance to Pacific students of synchronous meetings that bring people together even if through virtual means; the appointment of staff whose relationships with students will last the whole course; and considerations of students' home lives when considering course structure and expectations. Such thinking echoes New Zealand literature (Averill, 2009; Fonua, 2018) and highlights the potential of educational strategies that deliberately align with the values of those intended as the beneficiaries of the process. In the context of Pacific education, this implies the visibility of Pacific values.



RELATIONAL SPACES

Fa'avae (2017) discusses the education of Tongan males in the context of community. He shows how the extended family and elders are central to comprehending Tongan students' motivations and achievement. Fa'avae encourages researchers and practitioners to use Pacific concepts to understand the dynamics of Pacific social life so that education can be reframed as learning about the self in relationships with others. Challenges to education identified by Fa'avae include aligning cultural models of school leadership with those in communities, encouraging the identification of collective goals, and using strategies and structures that are recognisable to students because they reflect community practice. An important aspect of this study is a focus on relational matters through tauhi vā, caring for sacred relational spaces. This is a navigation that extends beyond student-teacher relationships and into all relationships in education, including those involving parents, families, communities, and schools.

Reynolds (2018a) examined educational environments at the classroom level, seeking, through the application of the Pacific concept of vā, to account for the relationships that contribute to Pacific success. Teacher-student relationships in Pacific education have been understood as a function of an individual teacher's disposition (cf. Hawk, Cowley, Hill, and Sutherland, 2002). A contrasting vā-based approach makes visible a cultural and spatial understanding of how such relationships can be understood.

Findings suggest that thinking about aspects of relationships in spatial terms, such as proximity, education as a gift given in the educational space, and classrooms as wide and potentially threatening spaces, can help teachers construct alternative ways of behaving that are valued by Pacific students. Such thinking offers a Pacific-theorised account of the risk averseness (Fletcher et al., 2009; Tait et al., 2016) of Pacific students

in public spaces, and of the relational value of one-to-one encounters (Averill, 2009; Patterson, 2012; Towner et al., 2017) between Pacific learners and their teachers or mentors. The benefits of understanding Pacific education through Pacific conceptualisations, including methodology, have been recognised elsewhere (Wikaire et al., 2017).

Classroom space and pedagogy were examined by Abella (2016, 2018). She studied a successful Pacific teacher's approach in a low decile school as a case study. Mapping artefacts for learning, such as information technology (IT) hardware and software, Abella found that the teacher constructed her pedagogical approaches in response to student need and circumstances. For instance, the teacher integrated mathematics into other subjects or everyday life as experienced by students, and acknowledged the time of day in expectations and teaching approach. Effective strategies included high teacher expectations of students, a reworking of space to create communal elements but also to encourage independent learning, and visual representations relevant to Pacific (and other) learners. Constraints on the teacher's effectiveness observed by Abella included limited availability of IT hardware, particularly for homework, low levels of literacy, large class sizes, and a lack of Pacific elements in the curriculum provided by the school and education system generally. The teacher in the study identified professional learning and development as an area of need, particularly relating to technology and pedagogies made possible by technology. Abella points to the interface between a teacher, their understandings, tools, and actions in educational spaces as an important area for study, particularly when integrated with other environmental factors in the day-to-day enactment of education. An approach that looks at what happens in the relational space of a classroom offers an opportunity to understand more of the factors involved in creating success in Pacific education.

In her doctoral dissertation, Averill (2009) examined teacher–student relationships in classrooms of schools characterised by low socio-economic circumstances. In the research, positive classroom spaces feature care. Averill identified that dispositional aspects, such as liking, respect, mutual tolerance, and being able to express one’s identity are those that support caring relationships. This is true if mutual connections as people and learners, knowledge about relevant cultures, and the enhancement of identity are present. Averill reports that care-based pedagogical practices include one-to-one teacher–student interactions, opportunities for sharing one’s identity, expectations of progress in mathematics, and humour. These findings sit well with other studies that value close relational contact (Tait et al., 2016), high expectations (Fletcher et al., 2005; Nicholas and Fletcher, 2017), and the giving of the self (Reynolds, 2018a).

Hill, Hunter, and Hunter (2019) discuss utility, peer collaboration or group work, effort and practice, and family support as Pacific students’ four top-ranked mathematics educational values. Utility focuses on the perceived value of mathematics to wider life, either in day-to-day activities or as support for a career. This highlights the importance of teachers providing authentic learning opportunities for students from all cultural groups. The researchers link peer collaboration to ideas of reciprocity and collectivism as Pacific cultural values. The value given by students to effort suggests they see success and understanding in mathematics as a result of hard work. This finding has implications where low expectations, based on the perceived laziness of Pacific students, exist. The finding that Pacific students value the active involvement of their family in mathematics learning counteracts ideas that Pacific parents either do not care (Nakhid, 2006) or lack the skills to care effectively (Turner, Rubie-Davies, and Webber, 2013). An implication of this study for Pacific education

is that effective classroom relationships are those that make space for Pacific learners’ lives, parents, families, and communities.

In the specific cultural space of a music conservatory, Rakena, Airini, and Brown (2016) examined the dynamic of student–teacher relationships practised through the dyad of novice–expert. They report Māori and Pacific students to be fluent in discussing power relationships in micro and macro contexts in their music education. This includes how teaching norms affects students’ ability to study and the wider consequences of pedagogy. For instance, actions and dialogues that devalue a student’s culture can lead to feelings of marginalisation. In addition, students report that their ideas of appropriateness, presentation, and communication can challenge the institution, potentially with negative consequences. The researchers conclude that coping with the rules of engagement within an institution creates additional learning for Māori and Pacific students over that required of students socialised into hegemonic cultural norms.

Although institutional culture can act as a barrier, especially when it is invisible to those with the most power to effect change, Māori and Pacific students in Rakena et al. (2016) claim relational resources provide a context for motivation and success. Social factors that support success include: peer influence, cultural networking, family, and attention to spirituality. These operate in complex ways. For instance, family relationships obligate time and attention but in return provide emotional and psychological support; and faith, as a motivation reveals the significance to students’ education of their relationship with God. These factors support students so they benefit from the effective aspects of institutional practice, such as the demonstration by teachers of their expertise, an important aspect of a conservatory model of education. Making Pacific strengths visible and valued in educational contexts such as this is likely to support learners’ progress.

APPRECIATIVE MENTORING FOR SUCCESS

The structure of mentoring programmes that effectively support Pacific students is discussed in the Pacific wellbeing section of this review. Here, the literature of mentoring in Pacific education is considered in relational terms. Pacific families and communities are structured around mentoring situations. The literature looks at the extent to which this strength is recognised and leveraged in formal mentoring situations.

Chu (2009) describes the potential of mentoring in tertiary education by reflecting on personal experience. Using an AI framework that contrasts with problem-solving approaches that try to unpick problems from a known position, Chu describes how the “dream” of optimal outcomes for Pacific students can be supported through relational means. An AI mentoring approach combines the desire of Pacific students for one-to-one contact with a space in which Pacific cultural norms and dreams become strengths. The development of identity, valuing of culture, and enactment of success on a student’s terms are all possible in AI, mediated by the expertise of a mentor. Chu describes examples of AI framed in a traditional mentor-mentee format and in a leadership

cluster where the potential for those involved to pursue leadership is socially articulated and explored. A group-based approach to leadership development adds the component of peer support to the mix, a positive aspect of Pacific success in the literature (Chu, Abella, et al., 2013; Lipine, 2010; Patterson, 2012; Reynolds, 2018b; Rimoni, 2016).

Developing her discussion of mentoring further, Chu (2018) portrays Pacific mentoring as a holistic experience. In this, mentoring is leadership development that involves the wider family in a relationship of trust; mentees do not stand alone. In addition, mentoring relationships that begin in education do not remain exclusively educational. Chu points out that, for effective mentorship to embrace Pacific values in academic institutions, employment practices need to ensure Pacific academic mentors are available for Pacific students to work with. This concern can be extended to other sectors of education. There is a dearth of Pacific teachers in the compulsory education sector. The provision of time and space for existing Pacific faculty members to offer mentorship has potential to address this situation. Time and space, as well as other resources, are significant in any attempt to encourage Pacific students to become teachers and academics, because the commitments of mentors are great.

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Several barriers to the success of Pacific students in education are embedded elsewhere in this review. In this section, literature is presented that draws attention to issues that make Pacific success hard to gain and that mute the potential of Pacific visibility in education.

Wikaire et al. (2017) conducted a largely quantitative study designed to establish predictors for Māori and Pacific students' success relative to non-Māori and Pacific in several health-related Bachelor's level courses. They found the impact of school decile and participation in bridging programmes were significant for outcomes when other variables were controlled. In addition, the first year of study proved highly predictive of further outcomes. Wikaire et al. suggest that bridging programmes help address, but not eradicate, issues stemming from gaps in academic knowledge and in experience inherent in the transition between secondary and tertiary education for Māori and Pacific students.

Wikaire et al. (2017) link the fact that results in the initial year of study were both predicted by pre-tertiary factors and predictive of later results in a student's programme, and to a literature base that describes the first year of health study to be a daunting and potentially unsafe experience. Such courses are characterised by cultural isolation, racial discrimination, and large class sizes in largely white institutions. In the researchers' view, survival of the first year may suggest a student has sufficient resources to continue to later success, but this does not remove responsibility for institutions to ensure the study experience is not characterised by negative racialised experiences. These would include Pacific cultural invisibility. The researchers draw attention to the need to consider the environments created by institutions, particularly in terms of the way they privilege some ethnic groups over others, when accounting for rates of

minority students' success in study. While pre-tertiary and early academic variables are relevant to ongoing success, Wikaire et al. found these were insufficient to account for the total difference observable in outcomes for Māori and Pacific students when compared with non-Māori and Pacific peers. A recommendation is that institutions widen their support to include not only bridging and the first year of study but to continue it for subsequent years of health courses.

Retention of students in the tertiary sector is the focus multi-sourced research by Benseman, Coxon, Anderson, and Anae (2006). They found five areas that, when poorly managed, provide difficulties for Pacific students that can adversely affect retention. These are: motivation and attitude, particularly in communities where the cultural capital gained by previous tertiary education experience is thin; family pressure and obligations; peer relationships that can be a help or a hindrance; financial issues; and a lack of support within the tertiary institution. The Pacific student voice reveals several positive steps likely to help in retention. Among them are an information service for secondary students facilitated by Pacific tertiary students as role models, motivators and information bringers. In addition, having a Pacific presence in the tertiary institution, appropriate pedagogy, support, timely information, and an effective interface between Pacific communities and tertiary institutions emerge as important areas with potential to improve Pacific student retention and future visible success.

Perrot (2015) provides a discussion of Pacific students' perceptions of how they obtain success in tertiary education. The main finding is a tension between complex barriers placed in front of Pacific students by practices within education and the personal strategies and approaches some students use to overcome these as Pacific people and succeed. Perrot uses the concept of resilience to account for aspects of individual Pacific students' success.

Many of the strategies Perrot describes, however, have relational aspects. Pertinent findings include the value to Pacific success of institutions adopting a long time-scale when appraising a student's potential. Given institutionally framed forms of exclusion, it is not unreasonable to expect the academic success of some Pacific students will take longer than for others who are well positioned in and by education at enrolment. The creation of explicit steps to success though goal setting is also valued by Perrot. The potential of this strategy is related to

the cultural journey some Pacific students have to make to succeed in an education system in which Pacific cultures are less visible and valued than others. Perrot's work intersects with other accounts of cultural issues in Pacific experiences of education (e.g., Houghton, 2015; Lipine, 2010; Marat et al., 2011). This work points to the value of listening to the journeys of individuals to make visible, appreciate, and develop clear understandings of the complexity of forces at work in Pacific education.



Theme Two:

Identities, Languages,
and Cultures



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Identities, Languages,
and Cultures





Identities, languages, and cultures involves:

- » understanding the construction of Pacific identities
- » the relationship between language and identity
- » leadership as a factor in supporting Pacific identity formation
- » the significance of home-school relationships to language, culture, and identity
- » teacher-student relationships and identity construction
- » processes of Pacific identity construction
- » specific cultural sites of significance for Pacific students.

Culture and identity are significant, interlinked aspects of life in the literature of Pacific education. Language is an important element of culture that contributes to identity. This section starts with literature that discusses the nature of culture and identity in the context of diasporic Pacific people. Literature is also presented that foregrounds the contribution of leadership in education to creating positive spaces for Pacific language, culture, and identity. Schools are inevitably places that contribute to identity construction. This is because education as a process provides experiences that support, shape, or undermine learners' sense of who they are. The literature considers this process through cultural responsiveness, examination of home-school relationships, in-school negotiations between world views, and descriptions of specific identity-centred processes. In addition, literature is examined that describes specific sites that support Pacific culture and identity within education. Taken as a whole, the literature of Pacific education on culture and identity alludes to experiences of tension between cultural norms and ideas about identity that have different origins, Pacific and non-Pacific. Wellbeing, success in education, and access to high-quality education are well served when these tensions are positively resolved so that diversity is a strength and not made a problem.



UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY

When looking at culture and identity in Pacific education, it is helpful to consider Mila-Schaaf and Hudson (2009a) who suggest culture can be understood as a “system of logic with its own underpinning assumptions and internal coherence” and as “an entire eco-system of interrelated ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, and behaviours” (page 115). This definition directs attention away from specific cultural items and towards the overarching relationships between them. Significant relationships discussed in the literature include those between school and home, and between a Pacific person and their language. This association is affected by the relationship between the representatives of the school and the Pacific language in question.

Mila-Schaaf (2009) provides a Pacific-origin way of understanding identity capable of rendering the significance of relational matters. Mila-Schaaf describes identity in relation to *vā*, a Pacific-origin multi-dimensional spatial metaphor of relationality, or the state of being related. Through *vā*, identity is determined through genealogical, inherited, and created relationships “within a relational force-field of interdependence” (page 135). Identity is a matter of positioning. In many Pacific cultures, identity is constructed relationally so that good ethics express identity by privileging interpersonal relationships above individual rights. The consequences of Mila-Schaaf’s understanding of *vā* when shifted from her focus of health ethics to education, remain the same: of importance is the state of relationships between knowledge systems. The knowledge system embedded in a public service, such as education, is embodied in institutionalised practice and the understandings of those working in the system. This exists in relation to other knowledge systems carried by groups in receipt of the service who were not involved in its inception and development, such as Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities. Thus, the issue is the

configuration of the relationship between knowledges held and valued by Pacific parents, families, and communities and knowledge held and valued by education as a whole and, specifically, the educators of Pacific learners. A well-configured relationship between these knowledge systems requires an authentic partnership between people. The inclusion of Pacific parents, families, and communities in Pacific children’s education is not only a necessary prerequisite, it is a necessary step that leads to the reciprocal relationships between the knowledge systems.

It is important to note that relationships between groups or knowledge systems are not static; critical thought is required to understand the contextual value of elements of knowledge systems and to avoid simplifications, such as essentialism and reification. Culture evolves over time. Simplifications are unhelpful because they do not reflect the complexities of identity under the umbrella (T. Samu, 2006) of Pacific education, nor do they reflect the fact that one’s identity can be multiple and contextual. Considering relational categories such as identity through a *vā* lens emphasises context as space and time. Although not all groups in Pacific education may identify with the concept of *vā*, the literature of the *vā* in Pacific education is growing (Airini et al., 2010; Anae, 2010; Frengley-Vaipuna et al., 2011; Māhina, 2008; Reynolds, 2016) and the concept is helpful in re-reading the ways identity construction is mediated in and through education.

Language, relationships, and family emerge as significant components of identity in Pacific education in a study by Hunter et al. (2016) that synthesises five year-long studies of data gathered from various participants in Pacific mathematics education. Hunter et al. report that the attitude of education professionals to Pacific languages can vary. The significance of Pacific languages is affirmed by professionals who value students using their Pacific language(s) in addition to English. However, other educators attribute

difficulties in speaking English to the use of a Pacific language at home, failing to recognise the long-term value of bilingualism and the aspects of identity associated with language. Such attribution indicates an instrumental understanding of the school, divorcing education from identity. Hunter et al. also report that, where their language proficiency does not meet the demands of the school and insufficient support is provided, parents find meetings with the school difficult. The researchers show how both parents and learners can feel devalued if their language of choice is not incorporated appropriately into institutional practices. Such feelings indicate how the politics of language inclusion at local and national levels can affect identity at individual and group levels. Understanding that fluency in Pacific languages is an asset rather than possible deficit in relation to fluency in English is, therefore, both a personal and political matter.

Hunter et al. (2016) also indicate that inclusive and collaborative learning spaces that support identity in Pacific education are possible where teachers build on the idea of family through a Pacific lens. Clear and strong links between family and school act to support Pacific students and teachers in their endeavours. Productive links involve relationships of respect that can be signalled by schools in many ways. Simple things, like correct spelling and pronunciation of names, can be significant. Learning activities embedded in the lived experiences of Pacific students also indicate respect, not least because of the knowledge displayed by teachers of their students under such circumstances. Where students are encouraged to bring identity-rich items or knowledge to school, the researchers point out that staff and other students can learn in a reciprocal process. This reiterates the need for equitable partnerships as being crucial to well-configured relationships in Pacific education.

While some teachers in the research by Hunter et al. (2016) display deficit attitudes to the richness of Pacific students' lives, professional learning and development helps others to gain knowledge to start bridging processes between cultural understandings. The researchers indicate that, despite policy, issues relevant to identity and culture remain as an aspect of the cross-cultural misinterpretation that happens in education. Thus, a way forward may be to disturb default interpretations of familiar educational events to make space for the expression of Pacific identity, language, and culture.

As previously indicated, discussions of culture and identity need not be limited to individuals. Education as a service can have an identity that sits alongside the identities of students and others involved. Leaupepe and Sauni (2014) discuss Pacific ECE programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand, recounting a history of development from garages and church halls, through struggles for equity and recognition to the establishment of chartered, licensed Pacific ECE services. They describe the present situation in which Pacific ideas compete with non-Pacific ideas in ECE, such as the way children and education are viewed. This is a matter of values and identity: education is valued in Pacific thinking not as a profit-making venture but an act of service. The centrality of churches in Pacific ECE contexts indicates the importance for Pacific people of faith and church participation. Church-supported Pacific community approaches contrast with privatisation in ECE more generally. In Leaupepe and Sauni's account, Pacific ECE demonstrates a diverse community's understanding of the significance of education as a way of developing identity. Because language, values, and accepted behaviours benefit from a formal place of reproduction in diasporic societies, ECE can provide a sheltered space, close to families, where the identity construction of new members of Pacific communities through immersion in Pacific languages and cultures can be valued.

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

Si'ilata et al. (2017) suggest that the way forward in Pacific education involves nurturing a situation where the success of Pacific learners does not hinge on them changing to adopt the majority culture, literacy, and identity. Instead, a transformation is required in education whereby Pacific learners are supported to make meaningful connections between their funds of knowledge – from home and school – so they experience success in both spaces. The authors argue that, to help Pacific students in this, several dimensions can provide guidance to teachers and schools: knowledge and high expectations of learners; knowledge of bilingualism in a Pacific context; appropriate strategies of instruction that include Pacific languages as resources; partnerships with families and communities; and the forging in school of Pacific connections involving languages, worlds, literacy, and texts.

Si'ilata et al. (2017) use the metaphor of a va'atele, a double-hulled ocean going canoe, to suggest the balance and alignment required in an endeavour to benefit from living in two worlds. They suggest relationships that are inquiry-focused, aimed at success, and collaborative can lead to: Pacific success in which language

and literacy are curriculum-relevant tools; teaching that connects with and builds on languages, identity, and culture to meet curriculum demands; support for teachers through school leadership; and professional learning and development so teachers can improve practice to facilitate Pacific learners' success.

A contribution of Si'ilata et al. (2017) is to focus on the significance of language as an important cornerstone and conveyor of culture in Pacific education. International literature (Valenzuela, 2005) shows how schools can subtract from students when their language and other cultural aspects are invisible or devalued. The va'atele framework highlights how various literacies can complement each other when they are made an explicit aim. Valuing what students bring to school can produce a situation where education adds to students' funds of knowledge without also depleting them. Linguistic diversity is a resource in classrooms when it is incorporated into day-to-day business and not regarded as irrelevant or a problem. Si'ilata et al. say that creating this positive situation is the responsibility of all teachers – all can improve their practice to create opportunities for Pacific (and other) students to build on their language, identity, and culture in meaningful ways.

LEADERSHIP TO SUPPORT CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Cardno et al. (2018) examine leadership that seeks to develop inclusive secondary education in a diverse low decile context. Qualitative data from leaders reveal that concepts of inclusiveness are often limited to Māori and Pacific groups, despite a wider diversity in a school, and effective leadership practices are absent, despite the espoused commitment of leaders. While leaders may see ethnic diversity as a strength of a school, Cardno et al. recognise the challenge for school leaders of effectively managing multi-ethnic differences in their schools. A factor acknowledged by the study is the inconsistency in the meaning of diversity and inclusion across the literature and in practice. In Cardno et al., inclusion is discussed as relevant to populations that are under threat of exclusion.

Practices designed by schools to promote inclusion, as identified in Cardno et al. (2018), include attempts at race-matching staff and students. In effect, this means finding Pacific teachers to teach Pacific students. In addition, the researchers report priority programmes for Pacific and Māori high-achieving, gifted, talented, and low-achieving students, and more general ethnic-specific mentoring programmes. They note that a consequence of ethnically targeted programmes can be the exclusion of ethnic minorities outside the target group. Where these groups are as poorly served by education as groups that are targeted, issues of equity need to be considered. Similarly, day-to-day practices intended to be inclusive, such as special awards ceremonies, sports activities, and cultural activities, are often targeted at Pacific and Māori students rather than all groups that would benefit from greater visibility. Other inclusion practices reported as effective by schools include opportunities for parents to participate as the audience of various events, and regular academic conferencing between teacher, student, and parents. However, the

researchers note that inclusive practices are not always overtly discussed as matters of inclusion (or visibility). This perhaps relates to an overall lack of comprehension about what ethnic inclusion might mean in school.

Thus, Cardno et al. (2018) reveal the way that well-meaning schools can construct practices that have potential for inclusion of Pacific students and communities in education but that are undercut in their effectiveness by insufficient theorising or discussion about the issues involved. School initiatives in Pacific education benefit from the authentic involvement of Pacific communities through fono, community-based mobilisation, and discussion. Where this approach is not adopted, investment of time and effort can be blunted, particularly under pressure from the complex operational needs of a multi-ethnic school. Hardworking staff can follow paths that lead to initiatives at the wrong time or in the wrong place, and to approaches that do not sit comfortably with the Pacific communities they are intended to serve.

A further study examining the relationship between leadership and Pacific student success, and relevant to a discussion of culture and identity, was conducted by Taleni, Macfarlane, Macfarlane, and Fletcher (2017). This reports the results of talanoa involving four principals from the primary and secondary sectors who were selected for their commitment to centrally-funded Pacific equity initiatives. The research reveals these principals value the weaving of several conceptualisations, initiatives, and attitudes into everyday school life. These include dynamic relationships with students and their families; understandings of cultural world views from the Pacific region; achievement data being used effectively; ongoing development of culturally responsive leadership; the creation of effective community engagement; high expectations in the areas of achievement and success; and engagement in motivational professional development.

An important element of many of these items is the leader adopting the identity of a learner. For instance, the use of data involves learning about learners and the development of Pacific world views requires leaders to continue to expand their knowledge of community. Thus, to provide a grounding for the culture and identity of Pacific learners to be valued, leaders need to develop their own enabling culture and identity.

Taleni et al. (2017) also show the potential for schools of having Pacific people with community links, appropriate cultural starting points for engagement, and passion

for their communities. A product of schools engaging with community can be the development of safe spaces in which Pacific visible provides a context for welcoming the involvement of Pacific parents, families, and communities. Community relationship brokers are, in effect, a resource for leaders and others who wish to learn to be more contextually responsive in their work. Consequent attention is drawn to the need in education, training, staff development, and promotion for the care and nurturing of Pacific staff who have this potential, and for structures for their potential to be shared.



HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

In the literature, discussions of identity in Pacific education extend beyond schools to embrace relationships with families. Paulsen (2018) studied experiences and perspectives of students of the Pacific diaspora and their parents in Melbourne, Australia. This research is relevant because it highlights notions of relationality understood within a diverse diasporic Pacific population.

Paulsen (2018) reports that, although parents may be engaged with their children's education in the home space, this is not necessarily transferred to the school space. Sometimes, this is because the school seems to parents to be an alien place in which a perceived lack of expertise provokes anxiety. While students and parents in the research express commitment to education and have relevant long-term strategies, such as career goals, parents' confidence at managing school processes can be limited. In some cases, parental confidence decreases as students progress through schooling. In others, where a parent's educational background is strong, levels of confidence are relatively high. An implication of these findings is that, if schools value Pacific parents' input into education, they need to be mindful how parents may feel in relation to the school, a significant finding in the PowerUP longitudinal evaluation.

Student perceptions were also investigated by Paulsen (2018). The author reports that conflicts between home and school expectations increase as students progress through the education system. An important area of conflict is over time use. These conflicts become indirectly visible to teachers; as schools demand more time of senior students, teachers see less commitment from Pacific students. Paulsen suggests some parents do not realise the out-of-class time commitment expected by schools. Where this is true,

improved communication is a potential way forward. Paulsen notes that, where strong relationships are in place, students take part in school, particularly in leadership and volunteer roles with which they are familiar from home. Peer influence is also a strong feature in this study.

Paulsen's (2018) findings draw attention to the home-school connection as a way forward in the educational success of Pacific students. However, relying on parents to have the cultural capital to make close connections can result in inconsistency. Some parents express support for students in terms of learning and close engagement with staff, others concentrate on support in more physical ways, such as uniforms. These differences are related to parental confidence and resources more than motivation or priority. Parents may be willing to change their behaviour to maximise educational success, but Paulsen points out the irony in schools expecting student compliance and conformity as a prerequisite for educational success. By implication, conformity does not sit well with student agency in identity construction, and neither does the exclusion of parents from aspects and sites of education. However, unwittingly, this situation is constructed and there are cases about uniform change to include cultural attire.

In addition, the different readings by parents and school staff of the same situation, as reported in Paulsen (2018), show how values and expectations affect the experience a person has, particularly across cultural boundaries. Paulsen concludes that schools need to find alternative ways of supporting parents to understand what is involved in educational success. This should be coupled with schools changing their perceptions of what success might mean, in order to accommodate diverse students' interests and strengths. Understanding notions of success requires schools to undertake authentic engagement with communities in equitable, reciprocal partnerships.

Both conclusions argue for the value of alignment in identity construction. This is because the management of conflict places an unnecessary burden on students as they seek success by navigating multiple identities across two (or more) worlds.

Flavell's (2014) thesis reached similar conclusions to Paulsen (2018) but in a New Zealand context. The author found that, although Pacific parents show an understanding of the education system through their choice of school, they may not relate to the individualised communication provided by schools. In addition, students often silo school and home life, and avoid learning conversations with parents (Nakhid, 2003) of the kind facilitated by Pacific PowerUp. Consequently, despite a desire for progress, parental frustration and disconnection is evident. One explanation is that students fear they may fail to meet parental expectations and so adopt a low-profile, passive-classroom approach and measures, to keep the worlds apart. In these circumstances, Flavell recommends schools develop more inclusive strategies that encourage dialogue between the parties in Pacific education and parents, students, and teachers. In this way, a shared understanding of students' learning needs and targets can be reached, partnerships developed, and relational conflict, which can negatively affect student identity development, minimised.

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

Porter-Samuels (2013) literature review unpacks ideas and implications of cultural responsiveness in the field of Pacific education, which is useful for articulating the journey towards cultural responsiveness as a series of logical steps. The definition used for culturally responsive schooling involves going beyond the surface acknowledgement of the culture of another to a place where a deeper understanding

affects teaching strategies. For this to happen, an understanding of the diversity of Pacific is required, accompanied by a clear sense of the identity of individual learners including their relationships with their parents, families, and communities. This can be developed by teachers knowing who they are teaching through engagement with representative Pacific community members.

In developing cultural responsiveness, learning cannot be limited to appreciating others. Porter-Samuels (2013) stresses that teachers need to recognise power as it operates in education and in their practice. For instance, value judgements that underpin curriculum and pedagogy need to be recognised as aspects of power, in order to be adjusted or replaced. The implication of Porter-Samuels' review is that, by combining knowledge of students, the self, and practice, teachers position themselves to reject deficit explanations for what they see in classrooms, shifting to relationally constructed, motivating and, therefore, effective practice. Such practice makes space for students' identities because power over what is learned and how it is encountered is shared. Consequently, learning can be relevant and authentic.

Reynolds (2019) extends the discussion of cultural responsiveness to cultural humility in an article that features a review of the literature of culturally relevant education and culturally responsive pedagogy. Addressing Pacific education through the concept of *vā*, Reynolds shows how teachers' understandings of themselves, in relation to Pacific students, can be enhanced through conceptual learning. For this kind of learning, it is helpful for teachers to have a disposition of humility in which the student and parent voice is valued as a basis for constructing actions that express relational care. By implication, these circumstances create space for students to learn in ways in which they are acknowledged and visible as cultural people and in which their identity construction process, culture, and language(s) are valued.

SYSTEM LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITY

McAra-Couper et al. (2018) discuss mutual prejudice among professionals and service users. Although this is health research, the nature of the relationships involved resonate in education because a key idea is that professional logic may not be significant to service users who bring their own logic. While prejudice is generally seen as a negative force and an area to be avoided, McAra-Couper et al. argue that prejudices merely exist, and need to be recognised and moved past. Thus, in the choice of hospital for giving birth, familiarity, closeness to home, and the advice of family and friends are prejudices held by Pacific women; the idea that a primary rather than tertiary facility is better for uncomplicated births is a prejudice held by midwives. The lesson is that fruitful discussion and greater mutual understanding can be facilitated by communicating and respecting the points of view of others, and that applies to education as much as to health.

When those responsible for a system, be it health or education, assume members of the communities they serve are ignorant, or they read the behaviours of community members as evidence of a lack of engagement, this can make invisible the values that form the core of identity. This situation may be exacerbated when matters of education, for instance, are out of the scope of community members' direct experience. As highlighted in Flavell (2014); and Paulsen (2018), communication to promote alignment in terms of goals and ways of achieving them is crucial.

As discussed, language is an important cultural element of identity. The way literacy is understood can affect identity construction. Robertson (2013) reiterates the concerns of many writers on Pacific education in a literature review of the area, with a special focus on literacy. This sketches the numbers of people from Pacific groups

who speak a Pacific language and describes aspects of best practice in second-language acquisition. In addition, Robertson reviews literature in the areas of strengthening home-school connections; world-shifting as an experience and strategy amongst young people; ways of recognising strengths so they can be deliberately included in formal education; and critical literacy. This is valuable as a way of positioning texts and student experience so critical awareness of the power relations that perpetuate power and legitimacy in society becomes a normal part of literacy. Taken as a whole, Robertson points to the nexus of language, culture, and identity, articulating this in an account that also considers strategies that education can take to recognise realities for Pacific students. This work resonates with that in other sectors, such as Toumu'a (2014) in adult education.

The way academic subjects are understood is another area in which system-level relationships can affect student identity. Fonua (2018) shows how changes in a teacher's practice can operate to better integrate knowledge from the Pacific into science programmes at the tertiary level to increase student motivation. The author discusses issues arising from the way Tongan values can collide with those embedded in teaching programmes, using the example that the topic of human reproduction is a tapu or sacred subject, and inappropriate for Tongans in mixed-sex classes.

As a result of learning from her students, Fonua (2018) describes ways of responding to this situation. These include options for tutorial classes organised by sex and changes to the images used in teaching. In addition, she discusses introducing Tongan knowledge, for instance, Tongan ways of healing of wounds, to stand beside Western accounts, and how these satisfy the demands for academic references for material currently outside the academy. Fonua also describes adjusting assessment practices to accommodate changes in content that allow students to teach their

teacher about gaps in their knowledge. This undermines any assumption that knowledge gaps exist for students only. Fonua reports that students' identities as positive science learners are supported when institutional practice embraces their indigeneity in a space that accepts Tongan language, culture, and values. Fonua's discussion focuses on power relations in the classroom. It aligns with literature discussed above (Porter-

Samuels, 2013; Reynolds, 2019) that values teachers as learners about their own cultural position and the origins of the material they bring to class. The exposure of teachers' assumptions and their increased awareness of power can facilitate a space of respectful sharing, where the conditions of learning are sympathetic to what a teacher knows and continues to learn about students' values in science as in other contexts.



PROCESSES OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

Rimoni (2016) analyses the voice of 12 Samoan secondary students from three schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, describing key aspects of experience that contribute to their success at school. These include schools acknowledging the boys for who they are and for the multiple identities they have. The author illustrates the potential of positive relational interactions with peers and staff to support a developing sense of belonging. The boys in Rimoni's study believe that socialisation at school enables future decision-making. It should be noted, however, that this can be affected by factors external to schools, such as the forces of politics, the economy, and New Zealand society in general, which provide stories of Pacific disadvantage. Rimoni suggests that listening to student accounts of identity formation can offer a foil to "official" accounts of what it means to be Pacific in Aotearoa New Zealand, especially in terms of diversity and criticality. By being aware of Pacific students' accounts of themselves, schools can provide more meaningful and motivationally appropriate educational opportunities. By valuing identity construction, schools can support a sense of belonging and appropriate decision-making in the light of individual and community aspirations.

Informed by comparing recent Pacific student experiences of education with her own, Siope (2011) organises her findings into five areas: aspirations; siloed experiences characterised by divisions between school and home; the educational significance of adults who are responsive, reasonable, and available; negative relational experiences in school; and the influence of church. These contribute security or insecurity to student identity construction processes in one way or another. At the core of Siope's discussion is the idea that teachers who are secure

in their cultural identity are those who generally provide the kind of educational experiences that honour Pacific students in theirs. By having the interest, confidence, and flexibility to connect with students, such teachers serve the educational aspirations of families by supporting students' identities.

In a study of the way identity is explicitly treated in Year 7 and Year 8 of schooling, Siteine (2010) describes a typology of four positions adopted by teachers: cultural provider; cultural mediator; cultural transmitter; and cultural popularist. Siteine says these positions provide a logic for teacher practice in attempts to affirm the identity of students, but they can result in the allocation of identity rather than its affirmation. For Pacific students, elements of anachronism and simplicity can be included in identity allocation that can complicate processes of identity formation. Siteine (2013) further problematises the concept of identity within the social studies curriculum. The author suggests a lack of conceptual clarity compels teachers to use their own personal and social knowledge in this endeavour in ways that create conceptual ambiguity and lead to the privilege of a particular view of identity. This is unlikely to reflect Pacific ideas of the concept.

Fasavalu (2015) also supports the idea that external factors can contribute to student identity, in this case, through a tension between being allocated to the "tail" of underachievement and stories of sacrifice, service, and pride in family that come from lived experience. An implication of these three studies is that teacher self-knowledge and a reflexive and well-grounded curriculum may provide a better context for discussions of identity in classrooms than a situation where power over what counts as knowledge relevant to identity is concentrated in teachers' hands and in which unspoken assumptions prevail.

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL SITES OF IDENTITY FORMATION

Within Pacific education, the classroom is not the only site in which identity can be developed. Fairbairn-Dunlop (2014) examines the concept of identity through the male Pacific voice in a Poly Club (a cultural performance group), and the spaces associated with it: community, practice, performance, and so on. Students in the study indicate an inclusive Pacific identity within the group that is based on acceptance. For instance, multi-ethnicity is not an issue for members. The club is a forum for the development of leadership, connections new and old, brotherhood, connections to culture(s), and, for some, a connection to education. As a safe space, Poly Club seems to provide a respite for some members from less well-configured relationships in school. Fairbairn-Dunlop also makes a tentative connection between Poly Club membership, improved school attendance rates, and positive achievement

data. Together, these findings suggest the potential of Poly Clubs as a model for other aspects of schools, particularly in terms of relationships and deliberate attention to identity as relationally constructed.

Fairbairn-Dunlop's (2014) claim that Poly Club is a significant space for identity construction, especially for peer connections realised as a "brotherhood" in boys' schools, is supported by Reynolds (2017). As other research (Paulsen, 2018; Rimoni, 2016) has shown that peer influence is a significant aspect of success in education for Pacific students. However, Nakhid (2003) suggests schools may be places where Pacific students find it difficult to "see" themselves as they would like to be seen: positive and visibly participating in education. Put together, these research strands make pertinent the question of how schools might more closely integrate the ethos and practices of Poly Clubs into their day-to-day programmes, an important outcome of successful leadership (Talení et al., 2017).



In the area of arts, Mackley-Crump (2011) provides an ethnographic account of how a musical enterprise (a Polyfest) can support Pacific student identity and perhaps also academic achievement. Backgrounding the data by referring to educational leaders' criticisms of time spent on Polyfest, research on the centrality of relationships in Pacific education, and Nakhid's (2003) calls for identity construction to be valued in education, Mackley-Crump shows how students performing material to which they connect is an opportunity to strengthen community through relationships. Anecdotes given include a student who changed behaviour to be included in the performance, and of the high attendance by the wider Pacific community. The complexity of the Pacific community is demonstrated by Mackley-Crump's concluding comments: moving the show to the capital city was an opportunity for an out-of-capital community to showcase its achievements to their more upwardly mobile cousins who may previously have had a detrimental view of them. This is a strategy that results in "introducing an intra-diasporic dimension" (page 271) to identity.

Williams (2018) provides an account of the significance to Pacific students and families of a large annual cultural festival for schools set in Auckland, the ASB Polyfest.

The author describes how communities of practice develop in schools with a focus on performance. Cultural performance groups become a transnational focus of belonging that reflect village structures, crafted by tutors in cooperation with students. School identity and elements of popular culture are woven into presentations that reflect the cultural parameters of the festival but are unique and relevant performance outcomes. Williams also observes sites of contestation between organising committees and cultural groups as gender, cultural, religious, and ethnic ideals meet the intents and actions of performers. The negotiations that take place reflect developing transnational urban Pacific identities and the dynamics associated with them.

The value of music to Pacific students both within and outside education is made clear in Faaea-Semeatu (2015). This work highlights that schools do well to recognise that existing practice may not provide recognition of Pacific students' artistic abilities. However, Pacific students can be honoured when schools execute appropriate changes, as a result of learning from students, families, and communities about the capital students bring, and accept alternative ways of operating that maximise Pacific students' strengths.

Theme Three:

Pacific Wellbeing



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Pacific Wellbeing





Pacific wellbeing involves:

- » understanding Pacific wellbeing through Pacific concepts
- » holistic thinking
- » the involvement of parents
- » the involvement of community
- » Pacific concepts of resilience
- » culturally informed measurement tools
- » mentoring and peer support
- » minimising shame and supporting mental health.

Pacific visibility can be improved by paying attention to models of wellbeing founded on aspects of Pacific language, culture, and identity. For example, Ola Lei (Panapa, 2014) uses the octopus as a metaphor to encapsulate the holistic relationships that communities from Tuvalu understand between various elements of wellbeing, such as spiritual, relational, and physical. The Fonofale model (Ministry of Health, 1995) developed by Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann has been widely used (Ponton, 2018) to understand wellbeing in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. This model emphasises the holistic nature of wellbeing through the traditional Samoan fale or house. The space, land, and family foundations that support the fale work together with four pou, or posts, that provide structure and spiritual, mental, physical, and other forms of wellbeing (Ponton, 2018). In this way, the connectedness of people is emphasised through the Pacific understanding of wellbeing embedded in the model.

A broad range of research addresses the wellbeing of youth and families in Pacific contexts, much of it located in education. A lot of the definitional discussion of wellbeing focuses on holistic conceptualisation, such as that described above, drawing strength from Pacific concepts and practices. Despite this, some wellbeing research addresses the area through more general concepts, particularly resilience, although this can also be rendered in several ways. The literature includes moves to develop precise Pacific measures of wellbeing through cultural references; ideas about consultation aimed at developing context-specific tools; and discussion about the negative potential of decontextualised practices.

Wellbeing is also discussed in association with caring in the classroom and cultural practices. Research into mentoring, as a way of supporting the wellbeing of young Pacific people, advocates for structures and practices that are congruent with Pacific family experience. Benefits can come to participants where familiarity encourages engagement. The research literature also draws attention to the involvement of families in educational contexts as a support to Pacific students' wellbeing and to the importance of the relationship between identity and wellbeing. At the community level, research suggests that identity is a complex, fluid area in intergenerational diasporic Pacific contexts. Threats to identity reported in the literature that can affect wellbeing include issues around acceptance and the related concept of shame. A positive role exists in this area for well-configured relationships between parents, families and communities, and schools. Taken together, the research literature presented here argues for the value of contextualised concepts, practice, and measures of wellbeing that consider Pacific histories, ideas, and behaviours.

HOLISM AND WELLBEING

Much recent research literature in the field of Pacific education depicts Pacific wellbeing as a holistic concept. This means processes and experiences that contribute to wellbeing are interconnected in intimate ways and are best explained by reference to the whole person located in their community. Pacific education research often reports on wellbeing as being constructed, realised, and experienced in and through relationships, often by reference to the concept of *vā*. This, however, is not a universal understanding of wellbeing.

A cultural element is part of a relational rendering of wellbeing; groups have their own understanding of what it is to be well and the conditions under which this is likely. Thus, when wellbeing is discussed, agreement about what is meant cannot be assumed. This is particularly true in contested cultural spaces. Heaton (2018) illustrates this in the bicultural context of education in Aotearoa New Zealand, warning of the dangers of simplifying one group's complex cultural concepts as they are brought into spaces dominated by other cultural understandings. In Heaton's view, the placement of the Māori "hauora" as an equivalent to the English "wellbeing" in curriculum documentation can blunt holistic Māori understandings. She suggests that understanding hauora in relation to other concepts, such as *whakapapa* and *wairua*, can make a contribution to a holistic appreciation of what hauora might mean. In this way, wellbeing in education can be understood as part of a field of related and intersecting concepts, avoiding narrowness, and conceptual isolation. Pacific holistic concepts of wellbeing also sit uncomfortably with narrow approaches.

The simplification of concepts of wellbeing in education is not only an issue for Māori. Research suggests that similar restrictions on Pacific-origin wellbeing concepts can occur. For example, Panapa (2014) shows how an introduced curriculum can work

against holistic ideas of wellbeing encoded in the Tuvaluan concept of *Ola Lei*. Panapa describes the way wellbeing focuses on physical health in education in Tuvalu. This denies the complexity of *Ola Lei* that is rendered in the research through a metaphor of a multi-legged creature at home in deep and shallow water; an octopus. *Ola Lei* is multi-dimensional, including spiritual, social, and physical worlds, and the relationships between human and other aspects of creation. Echoing the connectedness of *Ola Lei*, research in the field of Pacific education in Aotearoa New Zealand frequently draws attention to the interconnectedness of the wellbeing of learners, their families, communities, and the wider world, physical, and beyond.

Mila-Schaaf and Hudson (2009b) explicitly discuss the potential of negotiating relationships between multiple knowledge systems through a spatial metaphor that resonates with the concept of *vā*. The metaphor of a negotiating space is helpful when considering wellbeing, because the concept can be rendered differently according to culture. Essential precursors to effective interventions include developing an understanding of what wellbeing entails and how it is located in relation to other cultural concepts, such as family and the spirit. The same, of course, is true of other concepts such as education, where a pertinent question is to whom does education belong – the individual or the family and community? The aim of the negotiation space is to affirm that Pacific people have the agency and ability to select the best of the worlds in which they synchronously live. In this way, they have the opportunity to benefit from a multicultural or polycultural life (Mila-Schaaf, 2011; Mila-Schaaf and Robinson, 2010). It is important to point out, however, that effective negotiation is built on mutual respect and trust. Decontextualised assumptions of cultural superiority and inferiority are not helpful in this or any other context.



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The aim of Flavell's (2019) doctoral study was to explore how secondary schools could develop relationships with Pacific families and communities to support students' successful learning outcomes. The context was a New Zealand rural town in the North Island. The study recognised the drive from the Ministry of Education to strengthen family and community engagement in the education of Pacific young people (for example, the *Pasifika Education Plan*). It also noted that many effective strategies have been adopted by schools that encourage the engagement of Pacific families. One aim, therefore, was to capture good practice.

The study explored relationships using a variety of frameworks. An AI framework helped explore how home-school relationships worked well and could be enhanced to benefit secondary Pacific learners. A Communities of Practice lens helped explore power dynamics in relationships, and the theoretical

frameworks, Teu le vā and Talanoa Research Methodology, helped explore Pacific perspectives of relationships.

Key findings show the willingness and expertise of members of the Pacific community to support schools' endeavours to cater for Pacific learners, helping address any barriers to family engagement. Despite the strong commitment from teachers and school leaders to work more closely and creatively with Pacific families, the study concludes that knowledge and ideas do not always flow freely between home and school. An inherent risk is that schools hold onto decision-making processes, although the capacity exists within the Pacific community to offer effective solutions. Teachers and families may maintain relationships whereby families' cultural identities, experiences, and knowledge are distanced from decisions related to learning. To alleviate this risk, school structures need to open up to allow for a free exchange of information, prioritising relationships that accord with Pacific values.



The frameworks employed for this study could also be applied to school settings, to help review and develop home-school practices for Pacific families. These frameworks, which in some ways reflect a Pacific image of Bishop's (2012) kaupapa Māori thinking about home-school partnerships, have the potential to bring structural change that enhances reciprocal dialogue and shared decision-making between schools and Pacific families.

International literature indicates the importance of parental involvement in education as a positive factor in student wellbeing. Dedonno and Fagan (2013) conducted a quantitative study in the United States of America of contributors to students' academic self-concept. Among the findings were the value of praise and communication between parents and students. This extended well beyond the early years, suggesting value may exist for all students in deliberately involving parents in education. This also points to the importance of removing potential barriers to parental involvement that exist for some populations. Family structure was also deemed important to academic self-concept in this research, with two parent-family contexts positively associated with student academic self-esteem. By implication, this suggests that, in cultures where a non-nuclear family structure is a norm, attention by educators to the wider family may further support academic self-esteem, especially where a solo parent is embedded in an extended family structure. Dedonno and Fagan (2013) were surprised by racial differences in academic self-concept, speculating stereotype threat as a potential explanation. Such theorisation, if applied to Pacific students in Aotearoa New Zealand, points to racism as a possible partial explanation for any low academic self-esteem that exists within the group.

Pengpid and Peltzer (2018) analyse data drawn from responses to the Global School-based Student Health Survey of six Pacific Island nations. The data show a positive association between parental involvement in the lives of adolescents and several markers of health and wellbeing. Markers included lower rates of substance abuse, violence, injury rates, and truancy, and better dietary behaviour, physical activity, and mental health. If findings of this nature transfer to Aotearoa New Zealand as aspects of the relationship between family involvement and student wellbeing, schools may wish to support student wellbeing by facilitating student-parent relationships related to schooling. Helpful strategies might include taking deliberate steps to make school a welcoming space for Pacific parents because the research indicates some Pacific students seek to silo their lives (Nakhid, 2003), keeping parents and school apart.

Sullivan et al. (2017) studied the relationship between support given by Nauruan families towards family members pursuing teacher education and the student engagement and wellbeing development strategies of the Nauru Department of Education. They found a variety of family responses to the needs of students. These ranged from unquestioned support based on trust to intended support frustrated by temporal and material demands in the wider family context. Interventions from the Nauru Department of Education were seen by Sullivan et al. as having helpful pastoral characteristics and making a priority of negotiated family responsibilities. This research shows the kinds of practical difficulties Pacific students may face when balancing school and family responsibilities, particularly those associated with time. It also aligns with New Zealand research in suggesting pastoral care as a way to support academic achievement and course completion for Pacific students whose situations involve multiple responsibilities and identities (Wilson et al., 2011).

IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY-LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS

Wellbeing can be supported through deliberate attention in the education system. Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) conducted mixed-methods research using data from New Zealand's first national secondary school student health and wellbeing survey. The research looked for cultural variables that are significantly associated with better educational outcomes for Pacific high-school students. Of importance are cultural pride; maintenance of Pacific-origin values; proficiency in a Pacific language; and acceptance by Pacific people. Together with trying hard in education, doing well at school, and planning for the future, were significant. In addition, qualitative data provided by Mila-Schaaf and Robinson show that Pacific positive deviance in achieving rapid economic and social mobility is supported by being accepted, having confidence, speaking a Pacific language, and other Pacific cultural values.

Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) conclude that the migrant dream of remaining Pacific, while acquiring the benefits of a new location on an intergenerational timescale, contradicts stereotypical depictions of diasporic people caught between cultures. Instead, under certain circumstances, involvement in more than one culture can be a positive advantage as plural capital. What Mila-Schaaf and Robinson call polycultural capital involves fluency in moving across cultural spaces to advantage. This is a hybrid synergistic strategy in which non-financial forms of culture, such as skills and knowledge, operate as sources of status; a matter of balance, of finding a *noa* or an equilibrium between various cultural discourses.

The significance to wellbeing from Mila-Schaaf and Robinson (2010) is that Pacific students are supported when two sets of cultural stock are valued so that neither one is seen as necessarily superior. This balance can be actioned by schools that support

Pacific students to retain and/or develop heritage skills and knowledge. Resources for the acquisition and extension of language and other forms of culture are important as is the provision of space in which students can express their learning. Pacific cultural capital includes supportive family structures that can be acknowledged and leveraged by schools for the benefit of their Pacific students; language as part of curriculum and school practices; and the admission of student experiences as the basis of critical thinking in lessons. These and other strategies signal acceptance to students for who they are, which is essential to wellbeing.

In a further study, Mila-Schaaf (2011) discusses culture and identity and their impact on health, wellbeing, and educational outcomes by reference to relationships within Pacific communities. Data developed through face-to-face contacts with second-generation Pacific migrants show that an important dynamic for this group is with island-born Pacific people. This dynamic is characterised by hierarchies, power relations, and the politics of exclusion and inclusion. Mila-Schaaf reports that Pacific capital in the form of age, level of cultural knowledge, family, and so on counts in Pacific spaces, and that speaking one's Pacific language is of major significance.

Mila-Schaaf (2011) shows that, for second-generation Pacific people, acceptance in Pacific spaces is not a given. Island-born migrants may regard the identities of second-generation migrants as fixed, viewing New Zealand-born Pacific people negatively. Thus, a second-generation Pacific person might identify with other Pacific people but not be identified by them as Pacific. Wellbeing can be challenged by these contradictions. Mila-Schaaf describes strategies such as strategic essentialism, genealogical claims, and the offering of Pālagi capital as those used by second-generation Pacific people to bolster their position in identity transactions. However, the author theorises that, particularly in a diaspora, culture and identity are defended

by some through the exclusion of others using an appeal based on traditional notions of culture to define what counts. Thus, the ability to negotiate successfully in the space between ideas of what it means to be Pacific is significant to identity and wellbeing.

The complex view of Pacific identity provided by Mila-Schaaf (2011) indicates the significance to wellbeing of a holistic approach that can take account not only of issues associated with migration to a place where one is in a minority but also of intergenerational relationships within a group. Wellbeing and identity are closely linked, so acceptance is an important factor in both. Consequently, models of wellbeing and support programmes for Pacific youth need to include space to recognise, articulate, and negotiate such complexities. The significance of *vā* to deepened appreciations of Pacific identity, as it relates to wellbeing, cannot be overstated.

Ethnic identity and the related processes of acculturation and cultural orientation are important concepts in a study by

Manuela and Anae (2017). This is relevant for Pacific education because, not only is ethnic identity a significant element of an individual's self-concept, it is also linked to wellbeing. Manuela and Anae point to how ethnic identity, as a protective factor for Pacific people, can buffer against negative influences on wellbeing. One negative influence is the effect of colonialism, which conditions the spaces in which ethnic identity exists.

Manuela and Anae (2017) recommend that ethnic identity be included in future research, particularly in quantitative work. This is particularly important given the prevalence of issues such as mental health among Pacific young people. The importance of religion and acknowledging the differing needs and expectations of New Zealand- and island-born cohorts (Mila-Schaaf, 2011) are important features that Manuela and Anae's work highlight as significant possible elements in cultural enhancement programmes.



READINGS OF RESILIENCE AS AN ASPECT OF PACIFIC WELLBEING

Resilience is a concept that can be associated with wellbeing. Perrot (2015) discusses resilience as involving a process in which adversity is mediated by protection to produce a positive outcome. It includes the ability to cope positively with difficulty, a reflection of a position of strength associated with wellbeing. However, the seat and significance of resilience is not uncontested in Pacific education.

How educators think about wellbeing is a matter of theorisation, the explanation for what is observed. Associating resilience with grit, Crawford-Garrett (2018) suggests that concepts related to wellbeing can be located by teachers of Pacific students in an individualistic account of education that ignores structural features of education and society. Such accounts are amenable to deficit theorisation of student achievement because they erase power-related aspects of context that contribute to, or diminish, resilience. Crawford-Garrett's research suggests that an absence of theorisation in this area during teacher training can reinforce a simplified understanding of student behaviour in adverse circumstances. Adversity can include the forces of discrimination, lack of respect, Pacific invisibility, and cultural misunderstandings. Results that can come from these forces can include the silencing of Pacific learners and increased relational distance between

educators and learners, parents, families, and communities. Crawford-Garrett suggests that attention to resistance as an alternative theorisation for what teachers may see as negative behaviour in classrooms, particularly in low-decile schools, provides a basis for critical discussion during teacher training. While this suggestion may have merits, in that it includes the aspect of systemic power as an element in understanding classroom interactions, it is not informed by ideas of wellbeing of Pacific origin.

Research tools that operationalise concepts of resilience have been used to develop snapshots across populations. Caygill (2016) uses two datasets from the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study to examine the development of resilience in learners in Aotearoa New Zealand, specifically academically resilient students from low socio-economic backgrounds who achieve well. Because many Pacific students fall within this demographic, the study is relevant to Pacific education. Caygill used Kiswarday's (2012) framework for resilience. This involves inner personal strengths, interpersonal and social strengths, and supports and resources external to the child. Caygill concluded that all those involved – parents, whānau, teachers, and the student themselves – need to work on these areas for optimal academic achievement. This position underlines the agency teachers have to positively influence students whose families may not be able to fully realise their role in education.

The reading of resilience provided by Caygill (2016) rests on a social and holistic understanding of wellbeing. This draws attention to the importance of family and community in the progress of the individual. Caygill notes that the literature of resilience pays particular attention to moments of transition where students move between schools and/or educational sectors. Those who are already struggling at school may struggle more because new relationships and a renewed sense of belonging are required.

The Ministry of Health (2018) report *He Ara Oranga: Report of the Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction* provides support for holistic concepts of wellbeing in Pacific contexts. In education, factors such as a sense of belonging, a consequent feeling of safety, often vested in an understanding of the system, are potential markers of Pacific wellbeing in education in the sense described in the report. As a result of enhanced wellbeing, Pacific students are likely to contribute empathy in educational settings and experience resilience in the face of educational challenges. This view of wellbeing is contextual, involves connections both in and out of education and, therefore, is relational.

Fa'alili-Fidow et al. (2016) provide an analysis of learner data that suggests, over time, Pacific students' feelings about school can change, with safety and confidence about school completion increasing, despite no change in the proportion of Pacific students' who feel there is an adult who cares for them in school. When compared with New Zealand European students, these researchers report Pacific students appear more connected to their school, feel part of their school, and feel cared for by an adult in school. Possible explanations for this include students' perceptions about connection being informed by understanding the world through *vā*, and the significance of school-focused peer-group bonding for Pacific students. Overall, this dataset indicates progress for Pacific education in areas key for wellbeing at a national level.

CULTURALLY INFORMED MEASURES OF PACIFIC WELLBEING

Research exists that seeks to develop culturally informed ideas of wellbeing of particular relevance to Pacific education. Manuela and Sibley (2013) report ongoing development of the Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale (PIWBS). This was a five-point self-reported measure aimed at appropriately assessing wellbeing from a Pacific perspective, and now revised to six points (Manuela and Sibley, 2015a). The six points are: Perceived Familial Wellbeing; Perceived Societal Wellbeing; Group Membership Evaluation; Pacific Connectedness and Belonging; and Religious Centrality and Embeddedness and Cultural Efficacy (Manuela and Sibley, 2015b, page 61).

The intention behind the scale is to provide a holistic measurement of the overall psychological experience of people from the Pacific. Manuela and Sibley (2013) used constructs developed from literature, qualitative data, and other sources as the basis of the scale. Socio-centric markers of wellbeing are significant in the model, which takes account not only of the perceived wellbeing of the individual but also of family and community. The PIWBS also pays attention to the influence of religion and the importance of a sense of belonging.

Constructing a Pacific wellbeing measurement tool challenges universal measures of wellbeing by asserting it is possible and appropriate to conceptualise and measure it in contextualised culturally informed ways. In the PIWBS, a holistic, multi-dimensional Pacific-origin account of wellbeing is accentuated, which provides an avenue for developments in evaluating wellbeing-focused practice in Pacific education. Such thinking sits well with ideas of Pacific education that place relational concerns at the core. It also resonates with claims about the importance of family engagement in education as a way of supporting Pacific students' success.

Looking at Pacific migrant wellbeing through health and identity lenses in Australia, Rodriguez (2012) examines how reciprocal networks inform Pacific ideas of belonging and wellbeing. The author argues that policies and interventions that do not consider cultural factors construct problems because of the poor choice-making of individuals. Consequently, the effect of policy is likely to be limited. Instead, understanding the relationships between socio-economic position, cultural expectation, and notions of wellbeing offers a more contextualised approach to improving Pacific people's wellbeing. It is important to conceptualise, investigate, and intervene in wellbeing in ways that make sense to those involved. This means those responsible for policy development and evaluation need to be open to rethinking how such issues are approached. Losi (2017) supports this line of thought. The author concludes that health information currently provided to Pacific mothers is not well used by them, partially because of cultural and religious beliefs. Policy changes recommended by Losi include sensitivity in managing conflicting messages from Western and traditional health approaches, designing community health initiatives close to target populations, and using digital technology for information sharing.

"mHealth", or mobile health, is the delivery of health programmes through mobile phone and app technologies to achieve medical goals. Working in this field, Verbiest et al. (2019) provide an example of the potential of co-design in constructing wellbeing models and subsequent interventions. The researchers report the development of a holistic model of wellbeing informed by collectivist worldviews and constructed through discussion with Pacific people. The model embraces relationships with kin but extends to physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual environments. The research outcomes show how behavioural change in a group can be supported through contextually responsive understandings of

the issues involved when these issues are supported by appropriate communication methods. This suggests that a cultural lens, developed through community consultation, can produce relevant and positive wellbeing strategies beyond the scope of those imagined by professionals.

Averill (2012) links teaching practices to wellbeing in a study driven by multiple in-class observations. Averill augments Durie's (1998) whare tapawhā model, which was based on a four-sided house, employing cultural references from Tonga to structure holistic conceptualisations of wellbeing. These support the value of care in the classroom. Averill links caring practices to interrelated physical, spiritual, cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of culturally founded models of wellbeing that support academic rationale. Fonofale is an example of a Pacific culturally founded model. Potential outcomes of classroom care as pedagogy, as detailed by Averill, include the development of wellbeing, inclusivity in mathematics teaching, and positive attitudes from Pacific students to mathematics.

Wellbeing can also be understood as practice that can be built on cultural norms. Using data from the national youth health and wellbeing survey of 2012, van Lier et al. (2017) found that two-thirds of students had a vegetable garden at home and one-quarter of the student population were involved in home gardening. Gardening is associated with health through healthy dietary habits, such as fruit consumption, and also with physical activity and improved mental health and wellbeing. Young adolescent Pacific males living in rural contexts are the group most likely to be home gardening, providing significant information for those who seek to develop wellbeing strategies built on Pacific strengths.



CULTURALLY FRAMED WELLBEING: MENTORING AND PEER SUPPORT

One well-represented area of practice in the recent literature on Pacific education is mentoring. Mentoring in education is a relational practice where interpersonal support is available to learners as mentees from mentors. Mentors are generally staff but can be senior students. Three studies are reported here. When mentorship programmes embrace Pacific cultural understandings, including understandings of relationality, or when they are run by Pacific mentors, Pacific visibility is enhanced.

In her Master's thesis, Faletutulu (2017) stated that young Pacific people can be moulded into leaders through specific ways, including the availability of programmes that address their values and beliefs as a Pacific young person in New Zealand. Faletutulu recommended that leadership programmes have the potential to create a community of strong Pacific young people who will encourage one another to become mentors in the future for other Pacific young people. Effective programmes that provide a positive environment can cultivate young Pacific peoples' identities and leadership. The author further elaborated that leadership programmes for Pacific young people needed to provide spaces for a discussion of Pacific and Western styles of leadership. Such discussions would consider where Pacific young people might be starting from in their leadership journeys. As a result, stronger Pacific leaders can be raised up because development can start in a context that Pacific young people recognise.

Farruggia, Bullen, Solomon, Collins, and Dunphy (2011) examine youth mentoring in Aotearoa New Zealand. They report that, internationally, mentoring programmes are significant as interventions for youth who are at risk. Such programmes can lead to improved school attendance and achievement; support more positive attitudes towards school; support greater

wellbeing and connectedness; and reduce susceptibility to involvement with drugs. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Farruggia et al. suggest that cultural alignment in the context of Pacific youth mentoring could include the involvement of extended family; acknowledgment of language and customs; acknowledgment of cultural identity; and conceptualising wellbeing in collective rather than individual ways.

Mentoring is embedded in family like structures through tuakana-teina (older-younger) relational models in Aotearoa New Zealand. These mirror the kinds of mentoring that happen in Pacific families and communities. However, despite the fact that many mentoring programmes target Māori and Pacific youth, Farruggia et al. (2011) found little evidence of cultural alignment between practice and the cultures of these groups. In addition, they report that little local evaluative literature adopts a consciously cultural lens. A consequence is that what might be culturally salient to mentees may be missed in programme evaluation. This questions the validity of imported mentoring programmes without deliberate cultural perspectives as well as those developed in Aotearoa New Zealand that have aims, activities, and evaluation that do not take account of culture. Without nuanced thinking, the goals of mentoring programmes, along with their enactment, may be alien to those intended to benefit.

In her mentoring work in education, Chu (2009) recommends points that are critical for Pacific young people. These are as follows:

1. Pacific mentoring and leadership are interconnected and cannot be separated. One cannot exist without the other. Mentoring is about being interested in developing younger students as leaders and as people who can be influential within their relationships. Educational institutions should recognise, place priority, and support the understanding of alternative ways of mentoring for leadership.

2. Relationships that are built on solid foundations of shared values are important in leadership development. Some of these values are respect, compassion, humility, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, and reciprocity. These values should be integrated into mentoring programmes for Pacific students in education. Values build relationships. Engage students so their needs and values are reflected in mentoring processes.
 3. Leadership development starts today not tomorrow. A leadership initiative can start as something small and can still have a considerable impact on Pacific communities.
 4. A specific setting or context helps to facilitate leadership development. The people, their needs, the resources, and the culture of the context determine the shape of leadership initiatives. Universities should have structures, people, and resources that support and enhance these initiatives.
 5. Leadership development is for the long term. Short-term initiatives will have impacts but it is the long-term development that will have far-reaching positive effects for Pacific communities.
 6. Resources are needed for effective mentorship and leadership development. Institutions and government agencies should be constantly reminded of their obligations and responsibility to Pacific people. The people resources are important and necessary in leadership development.
 7. The development of shared visions by leaders is critical for leadership in Pacific communities. These are shared visions based on the hopes and aspirations of Pacific people.
 8. Mentoring of younger Pacific students in education is necessary for the growing and nurturing of their identities.
 9. It is important to document and record the stories of mentorship-leadership development and individual growth. Communicate and document the stories, draw out the key principles and themes, and use them for learning of leadership knowledge. To strengthen Pacific education, it is important the stories focus on enabling factors.
 10. The right leadership development has far-reaching effects. Appreciative mentorship, as well as being life-changing for individuals, also has the potential for considerable positive effects, changes and impacts on organisations, institutions, and communities (pages 263–265).
- Other recent relevant research describes mentoring practice that includes cultural concepts appropriate to the populations involved. For example, Noonan et al. (2012) examine the effectiveness of STARS, a locally developed programme intended to support students in transition from primary to secondary sectors. The STARS programme acknowledges Māori mentoring practices of tuakana-teina through its peer-based structure. In the programme, groups of Year 9 mentees are matched with Year 12 and Year 13 students who they interact with in wilderness camps, community projects, and weekly meetings. Qualitative data discussed by Noonan et al. indicate the programme to be most effective in low decile schools and those with high numbers of Pacific students. The researchers speculate that the group aspect of mentoring may align with collective cultures from the Pacific. An environment that reflects mentorship-rich family relationships may also benefit Pacific students.
- Ross (2010) discusses building culturally relevant support in a distance learning environment for the engagement, retention, and success of new Pacific (and Māori) students. The author found that proactive institutional provision of regular contact with tutors and knowledgeable peers is helpful

to new students, especially when timed to coincide with significant points in a student's course. Timely intervention can lead to the resolution of issues, especially when a student feels part of a learning community. The programme of support was built on a kaupapa Māori theory to embrace kōrero, whānau, and tuakana-teina relationships. Pacific students in the programme particularly value opportunities to build meaningful relationships, responsiveness, and the recognition of the importance of family and culture. Support workers in the programme acknowledge that inclusive, rather than specific, pedagogies provide an appropriate approach to Pacific diversity.

SHAME AND PACIFIC WELLBEING

Shame is integrated into how wellbeing is articulated. As discussed, issues of discrimination, invisibility, and misrepresentation are also significant. Nevertheless, shame is worth considering in relation to wellbeing, given its salience in the literature.

Because identity can be undermined by judgement, the concept of shame is relevant to wellbeing. Johnson (2012) gives a discussion of the relevance of shame in a US educational context. Drawing from the literature, Johnson associates shame with being exposed to external or internal judgements, loss of control, and/or incompetence. Shame is related to issues of wellbeing and associated with a threat to the self. Johnson provides results that tentatively link shame and a degraded sense of community, and suggests that, where this applies, the development of community by deliberate institutional action is a way forward. This quantitative research may have application in Pacific educational contexts through the salience of concepts of shame in the Pacific (Anae, 2010; Brown et al., 2007; Latu and Young, 2004).

Pacific concepts of shame may be nuanced by the nature of the social or relationally dependent self (Mila-Schaaf, 2006). If exposure to judgement is an important element in the construction of shame, deliberate consideration of the qualities, configuration, and scope of teaching and learning environments may be helpful in managing shame (Reynolds, 2018a). In addition, if community security is a way to reduce shame, deliberate support of Pacific communities in schools may be a significant strategy (Reynolds, 2018b). Because a feeling of incompetence is also related to shame, the recognition in schools of Pacific funds of knowledge, such as language and values, may also make a positive contribution. Students who fail to "see" themselves in school (Nakhid, 2003) because Pacific visibility is low are unlikely to feel part of the school community. Their absence may create a sense they are judged as unworthy, contributing to shame within the educational space.

The importance of relationships as a way of combating threats to wellbeing is supported by work on Pacific wellbeing that focuses on mental health and suicide prevention (Tiatia-Seath, 2014). In this work, stories of suicide prevention and mental health service delivery pay attention to the significance of family involvement, dissonance between Western and Pacific beliefs around mental health, and the level of engagement of Pacific youth. Tiatia-Seath argues that community cultural considerations in Pacific contexts are crucial for effective suicide strategies and more general mental health service engagement. This makes a priority of the visibility of Pacific ideas of wellbeing, identity, language, and culture more generally. It also prioritises attention on family and community relationships on the part of the health system and, by implication, the education system as it seeks to support Pacific learners' wellbeing.

Theme Four:

'Auala in - Access



Theme Four:

'Auala in - Access



'Auala in - Access involves:

- » parent and community access to education
- » the relationship between institutional culture and access
- » the effect of system level considerations
- » access and well-aligned educational relationships.

Pacific students, like all students, should have access to high-quality education that leads them to experience success. Because Pacific students are related to parents, families and communities, issues of access extend beyond opportunities to attend a school. A discussion of access, or the pathway into in Pacific education, should include the conditions that students, parents, families, and communities experience in the education system.

When paying attention to access, this literature review approaches the subject in several related ways. These include attention to opportunity as a result of the way the system is structured and experienced; the qualities required of in-school relationships to provide optimal access to learning; institutional structures, attitudes, and behaviours that welcome families and communities as part of students' educational journeys; and leadership and training as ways to ensure increased access by Pacific students, families, and communities to success within the education system.



PARENT AND COMMUNITY ACCESS TO EDUCATION

A significant factor in Pacific students' access to high-quality education is the extent to which schools successfully engage with families. Laumemea (2018) studied school practices intended to support Pacific family engagement. The author reports that when schools partner with Pacific families, student outcomes, student behaviour, and parents' abilities to offer effective support improve. Informal and formal practices were evident in schools within the study. The main factors required of effective schools in Laumemea's account are: an appreciation of the diversity of Pacific people; awareness of the cultures of Pacific people and the culture of the school as it seeks to be welcoming; and mindfulness of the prominence of spirituality and the church to Pacific people. Strategies that embody these factors are likely to be successful in encouraging engagement.

The Education Review Office (ERO) is responsible for reviewing the performance of schools across Aotearoa New Zealand. Mutch and Collins (2012) combine data collected by the ERO to present an analysis of factors that enable parental and community access to education. An important finding is that "it was not just what the school did but the spirit in which it was done that led to successful engagement" (page 177). This points to the significance of the qualities of relationships between institutions, parents, and community rather than to specific actions as predictors of successful engagement. This research suggests the importance of a belief in partnerships and shared responsibility for education; developed or developing common understandings and expectations; and commitment to collaborative work. Relationships characterised by mutual trust underpin these factors; effective communication supports trust. Leadership is a significant factor in developing a school culture that values openness and partnership. This is associated with well-

configured and effective consultative relationships. Examples given by the researchers of trust-based engagements include celebrations of success and restorative practices. Hunter et al. (2016) also draw attention to the significance of reciprocal and respectful relationships between schools, students, and their families. When these are in place, students' cultural identity is affirmed, learning is enhanced, and the kinds of cross-cultural misrepresentations and tensions that may result in inequitable practice are minimised.

Although the ERO data discussed by Mutch and Collins (2012) were not exclusively derived from the Pacific voice, they are relevant because, as the researchers point out, they resonate with more precise Pacific datasets, such as the Pacific Island School Community Parent Liaison Project (Gorinski, 2005). In addition, a diverse population invites schools that seek to be effective with all their students to structure consultation and partnership with multiple and diverse communities. In many schools, Pacific students and their communities constitute a diverse group within a more general diversity.

Averill, Metson, and Bailey (2016) review literature that is pertinent to a nuanced understanding of the involvement of parents in the education of Pacific (and Māori) students. Echoing the findings of others (Hunter et al., 2016; Laumemea, 2018; Mutch and Collins, 2012), Averill et al. note that the quality of relationships between school and home is a significant factor in the kind of access parents have to school processes. In this account, quality involves dignity and respect. Examples of how productive relationships can be enacted include actions to develop trust such as those that build on home practices.

From the literature reviewed, Averill et al. (2016) explain that the development of optimal relationships is a cultural matter for schools. Leaders and teachers need to understand parents as partners and the

development of shared goals as accepted practice, rather than as an add-on to other, competing understandings. The researchers point out, however, that several barriers exist. These barriers stem from factors that cannot be controlled by a school; variable understandings of policy within education sectors; insufficient access to effective professional development; time budgets that are already under pressure; language and cultural differences between home and school; and varied ideas about partnership among a heterogeneous parent group. For mathematics education in particular, which was the focus of the research by Averill et al., difficulties in understanding the subject can be an increasing issue for parents as students get older. Averill et al. identify a need for further New Zealand-based investigations into the maximisation of parental involvement in schools and the effect of this on wellbeing, affect, and achievement. This would include research examining effective paths that give access to parents, families, and communities so authentic, equitable relationships can form the basis of Pacific education.

Flavell (2014) examines the perceptions of family in their role in supporting learning. Like Siope (2011), Flavell describes Pacific students avoiding conversations about learning with their parents to reinforce distance between home and school. This frustrates parental desires to be involved and encourages a sense of disconnection. The fear of failure to meet parental

expectation is identified by Flavell as a possible motivation for students behaving in this way. Flavell (2017) points to a significant aspect of all effective relationships that seek to provide access to success in education for Pacific students: listening to and learning from Pacific parents and families. The author describes individualised communication models used by the school as being hard for parents to deal with (Flavell, 2014). This can include environments that are not welcoming and language use that does not invite participation. The kinds of *talanoa* favoured by Laumemea (2018) offer an alternative.

Akeripa (2017) found that the *fa'asāmoa* can influence decisions on learning and access to education by male Samoan students. The research also found, however, that masculinity in itself does not challenge positive participation in education. Akeripa shows that Samoan males value education and link it to future success for themselves and their families. It is also evident that the *fa'asāmoa* influences the value these males see in education as well as it contributing to their identity and self-esteem. Deterrents from education reported by Samoan students include family pressures and a lack of motivation rather than concepts of masculinity. These findings are interesting and point to an area for further investigation in a context where Pacific males are outperformed in education by Pacific females.

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE AND ACCESS

The findings of Mutch and Collins (2012) on the significance of school culture in producing an environment where minority students have access to success are reiterated in a Pacific context by Irving (2013) in a report of a single site report not subject to peer review. Among the findings of Irving's primary sector research are that access to success is encouraged when teachers and leaders show commitment to their Pacific students using a shared, collective approach based on the propositions that if "they fail we all fail" or that these are "all of our students" (page 3). A collective approach of this kind is a matter of school culture, deliberately developed over time in the face of potentially competing underpinnings of culture such as competition as the means to success. One aspect of this culture is the deliberate involvement of parents, families, and communities.

Irving (2013) also suggests that visible demonstrations of values-level concepts, including love and respect, position schools to encourage optimal achievement. Ongoing and visible commitment to care, understanding, identity, language, and culture by teachers is likely to support relationships that encourage student success. Irving's insistence on the significance of commitment and values suggests these are relational matters: they are effective not only because they are held by one party in the relationship but because they are perceived by the other. In other words, Pacific people have access to education when the environment created by the visible actions of those who run schools is welcoming and open. This idea is supported elsewhere at the classroom level (Reynolds, 2018a; Siope, 2011) and for parents (Fletcher et al., 2009).

Actions taken by schools to tailor education for Pacific students are examined by Bonne and Spiller (2017). A mixed picture emerges of progress in the way education in the primary and intermediate sectors is responding to Pacific communities. In 2016, two-thirds of teachers indicated they were deliberately gaining knowledge of individual students' cultural origins. Just over a third claimed recent access to practical professional learning and development focused on engaging Pacific students, up by 10 percent over 2013. However, despite the fact that more than half of principals surveyed claimed to be using National Standards data to identify Pacific students' learning needs, the proportion of schools that had integrated engagement strategies into their strategic plans was far smaller, at over a third. One strategy reported was to form a close relationship with Pacific language nests to encourage a smooth transition. However, not all schools that used this strategy facilitated continued learning of the relevant Pacific language in their schools. Around a fifth of principals indicated a need for further external expertise to ensure implementation of effective support strategies for Pacific students.

As a whole, the data given in Bonne and Spiller (2017) suggest that, while progress may be made in the classroom, at least in superficial ways, it is less secure at the institutional level. Given the emphasis of the literature on leadership and planning for the success of Pacific students in education (Averill et al., 2016; Laumemea, 2018; Mutch and Collins, 2012), the need for centrally sponsored changes, such as in time allocation, and opportunities to develop relationships are priorities. These are part of a greater system- and school-level rethink about Pacific students' access to high-quality education.

An example of leadership reshaping education to provide access to continuing and success-focused education for Pacific students is offered by Spee et al. (2014). The authors describe how the management team of a college with a high proportion of Pacific students created a culture of achievement and learning from evidence-based responsiveness, combined with effective pastoral care, the involvement of family, and belief in students' potential. The essence of the approach is partnership in a

commitment to improving Pacific outcomes in which respectful and responsive processes engage families. Raising student aspirations, enjoyment, and feelings of belonging are among the successes reported. Without effective leadership, access to high-quality education for Pacific people will remain overly dependent on individual teachers, parents, students, and school initiatives. Scaling up improvements in Pacific peoples' access to the best education requires significant institutional and systemic change.



SYSTEM-LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS

The literature on Pacific education points to several systemic factors that affect Pacific access to high-quality education. These include school size, costs (such as uniform and curriculum materials), and the way concepts that act as gatekeepers are understood.

Pacific students are not evenly distributed through the education system. For example, in 2011, 90 percent of schools had 25 percent or less Pacific students on their roll, while 5 percent of schools had 50–100 percent of Pacific students on theirs (Education Review Office, 2012). As a result of this clustering, some features of schools, such as decile designation and school size, are salient when considering access in Pacific education. Gordon (2015) conducted a relevant review of education organised by the decile system, a positively discriminating funding mechanism designed to distribute additional resources to areas of relative socio-economic need (Ministry of Education, 2016). Gordon found that the size of decile 1 to 4 schools in which Pacific students are over-represented (Bonne and Spiller, 2017) is a matter of significance. These schools are now smaller on average than they were 25 years ago, a trend that shows no sign of slowing down.

Because unviable class sizes can occur when a small cohort is offered a wide choice of subjects, small secondary schools are limited in the number of subjects they can offer, particularly in students' NCEA years. A consequence is that many Pacific students who attend decile 1 to 4 schools are relatively restricted in their access to a range of subjects. Access restrictions of this nature are not generated at school level. Instead, they are related to systemic factors. For instance, the small size of decile 1 to 4 schools may be a consequence not only of the number of students who live locally but also of their migration to other schools, including those with a higher decile rating.

Such movement may be an unintended and paradoxical consequence of decile ratings understood by communities as a proxy for the quality of education provided. Student migration has been described as a racialised decile drift (Singh, 2018), a “white flight” that consequentially reduces access to a wide education for those who do not migrate to higher decile schools. Thus, when access to a high-quality education for Pacific students is considered, consideration of intended and unintended contributory factors is necessary.

Faitala (2013) found that a combination of the popularity of less literacy-rich subjects, compounded by misunderstandings of the NCEA assessment system, teacher influence, and the prioritisation by students of immediate enjoyment can result in restrictions in the subjects studied at secondary level by Pacific students. As a consequence, access to tertiary education becomes limited. Faitala recommends that schools promote literacy at all levels of education, including reading and writing courses at the secondary level. Together with clearer pathways through assessment matrices, and clarification of the routes to higher education, a stress on literacy has the potential to support Pacific students to progress long term in education.

In the ECE sector, Mitchell (2014) reveals that costs faced by parents, often combined with enrolment policies, are a barrier to ECE access for Pacific people. Costs include requests for donations and optional charges levied, in addition to costs covered by statutory subsidies. When parents feel unwelcome as a result of enrolment practices, this can add to a second significant factor that affects access, which is a sense a centre cannot be trusted with the child. Mitchell suggests that deficit theorisation can be present in ECE centre staff and made visible in their various practices. A recommendation Mitchell makes is the wider adoption of induction processes that make transparent what happens at centres, support of family–staff interpersonal relationships, and embodying

an understanding of education as for and with, rather than separate from, families. A reduction of costs is another strategy that has potential to increase ECE access for Pacific people.

Access to high-quality education for Pacific students can also be affected by the way concepts that act as gatekeepers are understood. As an example, Frengley-Vaipuna et al. (2011) discuss the way increased access for Pacific students to Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) can be encouraged by re-understanding the area. Access to GATE and the opportunities for success it affords are governed by the recognition of students as having gifts and talents.

Frengley-Vaipuna et al. adopt a cultural model of GATE in which being *poto*, in the Tongan sense, “able to match behaviour to context – knowing what to do, being able to do it, knowing when to do it and doing it well” (page 43), is essential for recognising GATE students. An explicitly cultural model of GATE offers access to Pacific students who demonstrate their potential in ways valued by communities. Faaea-Semeatu (2011) extends the argument by showing how cultural GATE markers, such as adaptability, memory, church affiliation, commitment to excellence, relational skills, resilience, birthright, linguistic fluency, and leadership can be developed in consultation with communities, parents, and students. When this is achieved, concepts that act as gatekeepers reflect Pacific values and do not operate as exclusionary impositions.

ACCESS AND EDUCATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Access to a high-quality education for Pacific students can be enhanced when relationships between students, their families, communities, and teachers are supportive and inclusive. McDonald and Lipine (2012) conducted a study with 38 Samoan secondary students. The authors

found that, while educational systems need to be responsive to minority students, such as Pacific students, and policies and strategies in Aotearoa New Zealand have increasingly been adopted to promote the development of Pacific learners, more understanding is needed. Key findings include the importance of understanding that access to success in education for Pacific students involves relational matters. This includes developing a clearer idea of how partnerships and relationships between Pacific parents, families and communities, and educational institutions can be authentically developed.

Relationships identified by McDonald and Lipine (2012) as crucial to Pacific students' access to success in education include those centred on the students' home and community. For example, motivations to succeed at school for Samoan (and other Pacific) students include returning the support and investment of their family and community as a way of caring for the *vā* between themselves and the community. This may not be fully recognised and supported by schools. Also important to success in school is students' skills in dealing with two cultural worlds, those of community and school. A significant aspect of this reported by McDonald and Lipine is the ability to negotiate inconsistencies between the demands these worlds make.

The relevance of community as motivation in Pacific education raises questions of how conscious schools are regarding their part in constructing high-stakes choices for students. McDonald and Lipine (2012) recommend that ideas from key stakeholders about effective support for Samoan students should be considered in planning future achievement. By taking account of family and community in planning, the potential is increased to align the multiple worlds experienced by students. In addition, any arrangements intended to bridge these worlds need to be understood as cultural and involve parents, peers, and educationalists working together. However,



the student voice collected by McDonald and Lipine highlights the uncomfortable way schools sometimes promote concerns about academic achievement as a choice to be made above the cultural, social, and personal dimensions of educational environments. Where this occurs, the relegation of cultural obligations can be experienced by students as a misalignment between worlds.

Alignment is relevant to educational access for Pacific students because where schools listen to and understand what matters to families and communities, students are likely to be supported by inclusive relationships. However, where relationships between schools and communities are poorly configured, Pacific student success may depend on the skills of unsupported individual students to negotiate between conflicting demands or choices. An unbridged distance between home and school can operate to make access to all aspects of education problematic for Pacific students because it ignores the collective basis of Pacific cultures.

The significance of relationships in access to education is highlighted in a study by Siope (2011). This study describes the way Pacific students sometimes silo their worlds so family access to the student's education is restricted. Siope suggests that students' experiences of secondary education encourage them to act in this way, a finding echoed by Nakhid (2003). Siope describes how some teachers display characteristics of reasonableness, availability, and responsiveness to Pacific students with the effect that strong relational bonds support students' engagement and educational progress. Siope also finds the church is an important force, with potential to reinforce language, culture, and identity within a community setting. Negotiating the demands of church and school is a challenge faced by many Pacific students. Siope points to the potential of teachers who are aware of their students' lives to support this balance so access to both is protected. Other

literature (Fletcher, Parkhill, and Harris, 2011) supports the significance to Pacific students of positive student-teacher relationships in which links to parents, families, and community through Pacific culture and language(s) are acknowledged as valuable.

The link between relationships and Pacific students' access to success in education has also been described in the tertiary sector. Toumu'a and Laban (2014) investigated a research initiative designed to support continued access to university study for Pacific students enrolled at Victoria University of Wellington. Factors affecting access include the level of personal maturity and independence students possess, along with circumstantial factors, such as finance and family stability. Pacific students are supported when clarity exists around their presence at university, goals for study, and reasons for performing well. These are often associated with family. However, a sense of under-preparedness to study at the tertiary level in terms of "academic literacy, study skills and habits, and knowledge about what university life was like and what would be expected of them in order to succeed" (page 51) may be a barrier to continued access to tertiary education. Because under-preparedness is related to previous experiences in the education system, access to success at primary and secondary levels of education affect continued access to successful tertiary level study. This draws attention to systemic aspects of access.

Toumu'a and Laban (2014) also highlight the significance to Pacific students of relationships with staff. Where staff are supportive and take a holistic approach to their students, they are likely to continue to participate and achieve in tertiary education. Where this is not the case, students vote with their feet. For instance, one response in Toumu'a and Laban's study describes a passive form of rejection of learning: "we made a unanimous decision in our little informal group [of Pacific students] that we were actually more productive teaching

ourselves (laughs)” (page 52). The provision of spaces where relationships between Pacific students can develop, the structuring of mentoring by sympathetic others (particularly Pacific students and staff), and culturally safe teaching and learning spaces can contribute to students’ continued access to educational success. Another positive factor is institutional sensitivity to issues such as financial hardship. Balancing paid employment and study, access to space to study, and the effect of prior educational success within the family are also significant to educational success.

While limited in scope as a single institution study, the data in Toumu’a and Laban (2014) suggest that, although prior educational experiences may provide a limitation to future educational access, institutions can moderate this effect. In addition, specific initiatives that involve academic activities, but that also include the development of relationships through other means, can be useful to Pacific students. However, the day-to-day attitudes and behaviour of staff are also significant. The response of institutions to external factors that are essentially out of their control can also affect the way access is continued or curtailed. For instance, addressing financial matters “with adequate privacy and sensitivity to the realities of Pacific financial concerns” (page 53) can play an important role in enabling students to stay in study. Looked at together, these insights point to the importance of the way institutions and staff understand their roles as carers, educators, and creators of environments that support students to continue to access education. When access is assured, the opportunity exists for the community and family resources available to students, such as peer support and role models, to play a positive part in success.

The presence of Pacific staff has potential to support Pacific students’ access to success in education. This can be through their identification with Pacific staff (Toumu’a and Laban, 2014), but it can also

be through Pacific staff members’ abilities to identify and communicate with Pacific communities, as revealed by Laumemea (2018). The recruitment of Pacific teachers is generally achieved through initial teacher education (ITE) providers. Jenkin and Clark (2013) suggest extending access to ITE selection panels to communities such as Pacific communities. The potential benefits include expertise capable of recognising dispositions, knowledge, and skills valued by Pacific people in the process, so those admitted to ITE programmes are more likely to meet the needs of Pacific students.

Allen, Taleni, and Robertson (2009) describe an initiative that took school teachers from Aotearoa New Zealand to stay in villages in Sāmoa. The journey was part of a wider strategy founded on a dual idea. To teach diverse students effectively, teachers need to know themselves and their own culture while working to know their students’ culture(s) more fully. Culture is hard to appreciate in the abstract and the initiative hoped to help teachers enhance their cultural self-efficacy through experiential learning. Teachers reported that, following the visit, they had a greater sense of how much learning about their students was needed, about cultural insights, such as the importance of food and the significance of family, and ideas for specific teaching strategies. In practice, many of these capitalised on knowledge gained during the visit to Sāmoa, and on information and understandings that facilitated enhanced engagement of Pacific students. An important aspect of this initiative identified by the researchers was that, by living with people who have different world views, teachers can start to take new perspectives into their own “skin” as their existing thinking is exposed and challenged. A question to ask is of the resources available for similarly challenging Pacific community experiences in Aotearoa New Zealand and of the avenues that might make these available to teachers for the benefit of their Pacific students.

Theme Five:

Cultural Bias and Racism



Theme Five:

Cultural Bias and Racism





Cultural bias and racism involves:

- » understanding concepts of equity in Pacific education contexts
- » paying attention to structural features of contexts in Pacific education
- » acknowledging the effects of direct racism
- » the ways Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are understood and related to in education.

CULTURAL BIAS, EQUITY, AND RACISM

Ethnic diversity, including Pacific and many other diversities, is a fact of life in education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Ethnicity as an aspect of diversity relates to identity and involves how a person sees themselves in relation to others of a similar background and culture. Diversity is not always celebrated. When diversity is negatively responded to with power, whether by individuals or through institutional practice, bias and racism result. Racism is the result of when “cultural difference is combined with physical difference and the concepts of superiority/inferiority” (Spoonley, 1988, page 6). In education, Pacific visible is suppressed if Pacific cultures, languages, and identities are regarded either explicitly or implicitly as inferior to others.

One way of understanding bias is as unconscious judgement applied in the context of diversity. These terms come together in the negative experience of those to whom judgement and prejudice are applied. Individual professionals may find it hard to operate without bias in an educational system that privileges, in part for historical reasons, certain groups. In Aotearoa New Zealand, knowledges of European origin infuse areas such as the curriculum, organisations, and values in education. Pacific knowledges are far less visible. Important questions to consider, however, include how people respond when they become conscious of bias, and under what circumstances can greater sensitivity to bias and racism be promoted when thinking about personal activities and environmental factors in education. One important issue in both considerations is how diversity is understood.

Among the models of diversity prevalent in education in Aotearoa New Zealand is that of Alton-Lee (2003). She proposes a frame (page v) that:

... rejects the notion of a ‘normal’ group and ‘other’ or minority groups of children and constitutes diversity and difference as central to the classroom endeavour and central to the focus of quality teaching in Aotearoa, New Zealand. It is fundamental to the approach taken to diversity in New Zealand education that it honours the Treaty of Waitangi.

This model is founded on relational equity. However, the education system does not start from a “clean slate”; quality teaching has been conceptualised over time in relation to the experiences of success of past students and on their language, culture, and identity needs. For Pacific learners to experience quality teaching, the cultural biases in education need to be deconstructed and adjusted. Increasing Pacific visibility without self-examination and change on the part of education and educators is unlikely to lead to the optimal achievement of Pacific success.

Leach (2011) presents an informative discussion of concepts of diversity together with critiques that have been applied to them. Thinking about diversity points to a tension between the politics of assimilation and pluralism and can lead to conflicting concepts of diversity. To investigate conflicting understandings of diversity, Leach collected survey data from educational professionals in the tertiary sector on how they supported Māori, Pacific, and international students in their first year of study. This discussion is important because it informs the ways Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities are understood and related to in education.

From the data, Leach (2011) produced a five-stage continuum of tertiary teachers’ attitudes to diversity: universal, universal-group, group, group-individual, and individual. These can be summarised as follows. A universal position treats all students the same and holds racism to exist in any variation of treatment. Race becomes silenced in this position. A group-based position takes ethnicity into account and recognises bonds between students within a group. From this position, additional support, such as a targeted tutorial, can be justified on the basis of group need in the face of the exclusionary effects of existing practice. An individual position erases ethnicity but seeks to deal with students on an individual basis; each is treated differently according to their need. Proponents of this

position recognise the difficulties inherent in such differentiation. An individual-group position recognises groups as existing but diverse, a situation where group-based action becomes unviable. A group-universal position recognises differences but sees justice in all students being treated the same.

In Pacific education where the concept of Pacific is an umbrella, the Treaty of Waitangi partnership is significant, and where most teachers are not Pacific, explicit discussion around concepts of diversity within schools and in partnership with Pacific communities is important. Without careful thought and accountability, the kinds of well-meaning but blunted initiatives described by Cardno et al. (2018) are likely. It is on the back of perceptive discussion of diversity that the capability to deliver equity for Pacific learners can be built.

The need for explicit discussion of equity is reinforced by Nakhid (2011). The author questions who is represented in institutional decision-making at the highest level in matters of equity. Nakhid interviewed six equity leaders in a tertiary institution and revealed various understandings of equity. Responses to questions about the role of equity committees included: student advocacy, fairness, the challenging of unjust practices, and an economic approach whereby expenditure on equity should be returned to the institution. Nakhid’s findings suggest that, while people may have a core understanding of equity, this may not be shared by all. Instead, cultural bias may be prevalent.

Nakhid (2011) points to passion, commitment, and empathy as important personal characteristics of those involved in institutional equity matters. However, what also emerges as significant is the kind of historical knowledge helpful to unpick equity issues, and three factors important in fostering engagement with equity issues among the majority population. These factors are: 1) awareness of the need for equity as a feature of a future successful

society; 2) the presence in influential positions of Māori and Pacific staff (supported by Pākehā allies); 3) recognition of cultural factors that support achievement.

Nakhid (2011) places these findings in the context of institutional norms, pointing out that endemic structures, made invisible by their institutionalisation, present barriers, despite the way individuals may feel about equity. The author suggests that a good first step towards equity is to trust leaders of minoritised groups, such as Māori and Pacific communities, to lead equity committees, coupled with willingness at the highest institutional level to take advice, however challenging it might seem.

Institutional factors related to bias and equity also feature in research by Taylor et al. (2017). This study examines student engagement levels as they relate to ethnicity in the context of first-year law students. Engagement is defined in part as the time and effort invested in studies. Although the research does not reveal significant ethnic differences in engagement levels, significant differences are apparent in students' motivations for studying law. Māori, Pacific, and Indian students indicate that family obligations have the most impact on their studies, information that the researchers suggest could be better used by law schools in undertaking transition and recruitment for these groups. Current practice might be changed to embrace Pacific parents, families, and community in equitable and reciprocal partnerships. Equity is not just about achievement but includes experience, access, and relationships. Governance advice on relationships with Pacific communities is available (Ministry of Education, 2013a).

George (2010) studied Pacific male students' experiences in secondary education, revealing an awareness of hegemony, cultural capital, and deficit theorising. Collectively, these elements support a nuanced understanding of boys' journeys through high school. George also shows how parents' understandings of the workings of

the education system are improving and that parents are helping their sons as a result. However, while schools may be making changes, students and parents see the process as insufficient. George points out that the changes taking place often depend on initiatives by individual teachers, a limited and sporadic resource.

Seeking the ideal case, Helu-Thaman (2009) explores the challenges of pursuing classroom cultural democracy in Pacific Island nations. Cultural democracy involves the representation of those involved in education in its content, structures, and practice. Steps towards an ideal situation suggested by Helu-Thaman include recognising the potential contribution of Pacific knowledge systems, pedagogical approaches and values in the classroom, and institutional life. Helu-Thaman's approach has application in Aotearoa New Zealand because it provides a platform to address assimilationist tendencies in educational curricula and teaching materials, values the recruitment of staff who reflect more closely the demographic profile of students, and pays attention to environmental as well as personal issues in education. An explicit discussion of cultural democracy in education has the potential to improve clarity about the relationships of inferiority and superiority that produce racism and bias in education. This is valuable where the outcomes of Pacific education are affected by negative attitudes and expectations (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2018; Rubie-Davies, Hattie, and Hamilton, 2006).



STRUCTURAL FEATURES

The literature shows that the selection of one mode of assessment over another can produce bias. Young-Loveridge (2006) tracked Pacific students' mathematical achievements during the Numeracy Development Project (NDP) over a three-year period. A significant aspect of the NDP is making explicit the expectations teachers should have of mathematical progress. This is a feature that Young-Loveridge suggests may have alleviated previously documented low teacher expectations of Pacific students, a form of bias that has the potential to contribute to low Pacific achievement. However, the presence of several other factors prevents definitive statements from being made regarding links between the NDP. Young-Loveridge suggests that the NDP reporting methodology, a one-to-one interview between teacher and student, may have contributed to positive results for Pacific students that are somewhat at odds with other national surveys. This implicitly points to bias through assessment. Assessment data are capable of feeding racially-oriented low expectations in a circular way, especially when decontextualised. This places responsibility on policy makers when commissioning diagnostic frameworks to consider the relationship between how data are gathered, what data is measured, how they are presented, and the effects they can have on perceptions. As discussed by (Pettersson, 2014), the narrativisation of achievement data is not a neutral activity. The same can be said about the curriculum, to which achievement data are related, and the modes of teaching used for its delivery.

Representation is another structural aspect of education that can lead to bias. Siteine and Samu (2011) examined how Pacific peoples were portrayed in the New Zealand School Journal from 2002 to 2009. Building on earlier, more general work (Siteine and Samu, 2009) that suggested an image of Pacific people limited to superficiality

and stereotypical elements is prevalent in the social studies resources provided for schools, Siteine and Samu (2011) reveal a stereotypical depiction of Pacific people in the School Journal. This compounds under-representation when compared with Europeans. The researchers discuss these findings as problematic because stereotypical images support a deficit view of Pacific people in terms of their identity and social location in society in Aotearoa New Zealand. The task of schools seeking to challenge such ideological positions is made more difficult by bias in portrayal, presumably because of a lack of criticality in the dynamics of resource production.

Johansson (2012) also observes representation as an area for bias. The author examined the content of eight plays suggested for study at the secondary level on Te Kete Ipurangi, an officially sanctioned website. Johansson's analysis reveals texts that have culturally charged elements, such as stereotypical characters and themes, likely to support the construction of negative images of and in Pacific people. In a context where alternatives are available, Johansson's work asks why representation in drama is not subject to diversification and cultural responsiveness. Stereotypical images reinforce Pacific invisibility. Pacific visible is contributed to by authentic aspects of the curriculum, such as Pacific characters, contexts, issues, values, and ideas.

DIRECT EXPERIENCES OF RACISM

A survey of students conducted under the auspices of the Children's Commissioner (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2018) reveals everyday racism to be the experience of vulnerable students. Although many students surveyed had experienced positive and appropriate relationships with teachers, common insights regarding marginalisation and discrimination in education emerge from Pacific young people. Racism is one of the top ten things many vulnerable students

would change in education. Pacific students' responses given in the research make it clear that racism is experienced at the hands of teachers, in terms of low expectations, dismissive behaviour, and negative language, and also from other students. The effects on wellbeing, aspiration, and identity are clear in the students' responses, as are students' understandings of the way well-founded relationships that have been given time to develop are supportive in otherwise hostile contexts. The researchers suggest that a systemic approach to students' negative experiences, including racism, be developed. In addition, the researchers recommend that students be part of consultative processes at Ministry-level when national education and learning priorities are under review.

A survey of Pacific young people conducted through the Ministry for Pacific Peoples (2018) has similar findings. Low expectations and stereotypical responses from staff in education, reinforced by representations in the media, are among the experiences of Pacific young people in education. Many respondents report that their teachers do not understand the way they learn and behave, nor have sufficient knowledge about their families, to offer support in education. The report links wellbeing issues, such as low self-esteem, to discrimination and racial stereotyping, and highlights the potential role of teachers in Pacific students' success and flourishing.

Mayeda et al. (2014) reveal that racism is an issue at the tertiary level. In addition to experiencing university as a "white" place because of a Eurocentric curriculum, their research describes the way on-campus racism reinforces a sense of alienation for Māori and Pacific students. This can take the form, for instance, of assumptions by other students of Māori and Pacific privilege regarding entry to tertiary education, which implies a lack of effort and ability. A sense that majority group students require others to forsake their identity to fit in can be felt by Pacific students. The adoption of a

low profile can be the result of repeated discrimination. The researchers suggest that, although some students succeed in converting discrimination to motivation, this responsibility should not rest with students. Consequently, Mayeda et al. recommend that management teams should address the perpetrators of discrimination and work with Māori and Pacific students to warn them of the issues and encourage them in ways of channelling the negative emotions they are likely to encounter as a result of everyday racism and colonialism in education.

The literature suggests that bias and racism exist in education at all levels. Indeed, the literature highlights that experiences of discrimination are common for Pacific staff. This is clear from Pacific principals' responses to a wellbeing survey (New Zealand Educational Institute, 2017). In addition, some Pacific teachers feel a bias can exist in institutional expectations of them to inhabit role descriptions that may not be culturally comfortable (Brown et al., 2007). Despite the presence in the research of racism and associated forms of exclusion in education, the literature on Pacific education in this review provides a concentration on positive change, including through an inclusive focus on Pacific values, concepts, and metaphors. This may explain why the balance of the literature covered presents Pacific ways forward for Pacific education that, while not denying the negative aspects of the lived realities of Pacific students, families, and communities, seeks to support the maximisation of Pacific potential.

Conclusion



This literature review discusses research in Pacific education and the education of Pacific learners in partnership with their parents, families, and communities. Five interlinked themes have been used as organising features: Pacific visible; identity, language, and culture; wellbeing; 'Auala in - access; and cultural bias and racism. Many overlaps exist between these themes, and research that takes a holistic approach to Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities in relation to education promises much.

An aim of the review has been to support parents to champion their children and be more demanding of the education system. Within the review's findings are pathways of promise to Pacific parents and communities in this endeavour. While research has exposed the continuing presence of deficit paradigms and racism in education, many researchers have deliberately sought structures, pedagogies, relational activity, and policies capable of reforming education to meet the needs of Pacific students. Among these, mentoring, understanding the vā of education, appropriate methods of consultation, and, generally, strength-based approaches offer direction. Pacific families and communities bring strength and understanding but require visibility and ways in education to maximise their potential. The weight of past practice continues as an aspect of Pacific education, requiring deconstruction so a space can be created for more Pacific approaches to flourish. The research shows that this is not insurmountable.

Areas that deserve further attention include:

- » the potential for and actual contributions of parents, families, and communities to Pacific education
- » ways of facilitating the contributions of Pacific people to education
- » the kinds of learning available to education through engagement with Pacific people and Pacific wisdom, together with ways of facilitating this
- » the preparation of prospective teachers to be responsive to Pacific students and their families
- » the professional development and learning of practising teachers to be responsive to Pacific students and their families
- » the relationships between wellbeing, identity, and achievement: the role of language in Pacific identity and ways education can support this
- » access to high-quality education for Pacific students and eradicating the bias and racism that prevent this
- » research that focuses on Pacific learners, parents, families, and communities that does not aggregate populations without contextual justification
- » research that is grounded in Pacific ideas, methodologies, and motivations.

Airini et al. (2010) highlight that clarity and respect in research relationships is essential for producing knowledge that is useful and valid. This review honours all those who have made a positive contribution through research to the lives of Pacific students and their families and communities past, present, and future. We can only hope that our labour supports those who seek to serve in Pacific education in the years to come.

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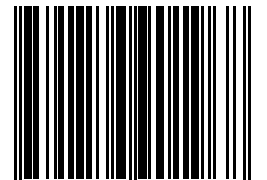
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