

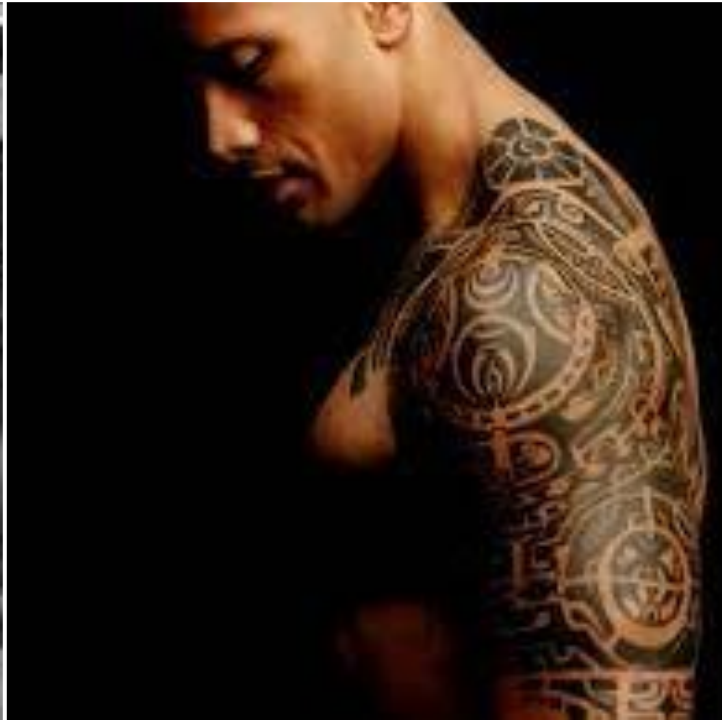
Barriers and enablers to literacy and numeracy: insights from the Pacific people

Maulupeivao Dr Betty Ofe-Grant
New Zealand Work Research Institute
AUT University

The experience, expression and transcendence of low skills in Aotearoa New Zealand

- Mixed-methods project, 5-year, MBIE Endeavour grant
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative: Māori (Waikato University), Pasifika (AUT University)
- New Zealand Work Research Institute
- Provide policy recommendations to improve life-course trajectories
- Reshape the way NZ seeks to enhance L+N
- Focus on effective intervention
- Qualitative focus provides insights into the lived experiences and practical implications of low L+N at the micro, meso, macro, familial, cultural and community levels





Pacific people:

- Ancestry, language, culture and heritage originate from the South Pacific
 - Niue, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Fiji, Tonga, Cook Islands, Samoa, Kiribati, Rotuma
- Share common fundamental institutions and values
 - Family, spirituality, hierarchy, respect, reciprocity, collective
- Unique Pacific national characteristics
 - Colonialism, power structures, cultural traditions, migratory patterns

(Ministry for Pacific People, 2022: Ofe-Grant, 2022)

Context: Pacific people in NZ

- Established ethnic group in NZ, 1950s+
- About 60% are NZ-born and young 23 y/o
- Overcrowded homes, earn the lowest median income
- High levels of marginalisation, cycles of poverty, poor health and wellbeing, housing issues
- Over-represent labour-intensive, low-skilled and low-paid jobs
- Vulnerable group living with low literacy and numeracy (L+N) skills
- Greater disadvantage, few opportunities, large debt, reliance on Government support



Research questions

- What are the lived experiences of living with limited literacy and numeracy skills for Pacific people?
- What are the barriers and enablers that transcend limited literacy and numeracy skills?*
- How does cultural identity and value systems impact on learning and engagement?



Pacific Research design

- Teu le va (spatial relationships), Talanoa (story-telling)
- Focus groups, Interviews+ (230+ participants of Pacific descent)
- Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Oamaru, Dunedin,
- Pacific businesses, churches, halls
- Pacific catering, Reverends
- Recruitment methods: LinkedIn, Online and Posters, Radio, Networks, Church, Conference, Fono
- Thematic Analysis, NVIVO + manual

Skills: Literacy & Numeracy

Where: AUT, Manukau City (ME block)

Date: Saturday 26 June, 10am – 1.30pm

Traditional Island lunch is provided

Register via email to Dr Betty Ofe-Grant,
betty.ofe-grant@aut.ac.nz



Results



Barriers to enhanced literacy and numeracy for Pacific People

Macro

- Poverty
- Racism
- Policy Failure

Meso

- Institutional Racism (Management/HR)
- Lack of Training Development Opportunities
- Lack of Diversity Culture
- Poorly Designed Courses
- Racist Trainers
- Lack of Cultural Competency

Micro

- Self-sabotage
- Undiagnosed Learning Disability
- Trauma

Pacific Cultural

- Collectivism
- Fatalism
- Culture of Silence
- Gendered Roles

Meso: Diversity
Culture,
Representation in
Managerial /
Leadership Positions

(Training Inst)
Culturally-sensitive
Courses, Pacific
Trainers, Culturally-
based Approaches

Macro: Inclusion
and Investment in
Policymaking,
Consultation,
Implementation

Enablers of
Literacy and
Numeracy
for Pacific
people

Inclusion of Pacific
Churches and
Ethnic-specific
Communities

Where to now?

Write it up!

- Social media
- Academic journals
 - Published – Qualitative paper
 - In progress (Pacific findings)
 - Landscape Intervention Report (Mary Hedges, Gemma Piercy-Cameron)

Dissemination phase

- Returning to main districts, seminars, presentations
- Share results with participants, stakeholders, communities, industries, government



Invest in Pacific people (and other marginalised groups) so that they can apply themselves and better their L+N skills



NZ Work Research Institute: Team of Teams



Pacific Research Team