Research Report

Pacific learner success in workplace settings

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Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

This is a study which focused on learners, learning facilitators and industry training organisation (ITO) staff engaged in improving Pacific learners' achievement in industry training. It brings a Pacific learner perspective to factors that influence their participation, achievement and continuance in ITO facilitated qualifications. Also included are the perspectives of ITO staff and facilitators who are working towards improving Pacific learners' success.

Four ITOs designed and implemented training pilots that focused on Pacific learners. The ITOs are:

- The Skills Organisation;
- Careerforce;
- ServiceIQ; and
- Competenz.

This research was undertaken by Pacific Perspectives Limited. The multidisciplinary research team included expertise in evaluation, cultural and qualitative research methods, and tertiary education.

The following are the key findings relating to Pacific learners, facilitators and ITOs.

Learners

Barriers

- Pacific workers are often unaware of the range of opportunities available for learning.
- Pacific learners have to prioritise learning, work, and family. Family is also a key factor for success.
- There are cost (economic) barriers to workplace learning for Pacific people. These include competing time demands outside of work hours.
- Pacific learners' self-perception of capability can be low – lack of confidence and language barriers based on earlier experience of education and training need to be overcome.

Success

- Workplace context is important and requires a supportive employer to create the motivating learning support and learning contexts.
- Relationships with facilitators of learning support are important catalysts for participation and achievement, continuance and completion.
- Small learner support groups have worked well for Pacific learners, particularly where barriers impede learning.
- Personal motivations need to be explored/facilitated to establish and develop positive, future-focused goals.

Facilitators

Characteristics of successful facilitators of learner support:

- Facilitators who share their industry and work experience ensuring work context underpins learners' experience; and the relevance of learning and its contribution to career progression is understood, demonstrated and applied.
- Facilitators who understand learners' lived reality – the broad context of experiences and circumstances that impact learning and the values and drivers important to learners – help establish shared values and a supportive and empowering learning environment.
- Facilitators who address diverse barriers to engaging in learning and develop strategies to overcome these, will help build learners' confidence.
- Facilitators that incorporate practical learning and supportive learning environments.

Barriers

- Generic rather than contextualised learning resources (workbooks).
- Work schedules during peak work periods.
- Finding ways to respond to an increasingly diverse and multicultural workforce.

Success

- Facilitators have the authority in the workplace to validate learning.
- Facilitators have the experience and skills to contextualise learning through practice, communication, and ensuring its relevance to the learners' work role is understood (concepts are applied meaningfully to the learners' work role, workplace and personal home lives).
- Facilitators have a close relationship with the learner context and have the skills to create practical forms of learning including learners use of their language of choice.

Industry Training Organisations

ITOs

- Few senior Pacific roles in ITOs.
- ITOs could do more to strengthen their strategic focus on Pacific learners.
- Greater awareness about issues for Pacific learners in the workplace is needed – with employers and within ITOs.

Employers

- ITO staff roles include engaging with employers and assisting the facilitators' learning support function.
- Engagement with employers about Pacific learner issues can be challenging with little evidence to support recommendations to employers about improving pacific learners' participation and achievement.
- Businesses with high numbers of Pacific employees are more willing to engage.

Design and implementation of pilot programmes

- Industries had their own approaches to learner support and ITOs struggled with implementing the proposed pilots.
- Programmes were labour- and time-intensive to set up for the ITO and progress was incremental.

Recommendations

1. Engage with Pacific families and learner support networks to disseminate information about industry training opportunities, and information that addresses the misperceptions about the 'value' and requirements of workplace learning.

2. Create a 'culture of motivation'. Understand what motivates Pacific learners in industry training in order to establish and develop positive future-focused goals.

3. Implement learning support mechanisms that addresses learners' negative perceptions of their own capability and fosters confidence, engagement and motivation. Factors that are likely to work include: leadership by facilitators with appropriate skills, contextualisation of training materials, relevant content and delivery and positive learning environments.

4. Provide support for facilitators/learner support as key roles in industry training. Effective facilitators demonstrated understanding of the lived realities of learners and were able to establish a shared set of values to guide learning, create supportive and empowering learning environments for each learner.

5. Contextualise and tailor learning. Encourage facilitators to use creative learning support approaches based on an understanding of the strengths of the learners.

6. Take a broad view of Pacific workplace success. Build on the programme logic models already developed in these pilots to engage stakeholders in understanding the value of training interventions and the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and indicators of success. Value 'soft skills' and transferable skills that 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions.

1. *Project Background*

Pacific Learner Success in Workplace Settings is an Ako Aotearoa supported project focused on better understanding interventions that support and improve the achievement of qualifications by Pacific learners in industry training.

The project consists of the design, implementation and evaluation of two industry training pilot programmes focused on Pacific learners.

This report provides a summary of the industry training sector and issues of relevance for Pacific learners; design and implementation of the two pilot programmes; evaluation methodology; analysis and discussion of key findings; and practical recommendations to guide further work in this area.

1.1   Project partners

The project is a collaboration between four industry training organisations (ITOs) that represent 75% of Pacific learners in industry training:

- The Skills Organisation: real estate, central and local government, emergency services, contact centres.
- Careerforce – Te Toi Pukenga: healthcare, community services, social services, cleaning.
- ServiceIQ: aviation, hospitality, retail, travel, tourism.
- Competenz: engineering, food processing, manufacturing, forestry.

A project team made up of representatives of the four ITOs provided oversight for project implementation. Pacific Perspectives Ltd (PPL), a specialist Pacific research and policy consultancy, were commissioned to carry out a utilisation-focused evaluation of the two pilot programmes. Together, staff from the ITOs and Pacific Perspectives made up the Project Advisory Group (see appendix 1 for further details on the project team members).

1.2   Limitations

Despite their central role in the industry training relationship, employer perspectives were not collected as part of this evaluation. Any discussion relating to employers within this report must be qualified by the fact that participating workplaces were not included in data collection.

The duration of the pilot programmes is a limitation of this study that reduces the ability to evaluate implementation of the pilots. The implementation timeframes were short and comparison of the impacts of the pilot programmes was not possible due to the varying timeframes of implementation. However, it is recognised that flexible start and finish dates of programmes are in the nature of industry training, which are learner-centric not calendar-centric.

1.3   Project purpose and objectives

The project builds on existing knowledge of what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education and improves our understanding of Pacific learner success in industry training. Particular consideration is given to how industry training can account for increasingly diverse Pacific learners across multiple industry contexts.

The aim is to identify factors that support successful outcomes for Pacific learners and improve Pacific rates of programme achievement in industry training. Optimising the utility

and applicability of research findings for ITOs and other stakeholders is a key objective of the project.

The research questions that guide this evaluation and directly address these objectives are:

- How successful were the two pilot interventions, that were implemented in the four ITO settings, at supporting achievement of Pacific learners?
- What were the enablers and barriers to success from the perspective of Pacific learners?
- What can be learned and what principles can be extracted from the pilots that will inform improved practice in ITOs in terms of responding to the needs of Pacific learners?

1.4   Project design

Key components of the project include:

- *Literature review and data analysis*
  A thematic literature review was undertaken to provide an evidence base for the selection and design of pilot initiatives and inform the development of evaluation priorities. Findings of the review have been integrated throughout this report, in particular Section 3. The full literature review can be found in Appendix 2.

- *Pilot design, implementation and delivery*
  A detailed description of the two pilot projects is included in Section 5.

- *Evaluation*
  The evaluation approach and methodology can be found in Section 4. Key findings from the qualitative interviews with Pacific learners, facilitators and ITOs are discussed in Section 6, and recommendations are made in Section 7.

2. *Pacific learners in workplace settings – background and context*

2.1 A youthful, urban, growing and diverse population

The Pacific population in New Zealand is rapidly growing, and is projected to increase from 8 percent of the total population (as of 2013) to around 11 percent by 2038 (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). In contrast to New Zealand aging population trends, the median age of Pacific peoples is 22 years old – more than 10 years less than the total population (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). The population is highly urbanised, with a vast majority of Pacific people residing in the Auckland and Wellington regions. Significant Pacific communities, about 38 percent of the total Pacific population in New Zealand, are concentrated in the South Auckland area (Counties Manukau Health, 2015).

The project thematic literature review notes the complex and dynamic diversity within Pacific ethnic groups and communities. Our understanding of what being 'Pacific' in New Zealand looks like and means is constantly evolving. A high birth rate is driving Pacific population growth – a departure from migration driven increases of previous decades – and, as of 2013, almost two-thirds of the total Pacific population was born in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). New Zealand born Pacific people are extremely youthful and, for most, English is their first language. Intermarriage is blurring the ethnic-specific identities that have been traditionally examined in research and policy contexts – in 2013, 9 percent of Pacific people identified with more than one Pacific ethnicity and 32 percent identified with ethnicities outside the Pacific group (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). For many Pacific people, understandings of traditional cultural orientations, beliefs, religion, their place in relation to their Pacific Island 'home', as well as to NZ, are transformational (Grey, 2001; Macpherson, 1999).

Pacific family units reflect these transformations, complex identities, and shared and divergent values. Pacific households are typically larger than the NZ norm, are multigenerational, multilingual and can include a fluid range of extended family members, non-related family members and large numbers of children. Nonetheless, Pacific family units are often where decision-making and actions relating to income, financial and community responsibilities, housing, health, education and work, are made on a collective basis.

2.2 Tertiary education outcomes for Pacific peoples

While outcomes for Pacific people in New Zealand across the education spectrum can be characterised by gradual and encouraging improvements over time, more work is needed to address some persistent achievement disparities between Pacific learners and other New Zealanders. The research clearly shows that by the time Pacific learners arrive at tertiary institutions many have had less than optimal education experiences. Studies such as Chu et al. (2013) provide a summary of the factors that underpin this issue, including an over-representation in low-decile schools that may not have provided the same learning opportunities as other schools.

Pacific participation rates have remained relatively steady in comparison to other ethnicities and Pacific learners tend to participate in higher level qualifications (level 4 and above) at about the same rate as the total population (5 percent of level 4+ enrolments in 2014 were Pacific, compared to the Pacific population of 5 percent) (Tertiary Education Commission,

2015b). Furthermore, while completion rates are improving across all levels, much greater improvement is needed to achieve parity. In 2013, 64 percent of Pacific students completed a qualification, compared to 80 percent of the total population (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015a). This remained unchanged in 2014 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

Educational outcomes for Pacific people are interconnected with a range of social and economic determinants relating to neighbourhood deprivation[1], health[2], housing[3], and income and wealth[4]. These issues restrict options, shape decision-making and affect the ability of many Pacific families to undertake long-term planning. They affect stability, productivity and participation, and necessitate different ways of organising and prioritising daily responsibilities.

2.3   Government response

A long-term, targeted Government response to improve Pacific education outcomes reflects the association between higher levels of educational attainment and life expectancy, civic engagement, life satisfaction, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes (OCED, 2013; Park, 2014). In addition, the increasing importance of a growing and changing Pacific population that is available to fill the skill shortage gaps of an aging population, presents great opportunities for Pacific people's social well-being and economic growth, while also highlighting challenges and implications for our education system. Note also that the Royal Society's Our Futures: Te Pae Tāwhiti (2014) analysis of 2013 census data suggests that NZ should take advantage of the demographic dividend of large youthful Māori and Pacific populations; however, there should also be a focus on productivity, not just population, to meet these skills needs (p.13).

Government strategic priorities for Pacific people and the New Zealand education system (including tertiary) are set out in the Ministry of Education's Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 (Ministry of Education, 2012), and the Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019 (Ministry of Education, 2014). The strategies emphasise the importance of putting Pacific learners, their parents, families and communities at the centre of the New Zealand education system, responding to the identities, languages, and cultures of each Pacific group, and delivering parity of achievement.

The Tertiary Education Commission specifically identifies the importance of effectively engaging Pacific learners, families and communities, setting challenging performance commitments in relation to participation and achievement, and clearly defining actions for obtaining educational participation and achievement parity (Tertiary Education Commission, 2014a).

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[1] Pacific peoples live in some of the most economically deprived parts of NZ. Around 76 percent of Counties Manukau Pacific people, many of them children, are concentrated in decile 9 and 10 areas and experience high socioeconomic deprivation and poverty (Counties Manukau Health, 2015).

[2] Health inequalities affect Pacific people across a range of indicators, including a high prevalence of complex chronic conditions. High rates of hospitalisation for both adults and children suggest difficulties in accessing high quality primary health services (Ministry of Health, 2012).

[3] Household overcrowding, poor quality housing and reliance on the social housing sector play a significant role in health outcomes for Pacific people, as well as in the financial circumstances and stability of families.

[4] The median income for Pacific peoples is $557 per week, compared to a national median income of $844. About 60 percent of Pacific people have an individual net economic wealth of less than $16,000 and about 20 percent less than $1,000 (Salesa, 2015).

2.4   The industry training sector context

There are 11 ITOs in New Zealand with the responsibility to:

- arrange workplace training within their industries;
- work with tertiary education providers to develop and deliver the skills that benefit trainees, employers and the New Zealand economy;
- set national skill standards, lead qualifications development; and
- play a central role in industry-related vocational education and training.

ITOs set skill standards and make arrangements for the delivery of industry training, but do not deliver training themselves. In meeting the objectives of the Tertiary Education Strategy, the Tertiary Education Commission notes that ITOs are expected to achieve a level of participation in their recognised industry, consistent with the scale and broad demographics of the workforce employed in that industry; and to achieve the same results for all participants in industry training, regardless of their demographic group (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015).

These roles and functions highlight the specific work context that ITOs operate within and the significant differences between ITOs and tertiary education organisations engaged in provider-based training. The thematic literature review notes that in contrast to a university model of classroom-based teaching and learning, the industry training system leverages the use of business resources (including labour profile) and capital assets, and manages relationships with employers to provide the training environment for learners. As a result, ITOs generally lack access to a critical mass of learners who are co-located for extended periods of time. This limits the direct capacity of ITOs to influence the day to day experience of learners compared to other tertiary education organisations.

These differences present challenges for ITOs to interpret and apply the results of most research about the experiences of Pacific people in provider-based training, particularly as the evidence base relating to ITO-arranged training is still developing. The challenge of meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse Pacific population, while contextualising new information about how people learn, introduces an additional layer of complexity.

Importantly, employers play a central role in industry training. While ITOs can directly influence their own institutional commitment to the success of Pacific peoples, their relationships with the deliverers of workplace training (employer representatives) are inevitably more diffuse.

Academic expertise in the area of industry training articulates a role for workplace learning that formal learning settings (such as universities) do not fulfil. This thinking emphasises the significance of the workplace as a setting where a vast bulk of adult learning takes place and where a genuine connection between skill acquisition and skill usage is achieved. A real employer commitment is essential to maximise the potential of this learning (Keep, 2014).

2.5   Pacific learners in the industry training sector

Pacific people engaged in industry training make up 21 percent of all Pacific learners in tertiary education. They comprise 7 percent of the total learners participating in training through an ITO (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

For Pacific learners in industry training, some notable performance gaps exist compared to other learners. For all ITOs, approximately 25 percent of Pacific learners are enrolled as apprentices compared to 39 percent non-Pacific. The rate of credit achievement (course completion) for Pacific learners in industry training is 71 percent, compared to 76 percent for all learners. In terms of programme achievement, 62 percent of Pacific learners in industry training complete their qualification compared to 72 percent of all learners (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b).

In terms of volume (actual student numbers), similar numbers of Pacific students are enrolled in industry training as in university study – 9,212 students and 10,550 respectively (Tertiary Education Commission, 2015b). Table 1 shows the proportion and number of Pacific students by Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO) type.

Table 1: Proportion and number of Pacific students by TEO type

Tertiary Education Organisations	Proportion of Pacific in each TEO	Total students	Number of Pacific students in each TEO	Each TEO's proportion of all TE Pacific students
Universities	7%	150,712	10,549	24%
ITPs	10%	118,917	11,891	27%
Wānanga	10%	37,636	3,763	9%
PTE	17%	46,077	7,833	18%
ITO	7%	131,603	9,212	21%

Source: Tertiary Education Commission. (2015b). 2014 Tertiary Education Performance Report. Wellington, NZ: Tertiary Education Commission.

While differences in delivery have been noted (classroom and workplace based learning), as well as differences in qualification levels (typically Level 7+ for university study and Levels 1-4 for ITOs), some differences in Pacific achievement between ITOs and universities are useful to note. Credit achievement (course completion) rates are comparable in both TEOs (71 percent at both universities and ITOs). Programme achievement (qualification completion) rates are much lower for Pacific students in Universities than ITOs (55 percent and 62 percent respectively). Table 2 shows a comparison of credit achievement and programme

achievement rates for Pacific students and all Students. That a considerable volume of Pacific graduates is being produced within the industry training system indicates the importance of this sector and the potential benefits of further improving its effectiveness in meeting the needs of Pacific learners.

Table 2: Comparison of credit achievement and programme achievement rates for Pacific students and All Students

Tertiary Education Organisations	Credit achievement (or course completion)		Programme achievement (or qualification completion)	
	All students	Pacific students	All students	Pacific students
Universities	86%	71%	81%	55%
ITOs	76%	71%	72%	62%

Source: Tertiary Education Commission. (2015b). 2014 Tertiary Education Performance Report. Wellington, NZ: Tertiary Education Commission.

3. *Thematic literature review*

The literature review identified the following key themes to help guide and inform the project:

- *New approaches are required*
  The evidence base about what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education is limited and mainly focused on the provider-based (predominantly university) sector which provides an imperative for industry training-focused study. Improved understanding is required for how best to configure industry training to meet the needs of Pacific learners.

- *Context matters*
  The evidence suggests that effective interventions for Pacific learners are multifaceted and coordinated. There is no 'silver bullet' or single approach that will deliver parity of achievement for Pacific learners. ITOs need to think about how they can align all of the areas of their operation to create an environment conducive to the success of Pacific learners.

- *The role of employers and workplaces*
  The role of employers and workplaces in providing culturally-appropriate environments for Pacific learners is not well-understood, but is likely to be highly influential.

- *Internal change*
  Current approaches for engaging with Pacific learners, their families, and communities reflect existing cultural norms within those organisations that do not include diversity. The literature suggests that making a meaningful and effective change to the context within which Pacific learners engage with and experience industry training requires attitudinal and behavioural changes for ITOs.

- *Mentoring*
  There has been some effort in recent years to understand what makes mentoring for Pacific (and Māori) learners effective. A number of practical steps are identified that ITOs can take to systematise the way in which mentoring is conducted, but care needs to be taken to integrate any interventions with other support systems and ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

- *Improved measurement*
  Quantitative data is underused in attempts to assess the effectiveness of interventions for Pacific learners, and there is scope to collect qualitative data in a more structured way. Improving the way in which information is collected and used, and engaging stakeholders in the design of appropriate measures, can help to ensure that interventions are appropriately designed and tailored.

The review took a broad view of the industry training sector and emphasised that, given their intermediary role, ITOs are well-placed to create sustainable systems of support. By extension, interventions should avoid 'bolting-on' to existing systems that are not optimally configured for the needs of Pacific learners. While there was a noted scarcity of evidence about what works for Pacific people in industry education and training, this creates opportunities to use pilot interventions, that are experimental and adaptive, to respond to changing expectations.

The full thematic literature review is referred to under Appendix 2 in this report.

4. Evaluation priorities and methodology

The utilisation-focused evaluation approach used in this project enables tailored research design based on situational issues and a continued focus on the needs of the primary users of the evaluation. Therefore, while the independent evaluation contributes summative information for accountability and performance assessment, and, given the lack of current ITO-focused information and research, contributes knowledge generally about Pacific learners in the industry training setting (PPL, 2015), the focus remains on utility for the ITOs and their stakeholders.

4.1 Evaluation priorities

The results of the Project Literature Review (PPL, 2015) and the expertise and experience of the ITOs were drawn on to identify the priorities of the primary users of this evaluation. Table 3 summarises the priority themes identified by the Project Advisory Group.

Table 3: Priority themes of the evaluation

Participation	Educational Attainment	Employers	Learner Context
Pacific learners are: • underrepresented in industry training (based on their overall demographic profile), • generally enrolled in programmes at lower levels, • concentrated in particular industries.	There is some variability in outcomes (credit achievement and qualification completion): • among ethnic groups, • among industries, and • due to the nature of training delivered. There are persistent gaps between Pacific and non-Pacific learners. There is some evidence to suggest that the main drivers are due to: • level of preparedness, and • enrolment choices.	There may be systemic and institutional factors that influence educational and training outcomes.	The Pacific population is a diverse one, including differences in: • ethnicity (subnational cultural affiliation), • whether New Zealand or overseas born, • traditional and contemporary cultural norms, and • age. Family and community expectations and pressures may play a role. It is important to avoid stigmatising learners through 'special' approaches, but rather integration of good practice into business as usual is best.

4.2   Evaluation methodology

Mixed methods were used to collect and analyse empirical information. The purpose of this approach was to broaden and deepen our understanding of the programme processes and outcomes and how these are affected by the context in which the pilots were implemented. Different types of evidence about the context and outcomes of the pilots were interrogated using system indicators of success and the perspectives of diverse Pacific learners, peer mentors, study group facilitators and ITO staff. To achieve this, qualitative descriptive approaches (Sandelowski, 2000) and Pacific research methods were used; complemented with quantitative methods.

The data collected included:

- a review of the literature on Pacific achievement in tertiary education (see Section 3 and Appendix 2);
- comprehensive descriptions of how the pilots were implemented in the four ITO settings;
- documentary analysis to understand the policy and implementation context of the pilots;
- collation of data about learners' characteristics; and
- focus groups and semi-structured interviews with Pacific learners, pilot mentors, study group facilitators, and ITO staff from the project team.

Qualitative description

Qualitative descriptive methods were used to collect information about the pilots from the mentors and study group facilitators, and ITO staff from the project team. A semi-structured interview guide, based on the literature review and information provided by the ITOs, was developed and finalised by the project team.

Pacific research methods

Qualitative research methods using in-depth interviews with Pacific learners were used to capture the richness and depth of their experience (Patton, 1990). The interviews were conducted, recorded, translated and transcribed by a team of experienced Pacific researchers. Pacific cultural research methods using the process of talanoa (Southwick, 2012) provided the overarching framework for engagement with Pacific learners. Talanoa in this sense is similar to qualitative methods for interviews and focus groups. However, talanoa is embedded in the context of ongoing relationships (or 'va') with communities, families and individuals. It is guided by the Pacific principles of respect for cultural protocols for engagement (codes of respect), and symbolic gestures of reciprocity and gratitude (for example, providing refreshments, and following up after the interview to provide further information or assistance). The semi-structured interview schedule to guide interviews was used to facilitate a narrative or 'story telling' approach about what matters to the learners. The aim was to enable learners to raise aspects of their experiences that were important to them, in their own voice. This can be considered part of an empowering approach used in education and health promotion research that emphasises personal experience and voice (Labonte et al, 1999). Our experience is that focus groups with a focus on empowerment and participation, using culturally competent, inclusive processes and talanoa, allow for greater reflection and discussion by participants. In addition, narratives are inclusive and assist with flexibility in responding to the preferences of diverse Pacific communities.

5. Two pilot programmes: Peer Mentoring and Study Groups

The Peer Mentoring programme and the Study Group (learner-focused training) programme were the two models considered by the project team to be most appropriate and applicable to workforce training.

Guided by the findings of the thematic literature review, selection and design of the programmes involved an evidence-based analysis of the learning needs of Pacific learners (diverse in ethnicity, age, educational background and English language proficiency) and the specific context of training within a workplace setting. Government strategic directions and policies, and academic expertise were taken into account. Consideration was also given to the 'scalability' (potential to expand) of initiatives and the viability of applying the model across a range of industries.

The two Auckland-based programmes were implemented across 11 workplaces and nine qualifications. Careerforce and ServiceIQ were involved in the Peer Mentoring programme; The Skills Organisation and Competenz in the Study Group programme. A detailed description of each programme can be found below and in Tables 4 and 5.

5.1   Rationale for the programmes

Although the two pilot programmes were distinct, there were commonalities in the desired outcomes of each and the evidence-based assumptions that underpinned them.

A better learning environment

Study groups aim to create a sense of fellowship and family, and a safe, trusting environment where learners support each other to persist and progress with study. Allocated time for group/community building activities, such as shared meals and supplementary teaching and assessment, help to reinforce these aims. Learners are more likely to request support through others with similar experiences. Peer mentors aim to help learners to recognise their own skills and to have confidence in their ability. Both arrangements create a positive, constructive space for shared teaching and learning.

A structured environment tailored to learners' needs

'On the job' industry training uses workplace resources to provide a setting for skill and competency development. To keep learners 'on track' within this system, both programmes aim to develop a structured informality that is tailored to an individual's specific needs. Study groups intend to provide a consistent space for purposeful and collective action. Peer mentoring relationships aim to be trusting, respectful and generous, while still observing boundaries that are appropriate within a working environment.

An environment underpinned by Pacific cultural values and approaches

Workplace and formal learning cultures are not well-attuned to the cultural norms of Pacific peoples. Pacific reticence in training settings may be culturally-driven and a sense of 'incongruity of culture' can distract from achievement goals. Culturally-based learning models, the embedding of Pacific cultural norms in teaching materials, and approaches that encompass Pacific values and principles among participants, can create a safe and more familiar environment that is conducive to achievement. The use of facilitators and mentors with strong cultural and relationship skills augments technical support and recognises and responds to the needs of Pacific learners.

An environment to engage and involve family

Learner success requires creation of a strong environment of co-support among family and peers. Engaging family involves communicating the value of workplace training and how other obligations can impede a learner's success.

A focus on meaningful progress and better engagement with the workplace

The programmes address the perceived lack of support and other barriers that can impede progress and lead to disengagement in workplace training and employment. Developing the confidence of learners and tapping into personal motivating factors, and encouraging self-directed learning habits, aim to positively impact training progress and ongoing engagement in the workplace. A positive side effect may be to create a self-sustaining culture of peer support.

A clear understanding of the desired positive outcomes for learners

Improved engagement at work, technical competency and better qualifications will tend to make learners more employable, contribute to career progression and satisfaction and have positive long-term implications on economic, social and health outcomes of learners (and their families).

Models of learning support delivered through small groups

Two types of pilots were designed for this project; peer mentoring and study groups (see the logic models in appendix 3). However, what we found were four types of learning support arrangements being implemented, typically in small groups. The four types were:

- an employer-appointed facilitator supporting learners to complete on-the-job learning outside of work hours;
- an employer-appointed facilitator supporting learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours;
- an employee-driven facilitation of on-the-job learning, during work hours (one case); and
- an ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support students to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.

5.2   Peer Mentoring

The thematic literature review identified a strong evidence base from the tertiary sector (including the industry training sector) for the effectiveness of mentoring as a tool to support Pacific learners.

Table 4: Peer Mentoring programme – basic data

ITO	Careerforce	ServiceIQ
Pilot description	Different for different workplaces. No 'start and end' dates (leveraged existing arrangements). Two types of mentoring (not peer-specific): • Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning outside of work hours. • Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours.	No 'start and end' dates (leveraged existing arrangements). Two types of mentoring (not peer-specific): • Employer-appointed facilitator to support learners to complete on-the-job learning during work hours. • One example of employee-driven facilitation of on-the-job learning during work hours.
Period of focus for pilot	Six months (November 2015 - May 2016)	Six months (November 2015 - May 2016)
Format	Flexible approach that responds to the need of each learner.	Flexible approach that responds to the need of each learner.
Qualification	Youth Work L3 & 4 Health and Wellbeing L2	Retail L2 Distribution L2
No. Workplaces	2	2

5.3   Study Groups

While there was evidence to suggest that targeted tutorial programmes for Pacific learners in provider-based tertiary settings can be effective, very little research exists about Pacific people learning in an industry training context.

This programme involved support for learners from different workplaces by an ITO-appointed facilitator to complete theoretical components of the qualification in study groups outside of formal teaching and outside of work hours (evening classes). Facilitators had relevant cultural expertise, as well as technical expertise and skills in adult education.

Table 5: Study Group (learner-focused training) programme - basic data

ITO	The Skills Organisation	Competenz
Pilot description	ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support learners to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.	ITO-appointed facilitator and tutor to support learners to complete theoretical components of qualifications in study groups, outside of work hours and outside of formal teaching.
Length of programme	Seven weeks (March/April 2016)	At least four weeks (July/ August 2016)
Format	Two hour-long study sessions (per week) included: Group/community building activities (e.g. shared meals). Teaching and assessment.	Two hour-long study sessions (per week) included: Group/community building activities (e.g. shared meals). Teaching and assessment.
Qualification	Electrotechnology L3 & 4	Mechanical Engineering L4 Engineering (Fabrication) L4 Engineering (Heavy fabrication) L4
No. Workplaces	4	3

6. Findings

Thematic findings of focus groups and semi-structured interviews with learners, facilitators and ITOs are presented below, by group.

Table 6 provides information about the interview participants from each group.

Table 6: Interview participants from Learners, Facilitators and ITOs

Learners	Facilitators (peer mentors and study group facilitators)	ITOs
36 learners in total were interviewed: • 25 (69%) in peer mentoring • 17 Careerforce, 8 ServiceIQ • 11 (31%) in study groups • 7 The Skills Organisation, 4 Competenz **Age** 4 interviewees (11%) were 10-19 years old 11 (31%) were 20-29 years old 9 (25%) were 30-39 years old 6 (17%) were 40-49 years old 3 (8%) were 50-59 years old 3 (8%) age unknown **Gender** 16 (44%) female and 20 (56%) male **Ethnicity** 16 (44%) Samoan 7 (19%) Tongan 3 (8%) Cook Island Māori 5 (14%) Other 5 (14%) Unknown	**6 peer mentors and facilitators in total** were interviewed: • 2 Careerforce peer mentoring facilitators • 2 ServiceIQ peer mentoring facilitators • 1 The Skills Organisation study group facilitator • 1 Competenz study group facilitator	Data was collected from **7 employees of the 4 ITOs:** • 2 from Careerforce • 2 from ServiceIQ • 2 from The Skills Organisation • 1 from Competenz 6 were ITO employees in the project team (2 of the 6 were members of the original project team of 5). Data collection from interviews (5 project team interviews), and project and evaluation-focused meetings. **Roles** • Industry Manager Electrical Technology • National Manager Pasifika • National Manager Māori and Pacific • Manager Support Services • Learning Engagement Advisor • Pacific Engagement Advisor • Training advisor All Auckland-based roles. Mainly national roles. Majority in their roles for less than 1 year. One person in their role for 3 years. Most had background in teaching or education. **Gender** 4 males and 3 females. **Ethnicity** 3 Pacific and 4 non-Pacific.

6.1   Key findings - Learners

Learner access and participation

Learners received information about industry training and apprenticeships through a range of family, social and community networks. For some learners, decisions to enter a certain industry were influenced by other family members and their family members' occupations.

> … all the men in our family are tradies …

> … my old man is a sheet metalist … he kind of pushed me to do it …

In other cases, sport, school or other networks provided opportunities.

> … our boss, his wife … her friend works at [the school I used to attend] so she got me an apprenticeship.

> [Tutor] coaches the rugby team for my nephew, so my sister got me in touch with [him] and … he offered me an opportunity here …

Family context and circumstances, particularly **a responsibility to financially contribute to the family unit**, were important factors in the decision-making process of whether to pursue tertiary study (for school leavers and adult workers alike). For many, the time commitment required for courses was considered to be unrealistic and the immediate need to work and earn money outweighed longer term positive outcomes of gaining a tertiary qualification.

Barriers

- Pacific workers are often unaware of the range of opportunities to learn.
- Pacific learners have to prioritise learning, work, and family. Family is also a key factor for success.
- There are cost (economic) barriers to workplace learning for Pacific people. These include competing time demands outside of work hours.
- Pacific learners' self-perception of capability can be low – lack of confidence and language barriers, based on earlier experience of education and training, need to be overcome.

Success

- Workplace context is important and requires a supportive employer to create the motivating learning support and learning contexts.
- Relationships with facilitators of learning support are important catalysts for participation and achievement, continuance and completion.
- Small learner support groups have worked well for Pacific learners, particularly where barriers impede learning.
- Personal motivations need to be explored/facilitated in order to establish and develop positive, future-focused goals.

… I thought of my family's financial weakness in [Pacific country], when I got here I thought of going back to school but we needed the money. So, I looked at our poor situation, and I was told that one can take a course in these kinds of trades. But I looked at the time spent on the course and the need to find a job to help my family …

In this aspect, the ability to 'learn while you earn' was thought to provide a better option.

… I left studies to come work to help my parents and stuff, I would love to go back to uni if I could for the money, but you know you can't really go back to school when you need to pay bills and stuff, I think this is good for us ... there's heaps of young kids inside like Pacific Islanders, this would be good for them, they can't go to school because they have work to give money for the parents, these are good qualifications for them, it's good for them to have …

Motivations for completing a qualification

A range of factors were motivating learners to complete their qualifications. These included using their skills to **help and benefit their family** ("… my long-term goal is to go back and change my grandparents' house …"), having a **transferable qualification**[5] ("… that's the advantage ... you can go anywhere really …"), **getting promoted** ("… I want to be qualified so I can give the orders instead of taking orders …") and (for nearly all learners) **earning more money.**

Many learners were also aware that opportunities for further study could be hard to come by. Knowing that other people had missed out on the chance to train and upskill, made one learner mindful not to "waste the opportunity" and it served as a motivation to "stick to it".

I looked at how difficult it was finding these kinds of opportunities to prepare one for these types of job, which helps our understanding with the rules and the requirements, it gets us out of our difficult situations. I can see that there will be few people that will get opportunities like this, and thank God that there will be opportunities at our place of work so that we can 'sharpen our pencils again as they have become very blunt'…

A supportive employer is also important. Receiving training opportunities and being supported by an employer to complete a qualification made learners feel invested in, respected and encouraged – and in turn more motivated to succeed.

… that's the positive thing with this place, they motivate you to become something or someone …

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[5] This finding specifically relates to learners in the study group pilots

... it's that relationship we have here … is what helps, you know makes us want to come to work. You know cos they're not only helping us get our qualifications, but you know they really genuinely want … they care about us succeeding …

... when I first started here I do English course through here like a workplace course and then this course and a health and safety course, it's just like, I've never work in a company that offers heaps of, heaps of companies make you work and never give you opportunities …

Barriers to study

Maintaining focus and motivation was difficult for many learners. One learner described being able to study at home for only a short time before giving up, another talked about 'getting lazy'. While these kinds of issues are common for many students, **managing work demands** (including overtime or night shifts) and **striking a work/life balance with other family, church and sports activities** had a compounding effect for many learners.

… we are working overtime ... not time to study, sometimes we work in the weekends, just not feeling like studying anymore, there's also the night shift if there's work, go home, sleep and then come back again …

I just go to church on Sunday, sometimes there's a family meeting …

… our job's quite physical and after work, after training, [I] only have one night a week at home … the weeks are pretty packed …

It should be noted however, that there were many instances in the interviews where learners described **family as a key source of support** for coping with these challenges. One learner, for example, described encouragement from his wife as being instrumental to completing his qualification

… every time I go home I say I don't want to do it, I'm just nervous and I don't want to sit in front of everyone and trying to write something, she just pushed me to do it …

Language is a major barrier for some. Understanding course materials, writing in English and completing assessments can take significantly longer for Pacific learners for whom English is a second language.

… its managing the time. Like the hours for work and also when you have the answer in your brain and you don't know how to explain it …

... [find the] … time to google the words and the sentences and try and finish my assessment.

For others, **perceived weaknesses or doubts** about their ability to succeed in the course were based on previous experiences in school or formal study. Many learners felt unprepared to understand workbook material or deal with theoretical components of the course.

… I think oh I want to give up ... you know my mind and my skills working on that book is not on the level of understanding it, so for me back in the island my school's not – I didn't do well in school … when they first nominate me to come for this course last year, I was really nervous and scared because ... for me I dropped my school when I was year 11 so when I had this course it's kind of like struggle sometimes …

… my strength is practical when I see things, I learn, watching that's my strength, when someone tells you to do the books, you just go huh?

Many learners were **entering a formal learning setting for the first time in many years.**

> *… I hadn't done any study or book work for like 10 years … it's a bit of a shock and probably more theory than I thought to be honest …*

The experience of many learners was that **classes are too rushed to understand topics** properly. They associated a formal learning environment with being lost and not keeping up.

> *… we rush through everything … they expect you to understand [and move on to the next topic but don't check that you have understood].*

These negative experiences were often magnified by the **teaching style and approach** of facilitators in the workplace.

> *… at school, the teacher … he sits there and opens the book and reads page after page and if you try and ask a question he shuts you off …*

> *… you know that the other tutor is not good like for example when [name] comes and that [other team leader] and just comes in open the book and read it to you … without explaining every little word for us, I feel like sleeping …*

Learner perspectives of the initiatives

Learning environment and teaching approaches
Study group sessions were viewed as **a chance to reflect on and really grasp course material.** Learners spoke positively about the slower pace of the study groups and the opportunity to go through material "in more depth" and to let information "sink in". The **small size of the study groups and the attention from tutors felt "more personal"** to one learner and promoted more participatory study sessions.

> *… yeah, pretty good pace, once we all understand we move on …*

> *… for these [times] that's where we really put our minds into study …*

> *… if we didn't pass the assessment … it gives us the opportunity to do it [before going back to the formal learning] …*

> *Study with the big group and one tutor some people are shy and can't ask question. They just quietly go home and don't understand what we did …*

The facilitator used **inclusive discussions, questions, and the sharing of ideas and opinions** as ways to supplement book work and create a positive and encouraging learning environment. Creating **a small learning network** provided a chance for learners to learn with and from each other.

> *… this place is choice, it gives you a good attitude on how to treat people …*

> *We share what we think. We explain it … the question in [Pacific language] and then we all share our ideas and then we go from there.*

In some cases, this learning network created a momentum that extended into family and social circles.

> *… We help each other, normally if you don't finish it you can take it home and your wife or your friends can help you, or your family can help you for this book and the assessment …*

English as a second language

For learners with English as a second language, this was especially valuable. For some learners, **learning strategies for dealing with language challenges** and **building the confidence to participate and interact** with others, had a significant impact on their enthusiasm and engagement for course study. The training was an opportunity to address language related barriers and build skills that can be transferred to other aspects of their life.

> *… it's just like discussing with the whole class, putting in ideas, like talking about health and safety and then [facilitator] just asks us questions, like what do you think about it, then you know everyone just says their ideas and she writes it on the board, and there's like different questions in the book, just answer it, she always says do it in your own words, if you don't feel comfortable writing it in English, write it in your own language …*

> *… I was hesitant because of the English language, I saw it as my (fili) weakness/ challenge. The language was like a wall that blocks my eagerness for the course. I was slow in picking up the content of the course in class … I copy the talk of those who were born in New Zealand and from the teacher. That is the value of the course to me, learning is 100 percent useful to me, it is lessening my fear to talk. I think of the advice from [facilitator] '… don't be shy, I must remember that it is my second language'… even if it's a mish mash the main thing is the other person (listener) understands …*

In the focus groups, these issues were discussed with humour and laughter, demonstrating the confidence learners with English as a second language have in working with their facilitator. The overarching tone described was an enjoyable learning environment.

> *… You just let it out it's up to the teacher to make sense of the verbs and the nouns eh …*

> *… That's one of our assessments, getting to know our teammates, that was a good one, that was fun …*

Facilitators and peer mentors

The **facilitator is a role model,** who has the respect of learners. Having a facilitator who was **available, accessible and visibly invested in their progress and achievement,** motivated and inspired learners to also "put in the effort".

> *… what [tutor] does for us, he talks to us like, not as somebody lecturing you, but as somebody who says listen here, this is the way you've got to do this, it's not complicated, forget about the words …*

> *… The thing with [facilitators name] she's like really flexible, even though we just see her on Friday, we can go to her anytime of the week and just ask her about something in the book …*

> *… She's really enthusiastic when she's teaching us and she makes us like you know want to be there and want to learn …*

Workplaces

This was coupled with **support for learning in the workplace**. In one workplace, team leaders had all completed the qualification previously and were very supportive.

> *My team leader actually pushed me to do this, he said it would be good for me. He's always like asking me how it's going and if I'm behind, if I miss a class, did you catch up, did you go see [the facilitator]. So, he's very helpful …*

> *… sometimes I don't understand something in the book so I always go up to my team leader and she always helps me, like if [facilitator] is not around so it's really good, she encouraged me too for this course …*

The courses of study are providing **a range of new skills and knowledge that many learners are immediately applying.**

> *… while the [qualification] is important, what I appreciate is the knowledge that you can put in practice straight away. It is a very good opportunity and to do this course and the use of English language …*

> *… it improves our communication and interconnections with other people it also opens one's understanding and one's thoughts to bring to you … [understanding to share with the interviewer]*

For many learners, the qualifications that they were working towards opened a whole new set of possibilities and options for them. Many had developed a **future focus and were motivated to think about and set new goals** for themselves.

> *… if you want to go higher, because this qualification can make you like, if you want to be an assistant team leader or team leader, this will help you …*

> *… for me thinking about getting the [qualification], get an opportunity to maybe not here but in the future and get a good job in the future, that's really makes me go forward and push myself to do that course …*

Engagement in the workplace

The course is giving learners a **broader perspective of their work roles** and their place within the company they work for.

> *… I work in [team] … I think what I learnt from the course is like the whole customer service thing ... we're not [other types of roles] but we still need to give customer service for our customers ... just being more mindful about how we are doing our work like sometimes we are in a rush we just want to go home and just do it and we just want to send it out the door, but what I learnt was just like what we do affects others, that's what I learnt like a domino effect sort of like we do something that will all go to custard, we lose business, stuff like that, I've never thought about that, I just think like 'that's just another order to do'…*

Course material was valuable and helped learners to **understand and engage with their roles and other people around them.**

> *… the book, it's really understanding and the way for me to understand the English more and my culture, your cultures, how we respect each other in your workplace and also how to work safely in a workplace ... I don't know if there is any other thing to improve …*

This included an increased awareness of **recognising and respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds** of others in the workplace.

> *… It's different because everyone in here is from a different culture but this course makes us to go outside and ask your work mates that have a different culture, how do they say in respectful way … I was like saying the words that is offensive and aggressive, but when I done this course it makes me realise I have to be respectful and all that about cultural thing …*

> *… Because it's so big … everyone is separated so you only know your own team … but this made us actually go and talk to other people and get to know each other, different team, different culture, it's really good …*

> *… I enjoy this workplace, is good to know other people and their cultures, we have to respect their cultures because sometimes when I talk to them they don't look at you in the eyes and you thought are they listening, but they are, it's just their way, their culture, we have to respect that, if we do that, I love [the course], I learned a lot, I learn how to respect and be patient …*

In some cases, courses helped this learner draw a **connection between work and home life.**

> *I have learnt the relationship with other colleagues is very important, understanding what they do, respectful within the workplace and also outside of work. For example, if you get upset from home and come to work unhappy, you could end up taking it out on someone else who has no idea why you are upset …*

6.2　Key findings – Facilitators

This role was called different things in the pilot initiatives (peer mentor and study group facilitator). We saw no evidence of peer-specific support, and we see the roles in both pilots as being generally to 'facilitate and support learning' (as opposed to being employers, or teachers for example) so have referred to them here collectively as 'facilitators'.

Programme facilitators who were employed in the company were mindful of the **multiple roles** they were required to balance. This involved exercising leadership, while also 'being on the same level' as learners. While this was not seen as a conflict or as problematic, it was considered important to draw boundaries between their functions as a mentor or coach and as a senior member of staff or management.

… If work needs to get done … it has to get done, there's no ifs or buts or I thought we were mates ... I try and tell them when we're working, well I am the boss, you work. When we're having a beer we're all at the same level. When we're studying, we're all at the same level.

We are running a business … and I guess helping them to understand where the business needs to draw the line, but also where we can actually come to the party … you've got to put the work in to understand the learners, where they are at, what's going to bring them out of their shell …

Characteristics of successful facilitators of learner support:

- Facilitators who share their industry and work experience ensuring work context underpins learners' experience and the relevance of learning and its contribution to career progression is understood, demonstrated and applied.
- Facilitators who understand learners' lived reality – the broad context of experiences and circumstances that impact learning and the values and drivers important to learners, help establish shared values and a supportive and empowering learning environment.
- Facilitators who address diverse barriers to engaging in learning and develop strategies to overcome these and build the learners confidence.
- Facilitators that incorporate practical learning and supportive learning environments.

Barriers

- Generic rather than contextualised learning resources (workbooks).
- Work schedules during peak work periods.
- Finding ways to respond to an increasingly diverse and multicultural workforce.

Success

- Facilitators have the authority in the workplace to validate learning.
- Facilitators have the experience and skills to contextualise learning through practice, communication, and ensuring relevance to the learners' work role is understood (concepts are applied meaningfully to the learners' work role, workplace and personal home lives).
- Facilitators have a close relationship with the learner context and have the skills to create practical forms of learning including learners use of their language of choice.

One facilitator used their previous experience as a front-line staff member to emphasise that the jobs learners do within the company are valued and their participation is respected.

> *… so, when I run the classes [I say] 'I don't have all the answers because you work out there and you are doing it all day, whereas I'm just sitting here and telling you how it is, but back in the day when I was [front line staff member]' and when I tell them that they're like 'wow you were…?' ... you'll find that when you come down to the learner's level, you respect their protocol, you respect how they learn, they will understand better and understand the book as well …*

Addressing barriers to engaged learning

All facilitators were aware that understanding the lived realities of learners was vital for developing strategies to support their learning progress and achievement. An implicit **understanding of the cultural values and drivers** that underlie barriers was evident in the way facilitators discussed the issues. One description of tailoring support to meet the diverse needs and abilities of learners summed up the challenge this often presented for facilitators.

> *… that's probably one of the struggles I think, sometimes it's such a wide variety of people, for some English is a second language, for some people it's because they haven't been at school for some time, for some it's like they may be more advanced than other people, and it's trying to tailor it so that everybody feels like they are getting something out of it, but making sure they are keeping up to speed as well …*

Prioritising work and learning while acknowledging and managing personal and family commitments and demands was important. This could include flexible and adaptable approaches to homework or work hours, engaging families or taking more time to explain a broader workplace perspective to learners.

> *… most of us islanders, we value our religion and we value our culture and our family, so it's just working around that area because we seem to not pass because of that … but when it comes to homework or something to get the head going … there are more important things than homework …*

> *… one guy, he was in a custody battle for his son, we actually made it work, we changed his hours so he could be with his son …*

> *… the young ones, fresh off school and are trying really hard and all I'm doing with them is to try and talk to them and try to encourage them, if you've got some problems at home, do try and talk to us about them or come and see us. But I don't know, not trying to overpower them or try and be their Mum and Dad …*

> *… our Pacific island students [the workers], I would say that [absenteeism is] probably quite high, so giving them [the organisation's] side of the story, okay here's what we need to consider when asking for leave …*

These flexible and supportive approaches recognise the **need for financial support** as a legitimate barrier. For many learners, it was the deciding factor between undertaking training or not.

> *… when I was doing Level 2, I struggled because that was Monday to Friday for three months although I was on a benefit, but imagine someone that's not on the benefit and relying on their wages week after week without guaranteed hours, they are going to say no to training, and that's the first thing the [learners] asked, are we going to get paid for training?...*

> *… all [of the course work is done] during work time, they do have the option to do some stuff at home …*

Recognising that prior educational achievements of learners may be limited was important. As one facilitator described, for learners with English as a second language, it may be the "first certificate in their life" or for Pacific immigrants settling in New Zealand "it's their first job from coming from the islands …". This also extended to dealing with (and overcoming) different norms of engagement relating to speaking and respect in a cultural context or learning context.

> *I guess for me it's where it's limiting us from being able to open up … at home you get taught when it's your turn to speak … out in the real world, where even if it's not your turn to speak, you are free to speak and you are entitled to your opinion … so if you are at home as a Pacific Islander, we are so limited in being able to come out of our shell and say what you really think … how we feel …"*

Transferable skills

Facilitators were seeing **new skills being applied in the personal and home lives of learners**. This kind of broad and holistic development was important to one facilitator who argued that recruitment for successful employment is not solely about reviewing educational attainment, but looking for life experience, responsibility and practical management skills.

> *… that's success for us, taking what they are learning and applying it, not just at work but for home. [learner's name] I think is a fantastic example, I met with his wife last year and she was saying you know before he did the course he didn't actually read to his kids, he was really shy about his English and how he sounded and that people would think he wasn't smart enough … and since doing the course, it became a thing for him and his son reading to each other, that's what you want to see out of it, not just that it's helping us in the workplace setting but that it's carrying over to people's lives …*

Teaching approaches

Ensuring that study books and materials are accessible, understandable and relevant is a key function of learner support. Facilitators noted that learners often report negative and demotivating experiences from traditional teaching approaches. Moving quickly through course materials, adhering strictly to workbooks and leaving little time for questions or to ensure understanding, were criticisms that strongly aligned with findings from learner interviews.

As a result, facilitators had put a lot of time into making practical connections between workbook theory and aspects of learners' jobs or experiences. In one case, a facilitator made a glossary for the existing glossary in the workbook, that linked technical terms to tasks learners do in the workplace.

> *… I guess it's just about breaking it down for them to understand and using what they do out there with our clients … once you explain their job, what they do every day, they tend to understand what the book is asking them for … experience that they've gone through is better learning than what they're going to read in a book …*

> *… so, you've got a course book and it's pretty stock standard across lots of different workplaces. I actually relate it back to what we do here and [tell the learners to] think about the time you did this, it's the same thing …*

> *… what I do is a definitions list, they've got a basic set in front of each section, they have the words that's terminology for the section, I know many people won't go and look it up [even though they don't understand the words], I actually go and find the dictionary definition and write it out … it's funny since working with [ITO staff] it's actually made me go back and look at the definitions and I think oh gosh, that actually makes it more confusing so I've gone back and made them simpler to understand and linked it directly to a task [the learners] have to do [in their workplace] … so when it says this, this is the task that you do here and this is what it means so it has more relevance …*

Other **practical forms of study** were incorporated to engage learners and contextualise what they are learning.

> *… this year I got one of our managers to take them through [the company] tour, so it's like you're a visitor, these are the things I want you to look at, come back and we'll have a talk about it and that made a huge difference because they were actually experiencing it rather than reading it from a book …*

… in the past, a lot of [our training] has been paper-based, so manuals and procedures and processes … what we are looking at now is more digitised training and we are starting to make our own videos because people learn a lot more by actually seeing how it's done … not everyone learns the same way … just that variety of material. I think we are getting a better result rather than just here's your workbook, here's your training document, learn it and expect people to understand …

… yeah and it's good that I have recognised that they're getting bored … not too many people like PowerPoints … I normally have theory, practical, theory, then practical in the afternoon …

Learning environment

A combination of factors was thought to maximise the effectiveness of initiatives. Small study groups (around six members) were preferred for creating an environment where participants were "free to talk about whatever [they] want to" and not worry about "getting it right or wrong". In bigger classes people tended to "back off and just sit in the corner …".

Mixed learning environments have mutual benefits for new learners and those who have previously completed the qualification. Those who have already completed the qualification are able to "share [learnings] back to the other fellas …". In turn, new learners help to refresh and remind those who have completed the course previously "all about what's been done [before] …".

The approach was motivating for those involved and **enabled people to take ownership of their learning.**

… they actually met on lunch breaks or before work, they set up their own little study group and that was motivated by themselves and that wasn't me saying they should do that, that was them organising themselves and sort of encouraging each other …

Supportive learning communities developed that were widely accessible and not limited to learners in the current study group.

… one of the really nice things is that often [the current learners] will go back to past students … [in the organisation who have completed the qualification] … they've got quite a good group, the support group they can go back to, you know [and ask] 'what did you do, how did you get through this part' …

While this shared and inclusive approach overcomes the cultural norms of not speaking up, it was recognised that **working with a buddy can also have limitations.**

… you know if you've got somebody that you are really comfortable with training you, you are kind of more receptive to it, but there's a fine line, sometimes if it is your buddy, you may not take it seriously … so it really depends on the type of training that it is …

Values that underpin a positive learning environment

Facilitators were aware of the learners' vulnerabilities and things that affected confidence. Leadership was shown to **establish a set of values and norms to create a supportive learning environment.**

… we kind of have a thing you know, we don't laugh at each other, don't have a go at each other because someone asked a question, we can have fun in here but make sure it's a supportive environment … and if they do give an answer that's not right, I always try to sort of answer it with okay, that's a really interesting way of looking at it, what if we look at it this … so they are not actually feeling like I'm wrong or it's a bad idea [and] they are actually getting some encouragement and moving in the right direction …

… it's about connecting and understanding rather than judging … I'm not going to say this one can't write, so we're going to have to draw pictures … I think it's important building that bond [with each learner] so they can share … it's about trust because they don't want you to go to the next person 'oh you know [learner's name] can't read'… so it's about encouraging and empowering them …

… [the learners] are like 'oh I don't want to do it, you know I am old, I can't understand English that well' … because they're quite scared … some can't write … I won't say they can't write but they just don't know how to do it, and I tell them as long as they understand, just put little bullet points, things that you think are correct because we'll come back and look to see if it's correct and add more information …

Supporting learners with English as a second language

Facilitators constantly engaged in finding ways to provide language support to learners. This sometimes involved **drawing on the resources and capabilities that exist within the workplace.**

… we have Samoan, Tongan, Fijian, Cook Islands [coordinators] and that's a bonus as well … and I can say 'hey, can you help, I'm trying to explain but I'm not sure if they've got it' and that's when they come in as well and we can do one on ones, and if [the learner] is struggling, I sit with them and I say if you have any time available and you can't get through your [workbook] just come and see me or if you would rather see someone who can translate in your own language then come and book a time with a coordinator …

Facilitators thought about **supportive combinations of people** when recruiting for each cohort of learners.

> *… I try and pick two of each culture, two Tongans, two Samoans, two Cook Islanders, like that in case one does not understand what I'm saying then the other one will translate for him or her, and it helps, it's working …*

> *… I know that [learner's name] English isn't as good as someone else's, so I will put him next to someone who I know will be very patient with him, like [other learners] who will be really good with him, sort of talking to him … Just thinking about how they interact with each other and what's going to be the best fit and what's going to help them learn …*

Learners can use their first language or language of choice.

> *… if it's the language that's the barrier because they are unable to read the book, … get the learner to explain in their language and she [coordinator] will write it for them …*

> *… that was actually [ITO staff name]'s idea and I really love it … write it in your own language because you will be a lot faster writing than you are in English and you can always transcribe it later ...*

> *... [learner's name] when he first started writing in English under the table, then in the next class … the idea was to write in his first language and then he had the pad out furiously writing …*

6.3   Key findings – Industry Training Organisations

ITO commitment to Pacific issues

There were **few senior roles held by Pacific people** within ITOs. Some interviewees described being a sole Pacific presence and feeling personally responsible for taking on 'Pacific specific' work. The strategic focus on Pacific **learners in the organisations was considered to be lacking,** despite a long-term Government prioritisation of this group.

> *… so far, I have a team of me, myself and I, all on my own …*

> *… my involvement was by default because when I started, I was the only Pasifika person in the organisation … so while it's not part of my role, it's something I'd like to see the [ITO] do well …*

> *… there was meant to be a Pasifika strategy in place, but there's nothing …*

> *… Pasifika are not a priority [in industry training] even though they are called priority learners …*

One interviewee found **support through other Pacific staff,** mainly in administrative roles, within their organisation.

> *… yeah it was just showing the organisation, there are different ways to operate. I created within our organisation a Pasifika Committee, working with different Pacific people within our organisation, most are operational level, admin people … [to run Pacific language week and other campaigns] … it was just about growing awareness, engaging other staff, sharing Pacific culture, but also*

ITOs

- Few senior Pacific roles in ITOs.
- ITOs could do more to strengthen their strategic focus on Pacific learners.
- Greater awareness about issues for Pacific learners in the workplace is needed – with employers and within ITOs.

Employers

- ITO staff have a role to engage with employers and helping the facilitators' learning support roles.
- Engagement with employers about Pacific learner issues can be challenging with little evidence to support recommendations to employers about improving pacific learners' participation and achievement.
- Businesses with high numbers of Pacific employees are more willing to engage.

Design and implementation of pilot programmes

- Industries had their own approaches to learner support and ITOs struggled with implementing proposed pilots.
- Programmes were labour and time intensive to set up for the ITO and progress was incremental.

*underlining some of the things, for example outcomes for Pasifika within our
organisation … so it was a whole communication strategy and we tried to tag on
stats, there's low participation in this area, what can we do or do things differently?*

ITOs are not training providers and, as such, ITO Pacific staff **do not have regular or direct
contact with learners.** A **central part of their work involves engaging, informing and influencing
employers** about workplace training issues for Pacific learners. A key challenge for Pacific staff
is **a lack of evidence to back up recommendations to employers** about improving participation
and achievement in training programmes.

*... we don't have access to the trainees, we are not doing the training or the
teaching or facilitating, that's done in the workplace and so our [work] is with the
educators, assessors and trainers…*

*… we can't influence the environment that the teaching or learning or the training
or assessment is going on in … we are one step removed from the trainers and at
times a lot of the recommendations that come out of university research is hard to
apply [to the ITO context] …*

*… I think part of the work as an ITO is to inform employers, you know these are the
strengths of taking on a Pacific workforce … [a common response from employers
is] I'd just like to see those findings, those recommendations [from this research]
that I can take back to our organisation and say this is something that can actually
work, you know how can we invest into this type of project and resource it …?*

There was recognition that alongside employer engagement, **awareness raising about Pacific
issues also needed to be a focus within the ITOs** (their own organisations).

… and probably our biggest challenge is to get our own house in order …

*... it's quite new [in the ITO] for Pacific to be visible … [my advice is] … let's look
at, is this a better way to engage with this type of community? … but it's a bit
overwhelming for [the ITO] …*

Pacific staff work to **raise the profile of Pacific issues within their organisations.**

… [promote understanding of] skills and competencies [in Pacific communities] that are largely unrecognised by society and traditionally by the education system … where an ITO is interested and motivated to recognise those competencies, to capture them and disseminate them wider …

… When I came into the organisation it was pretty much like a traditional sort of organisation with very little diversity … We've put in place things to try and change the culture and some of the things we have implemented are around Pacific language week campaigns …

The significant **Pacific population in Auckland is an important driver for action.**

… we are in Auckland, it's the biggest population of Pacific people here, we need to do something to help support them …

I think one of the main drivers has been the population growth of Pacific, especially here in Auckland …

Employers

Interviewees reported **difficulty engaging employers** and dealing with diverse industries. **Businesses with high numbers of Pacific workers were generally more willing to engage.**

… we as ITOs need to put a lot of work into convincing employers that getting a workplace qualification is good [for them] … there is not that much buy-in …

"… we can't really go in until we are invited … and it's only when they get stuck or a crisis happens that they contact us, and the businesses are very diverse and some of them don't want to focus on Pacific … the industry that's actually signalled us for help has a predominantly Pacific workforce …

… we do have some very high performing Pasifika providers who can act as exemplars for us [to other businesses] … when we look at our Pasifika providers there is a much stronger emphasis on the overall development of the people, the communities …

Experience of setting up the two pilot programmes

ITO staff described the multiple layers of engagement required for different industries and the **difficulty of gaining industry buy-in** for the two programmes. Within ITOs, Pacific staff relied on industry advisors to make connections with industry.

While experiences of implementing the two selected pilots varied, a common observation was that **industry was resistant to external models** and wanted to **tailor pilots to fit the culture of different workplaces.**

There were long delays, and communication [with industry] was challenging.

Pilot design

Two approaches were used to design the pilot programmes. In some cases, programme design was based on staff experience and located 'offsite' from the workplace. For other programmes (such as the peer mentoring programme described in the quote below), an 'organic' process was employed that responded to what industry was already doing with an expectation of using the evaluation to capture learnings.

… when we started planning for our [programme] we were pretty much going to tell them [employers] how we want it to run, but … [then I realised] we were approaching it the wrong way, let's have a look and talk to [organisations] and find out what they're doing and how they're doing it. So, we went in and talked about their qualifications, and how it's run and how they do their training and how they support their trainees and it just kind of fell into place really …

Study groups were designed by ITO staff. Relationships with key stakeholders, such as employers and learners were important while establishing the programmes. However, even with these in place, **programme setup was described as very labour and time intensive from start to finish**. When pressed, staff estimated that about a third of their work week was spent working on the programmes during this period.

… what we've seen is the value of study groups, and having a champion and having institutional buy-in.

… it was intensive sitting down with [names], coordinating, also coordinating the trainees, the [training provider], setting up meetings, going to meetings, yeah from go to woe, it was really intensive …

7. *Discussion and Recommendations*

Both pilot programmes have articulated an intervention logic model (refer appendix 3), which show how activities undertaken to support Pacific learner achievement were planned to lead to improved learning, results and life outcomes. These intervention logic models were adapted in some cases to meet workplace and employer priorities.

Given the duration of the project, the evaluation was focused on assessing the short-term (and to an extent the medium-term) outcomes of the programme. Ongoing tracking of learners will be required to make an assessment of whether the longer-term outcomes are achieved or realised.

Analysis for this study focuses on success and good practice with a strength-based approach for Pacific learning within workplace settings. The findings from interviews with learners and facilitators, in many ways align with and confirm well-recognised Pacific learning theories and pedagogical approaches (for educational success generally and tertiary education success specifically), which are discussed below. They also offer a valuable Pacific perspective to emerging theories of workplace learning, an area where little knowledge exists.

Recommendation One: Better engagement

Engage with Pacific families and learner support networks to disseminate information about industry training opportunities, and also information that addresses the misperceptions about the 'value' and requirements of workplace learning.

Interviews suggested a common lack of awareness about the range of learning opportunities available within a workplace setting. Learner perception that tertiary education would affect immediate financial stability and income is indicative of broader economic barriers for Pacific participation in tertiary education. 'Learn while you earn' training opportunities appeal to Pacific people as a way to minimise financial barriers to further learning.

Families had significant impacts on the experiences of Pacific learners. The interviews suggested families, and social and community networks, were often pivotal in decision-making processes and pathways to work (e.g. interviews showed that family role models influence entry into some industries). Providing better information about training opportunities, not only to Pacific learners, but also their families and broader support networks, may positively impact participation. The effectiveness of Pacific interpersonal relationships and networks for sharing and obtaining information has frequently been noted in research and policy settings, and shown to be effective in practice (see MPIA, 2010 for a discussion in an educational context).

The chance to use work skills to benefit the family was a motivating factor for many Pacific learners and further confirmation of how personal and family motivations are very closely linked. The interviews described the complex ways family (and by extension community) commitments can create a barrier to training, but also be the central supporting role of Pacific families for completion and success in an industry training context. While education is

undoubtedly important in a Pacific family context, the evidence suggests that apprenticeships or industry training are not given priority (despite the fact that many Pacific adults participate in industry training) (MPIA, 2010). Vaughan (2012) notes that industry training tends to be held in 'lesser esteem', partly because qualifications are generally at a lower level than in other kinds of tertiary study and partly due to a misperception that workplace learning is just 'doing the job'. Better communication with families about the increasing value that is placed on industry training may change these perceptions. Furthermore, innovative and flexible strategies by ITOs and employers that enable Pacific learners to manage and prioritise learning, work and family commitments (e.g. flexible approaches to homework and work hours that were discussed in the interviews) may impact participation and success.

Recommendation Two: Culture of motivation

Create a 'culture of motivation'. Understand what motivates Pacific learners in industry training in order to establish and develop positive future-focused goals.

The interviews offered an insight into key motivations for learners that drive progress and completion of qualifications. Many of the motivations – the possibility of attaining a qualification that was transferable to other career pathways, the prospect of promotion and greater earning potential – were positive, future-focused and orientated toward further progression and self-development. For learners, many of whom did not have prior positive experiences of formal learning, this suggests both an engagement in, and increased confidence for, further learning, and a disposition to keep learning – a key element commonly identified in successful workplace learning (Vaughan, 2012).

Employers, programme mentors and facilitators played an important and influential role in enabling learners to tap into these motivations. This is consistent with prevailing understandings of Pacific educational success – that expectations of student's achievement, coupled with encouragement, support and teaching will impact learner engagement and achievement (Alkema, 2013). The effectiveness of workplace learning is reliant on the workplaces' readiness to provide opportunities for learners to engage (Vaughan, 2012). Having a sense that employers were willing to invest in, offer help and genuinely encourage their success, particularly for learners with prior experience in workplaces that had offered few or no opportunities, fuelled learner beliefs about themselves personally. Similarly, the relationships learners formed with mentors and facilitators, characterised by care, respect, and being available to invest time and expertise, had the same effect.

Recommendation Three: Implement support mechanisms

Implement learning support mechanisms that address learners' negative perceptions of their own capability and that foster confidence, engagement and motivation. Factors that are likely to work include: leadership by facilitators with appropriate skills, contextualisation of training materials, relevant content and delivery and positive learning environments.

Learners who have poor or low perceptions about their own capability impacted on their confidence and were demotivating barriers to study. These doubts were often connected to deeply entrenched previous experiences of formal learning at school or study, because a person was entering a learning situation for the first time in many years, or because of English as a second language issues. Entwined with this were struggles with theory-based training, feelings of being 'left behind' in class time and a sense of alienation from the teaching style and approaches. The pilot programmes encompassed a range of interrelated, dynamic strategies to address these issues, including: through the skills and leadership of facilitators and mentors in the learner support role; the contextualisation of training materials, content and the teaching approaches for delivery; and the creation of a positive learning environment – all can be linked to reported observations of improved confidence, engagement and motivation from learners and facilitators. This provides an interesting insight into the potential of melded pedagogical approaches that work for Pacific learners and to workplace learning theory to guide interventions for Pacific learners.

Recommendation Four: Facilitator support

Provide support for facilitators/learner support as key roles in industry training. Effective facilitators demonstrated understanding of the lived realities of learners and were able to establish a shared set of values to guide learning, and create supportive and empowering learning environments for each learner.

Interviews with facilitators and mentors demonstrated an understanding (or at the very least, an openness to understanding) of the 'lived realities' (the broad context of experiences and circumstances, both positive and negative, that impact their learning journey) that underpinned their relationships with learners and their approach to learner support. As noted in the interview findings, when dealing with a diverse group of Pacific learners this involves understanding the values (including the specific cultural values, beliefs and drivers) that are important to individual learners. These understandings were reinforced through the establishment of a shared set of values to guide learning and create a supportive and empowering environment for each learner.

The validation of cultural values and norms was described by learners, facilitators and mentors as a valued part of the learning process as it confirmed a sense of identity and belonging. For learners with English as a second language, this was especially valuable.

Learners reported that the accessibility, availability and investment in their success motivated them to 'be there' and 'want to learn'. This broadly aligns with the Pacific research messages that caring, respectful relationships and the cultural awareness, empathy, knowledge and responsiveness of teachers are all important factors for Pacific tertiary success (Alkema, 2013; Chu et al., 2013).

Recommendation Five: Contextualise learning

Contextualise and tailor learning. Encourage facilitators to use creative learning support approaches based on an understanding of the strengths of the learners.

The barriers relating to workbooks and the theoretical components of training described in the interviews, both by learners and facilitators, are also commonly identified in the literature about workplace learning. Vaughan (2012) argues that theory components of apprenticeship schemes are often regarded as difficult or less relevant by all learners. Facilitators and mentors employed a range of creative strategies to contextualise learning and incorporate practical learning to increase the relevance and accessibility of course material. Facilitators supported Pacific learners to recognise their existing skills and knowledge (most acquired on the job) and apply them to their study. Learners with English as a second language found theoretical language was complex and time-consuming and facilitators offered them strategies for dealing with this. In some cases, additions were made to workbooks to help learners better understand and relate to the content. These creative teaching approaches required a significant level of extra work and effort from facilitators and a deep understanding of the strengths of the learner group, particularly in relation to what would generate interest, engagement and motivation.

Positive learning environment

Learner interviews identified the safe, inclusive and supportive learning environments that were created in the programmes as being important to them understanding training materials, getting involved in discussions, contributing ideas and opinions, and asking questions. For learners with English as a second language, the small learning support groups provided a space to build their confidence and abandon fears and self-consciousness of speaking English. The value of these processes is recognised in workplace learning theory. Creating a space for learners to understand and foster discussions of theoretical ideas can improve confidence, provide a safe practice area and allow sets of shared meanings and behaviours to develop (Vaughan, 2012).

A wide body of educational research also notes the importance of social interaction, sharing, and enjoying the company of others in enabling the understanding and application of learning. Indeed, the small sized learning support groups seemed to optimise a range of positive social aspects of learning. The example of learners organising extra study groups during lunch breaks and before work echoes research that learning relationships between students – the sharing of knowledge and mutual learning – can create a culture of motivation and enable learners to facilitate their own learning communities (Chu et al., 2013).

Recommendation Six: A broader view of success

Take a broad view of Pacific workplace success. Build on the programme logic models already developed in these pilots to engage stakeholders in understanding the value of training interventions and the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes and indicators of success. Value 'soft skills' and transferable skills that 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions.

The learning taking place in the programmes was broadly impacting on all aspects of learners' work, and in many cases, home and personal lives. Vaughan (2012) notes that documented capabilities developed during workforce learning include "soft skills" in communication and negotiation, literacy and numeracy skills, increased confidence and motivation — all of which 'spill over' into non-work settings and interactions. The increased confidence to speak English, a new broader perspective of a work role or workplace, new habits or routines at work and home, increased interaction with work colleagues and peers, and a willingness to engage and contribute to the workforce are some of the wide and varied examples of what learners were getting from their learning experience.

These examples point to the forming of a 'disposition for learning' and 'culture of motivation' discussed above – a success in itself when related to individuals with less than optimal education experiences or English language challenges. Considering the findings in this way is consistent with recent work in the area of lifelong learning and workplace learning that seeks a wider perspective of how people 'learn by becoming' (Chan, 2011). Keep (2014) emphasises moving beyond a focus on courses and qualifications to a more all-encompassing understanding of the skills that are created in day to day work and how they can be used productively. Other research notes workplace learning as 'essential learning experiences in their own right' and worthy of integration into a formal curriculum (Vaughan, 2012).

8. Conclusion

This study focused on two pilot programmes that engaged learners, learning facilitators and industry training organisation (ITO) staff in improving Pacific learners' achievement in industry training.

The study builds on existing knowledge of what works for Pacific learners in tertiary education and improves our understanding of Pacific learner success in industry training. In this study, a Pacific learner perspective was specifically sought to explore factors that mattered to the learners regarding their participation, achievement and continuance in industry training.

The utilisation-focused evaluation approach used in this study allowed the research design to be tailored based on situational issues and with a focus on the needs of the primary users of the evaluation. Optimising the utility and applicability of research findings for ITOs and other stakeholders was a key objective of the study and six recommendations have been made.

The findings of this study highlight that there are many positive 'take-outs' from these relatively short and discrete programmes. Reports from learners and facilitators alike conveyed an optimism about continuing to progress in their training and completing their qualifications. Ongoing monitoring of this cohort and collection of course and qualification completion data will enable a more in-depth analysis of these outcomes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Project Advisory Group

Membership for the Pacific Learner Success in Workplace Settings project advisory group was fluid over the course of the project and included the following ITO and Pacific Perspectives Staff:

Organisation	Advisory group members
The Skills Organisation	Issac Liava'a, Martin Draper
Careerforce	Joel Rewa-Morgan, Sarah Goff, Laloifi Ripley
ServiceIQ	Jenny Connor, Doris Kaua, Glen Keith, Peter Scanlan (Chairperson) Caroline Harris
Competenz	Kate Thompson, Iani Nemani
Pacific Perspectives	Dr Debbie Ryan

Appendix 2: Pasifika Learner Success in Workplace Settings – thematic literature review

Authors: Dr Debbie Ryan, Lisa Kitone and Racheal Fleming
March 2015

Download from the Ako Aotearoa website at:
https://akoaotearoa.ac.nz/pacific-learner-success-in-workplace-settings

PEER MENTORING LOGIC MODEL

Theory of Change

- Industry training uses the resources of the workplace to provide the context within which skills and competencies are developed. It is more challenging to create a formal and structured learning environment as may be found in provider-based training.
- Peer mentoring in workplace training involves the development of a structured informality.
- The use of peer mentors is intended to address factors that discourage training (such as perceived lack of support and encouragement), and encourage employees to develop the self-confidence to assume more accountability and responsibility for their work.
- The use of mentors with strong relationship skills is augmented by support services to recognise and respond to the needs of Pasifika trainees so that trainees feel safe and understand their own psyche and that of others. It also reduces the sense of an 'incongruity of culture', which distracts from a focus on achievement.
- Trainees will progress more quickly through their training, and develop higher levels of self-confidence. This self-confidence will translate into better engagement in the workplace, and, in the context of Careerforce, a willingness to report issues relating to patient safety. This higher engagement and technical competency will tend to make the trainees more employable, have positive impacts on the trainees' life outcomes, and help to create a self-sustaining culture of peer support.

Input	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
Mentors: • 10 from each ITO who have previously graduated with a level 4 or above qualification • May be outsourced, employed in the same organisation, or operate with a cluster of employers • Have good relationship skills Training materials and resources: • Briefings and training plans for mentees and mentors • Expert peer review Trainees: • Careerforce and ServiceIQ	Contact between mentors and mentees: • Number and proportion who have contact at least once per fortnight Training of mentees and mentors: • Number of training sessions • Feedback on training sessions Approach is responsive to the needs of employers: • Employers demonstrate a willingness to support the intervention	Mentoring undertaken: • Number of interactions reported • Type and status of interactions reported	Trainees make faster progress in their training: • Trainees record higher rates of credit achievement • Facilitators and employers report better engagement Mentees and mentors develop strong relationships: • Perceptions of quality of relationships Trainees demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence: • Evidence that trainees are more likely to put what they are learning into practice • Trainees report lower levels of self-doubt Better access to support services: • Rate and type of support services accessed	Trainees are more likely to obtain a qualification: • Qualification completion rates increase Workplaces are more welcoming of and value diversity: • Trainees' perceptions of their value to the workplace Trainees are more engaged in their workplace: • More reporting of issues of patient safety (Careerforce) • Increased levels of work satisfaction • Evidence of increased participation with peers and managers • Evidence of willingness to contribute to the organisation • Evidence that trainees are taking on leadership roles and are more self-directed	Trainees are more employable: • Trainees have the technical skills that employers want • Trainees are employed at more senior levels Trainees and family have better life prospects: • Trainees record higher incomes, better health and well-being, living conditions and nutrition A mentoring culture is created: • The number of mentees who become mentors

Assumptions

- Training for both parties is needed to ensure that the employment relationship is not impeded and the limits of any support are understood
- Mentoring will be narrowly defined, focusing on the relevant training arrangements
- Mentors may need training in the cultural aspects of their role
- Mentees need to understand their contribution in this mentee-led process

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- The workplace provides opportunities for interaction between peers
- Employers welcome the service

- Increasing the number of first points of contact for referrals to ITO 'additional' services will generate more referrals to and uptake of those services
- Trainees are more likely to request support through a trusted partner (e.g. a mentor)
- Peer mentors can help trainees to recognise their own skills and give them confidence in their own abilities

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- Strengthening relationships between peers will help to make the workforce more proactive, and change the expectations of employers

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- Better qualifications contribute to career progression, and to better economic, social and health outcomes

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None identified

STUDY GROUP LOGIC MODEL

Theory of Change

- The study groups will create a fellowship among trainees and a structure through which momentum for success can be created.
- The fellowship is obtained through a fanau-like environment that binds trainees together. This binding in turn creates a safe environment where trainees can teach each other.
- The structure of a study group provides a space for purposeful and collective action.
- The embedding of Pacific cultural norms in teaching materials and approaches helps trainees to feel safe, to understand their own psyche and that of others, and reduces the sense of an 'incongruity of culture', which distracts from a focus on achievement.
- Engaging fanau in the programme provides a mechanism to communicate to fanau about how other obligations can impede a trainee's success, which will in turn contribute to a more conducive learning environment for trainees.
- Trainees will progress more quickly through their training, and develop higher levels of self-confidence. This self-confidence will translate into better engagement in the workplace. This higher engagement and technical competency will tend to make the trainees more employable and have other positive impacts on the trainees' life outcomes.

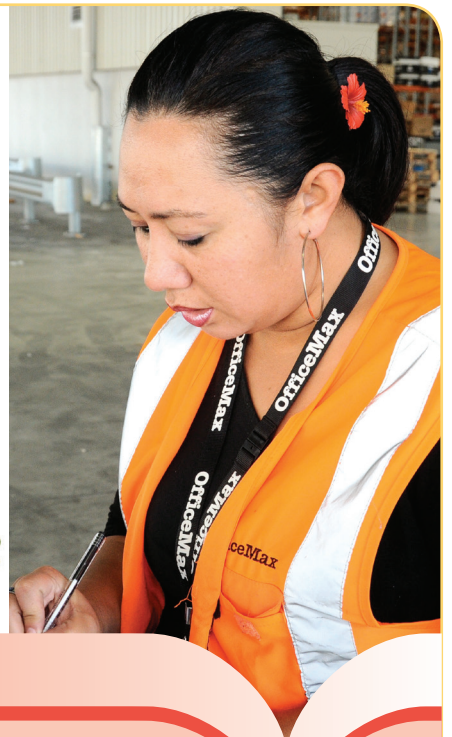| Input	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
Study group facilitator and tutor: • Two hours per week of staff time • ITO staff used as assessors Training materials and resources Venue and catering Trainees: • 10-15 each from electrical and engineering apprentices	Learner support: • Planning for delivery of unit standards Building of a learning community: • Use of culturally appropriate teaching and learning methods • Facilitated debriefing of approaches Develop learning plans and document learning outcomes: • Plans developed and outcomes documented • Observational assessment	Study group sessions delivered: • Number of unit standards assessed • Number of study group sessions • Trainee participation rates • Trainees undertake self-directed learning • Trainees' perceptions of study groups	Trainees experience validation of their culture(s) and associated norms: • Trainee engagement with the programme Trainees make faster progress in their training: • Trainees record higher rates of credit achievement • Facilitators and employers report better engagement Trainees develop networks with peers: • Evidence of camaraderie among participants Trainees demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence: • Evidence that trainees are more likely to put what they are learning into practice • Trainees report lower levels of self-doubt	Trainees are more likely to obtain a qualification: • Qualification completion rates increase Trainees are more engaged in their workplace: • Evidence of increased participation with their peers • Evidence of willingness to contribute to the organisation • Evidence that trainees are taking on leadership roles and are more self-directed	Trainees are more employable: • Trainees have the technical skills that employers want • Trainees are employed at more senior levels Trainees have better life prospects: • Trainees record higher incomes, better health and well-being, living conditions and nutrition

Assumptions					
• Workplace and 'classroom' cultures are not well-attuned to the cultural norms of Pacific peoples • There are limited opportunities to influence the workplace culture • A tuakana teina relationship among participants creates a safe environment that is conducive to trainee success • Fanau need more information about the value of workplace training	• Study groups and peer support create a positive feedback loop encouraging trainee success • The peer network makes it harder for trainees to withdraw from their training than continue • Reticence of Pasifika trainees in training and study groups may be culturally-driven • The peer group created within the study group can be an effective counterweight to fanau pressures and expectations	None identified	• Trainee success requires the creation a strong environment of co-support among fanau and peers.	None identified	• Better qualifications contribute to career progression, and to better economic, social and health outcomes

Literature Review

Pacific learner success in workplace settings

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This report was developed and written by Pasifika Perspectives Limited. The report was commissioned by ServiceIQ, The Skills Organisation, Careerforce, and Competenz with support from Ako Aotearoa.

Contents

1. Introduction

The Pasifika Learner Success in Workplace Settings project aims to better understand the links between interventions and retention, completion and higher achievement for Pasifika learners in workplace settings. The project is a partnership between four ITOs, ServiceIQ, The Skills Organisation, Careerforce, and Competenz, and Pasifika Perspectives Limited and is supported by Ako Aotearoa.

The project aims to identify critical success factors and effective models for Pasifika learners, including those generally applicable to industry training, and specific to the training models of ITOs.

The project aims to answer the following questions:

- What are the critical success factors for Pasifika learners in industry training?
- What interventions focusing on these factors can ITOs put in place to support achievement?
- How successful are these interventions at supporting achievement for Pasifika learners?

On behalf of the consortium of ITOs, ServiceIQ commissioned Pasifika Perspectives Limited to undertake a thematic literature review to provide an evidence-base for the identification and selection of initiatives, and help to inform the design of pilot initiatives. This literature review is intended to be read in conjunction with an analysis of data about trainee performance based on data supplied by the Ministry of Education.

This literature review will be updated during the course of the project as more information comes to light, and will take account of the implementation experience and results of the pilot initiative. The second (updated) literature review will be incorporated into the project summary report which will be prepared at the conclusion of the project.

2. Background

Pasifika people living in New Zealand are a vibrant, predominantly New Zealand-born, highly urbanised and youthful part of our national community (Hawke, 2014) however compared to other New Zealanders Pasifika people experience poorer outcomes on a range of health, social and economic indicators.

For example, Pasifika people experience twice the rate of infant mortality, are less likely to be engaged in and succeed in all levels of education, are more than twice as likely to be unemployed, report lower median incomes, are less likely to own their own homes and are more likely to experience household crowding (Ministry of Health, 2014; Southwick, 2012; Statistics New Zealand, 2011; Tanielu, 2014; TEC, 2014a).

Successive Governments have emphasised the importance of addressing these disparities, and these calls have found their expression in an array of policies, strategies and interventions[1]. Education, and tertiary education in particular, has been a particular area of focus reflecting the association between higher levels of educational attainment and life expectancy, civic engagement, life satisfaction, better employment outcomes, and higher incomes (OCED, 2013; Park, 2014).

The Government's high level aspirations for the New Zealand (including tertiary) education system as it relates to Pasifika peoples are set out in the Ministry of Education's Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 (Ministry of Education, 2012), and the Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2018 (Ministry of Education, 2014).

These strategies emphasise the importance of putting Pasifika learners, their parents, families and communities at the centre of the New Zealand education system, responding to the identities, languages, and cultures of each Pasifika group, and delivering parity of achievement.

More detailed guidance to tertiary education organisations prepared by the Tertiary Education Commission identified the importance of effectively engaging Pasifika learners, families and communities, setting challenging performance commitments in relation to participation and achievement, and clearly defining actions for obtaining educational participation and achievement parity (TEC, 2014c)[2].

There are some indications that the achievement 'gap' in the tertiary education system is lessening (Ministry of Education, 2014a), however considerable opportunities remain including for the 9,024 Pasifika people engaged in industry training who make up 19 percent of all such learners in tertiary education in 2013. The rate of credit achievement for these Pasifika trainees (at 64 percent) was lower than the rate recorded for all other learners (72 percent). A similar gap was recorded in the rate of programme completion (65 percent compared to 75 percent) (TEC, 2014a).

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[1] For recent examples see (Ministry of Education, 2012), Ministry of Education 2014b), (Ministry of Health, 2014), (Wevers, 2011))

[2] The Supplementary Plan Guidance for ITOs for 2016 and 2017 will be incorporated once it is released.

The ITO context

It is important to recognise and take account of the difference between the role of ITOs and those tertiary education organisations engaged in provider-based training. ITOs arguably have less direct capacity to influence the day to day experience of learners compared to some other tertiary education organisations. This difference arises because of the particular characteristics of the industry training system including the use of the capital assets of businesses to provide the training environment and resources.

Skill development in the context of trades training is a complex process involving identity formation, acculturation into an existing practice community, and is dependent on a suitable workplace context (Chan, 2011). Further, ITOs may lack access to a critical mass of minority learners who are co-located for extended periods of time as may occur in provider-based training. While ITOs can directly influence their own institutional commitment to the success of Pasifika peoples, their relationships with the deliverers of skills development in the workplace are inevitably more diffuse.

These differences present particular challenges for ITOs in interpreting and applying the results of research into the experiences of Pasifika people in provider-based training, particularly as the evidence-base relating to 'on-job' teaching and learning for ITO-arranged training for this group of trainees is still developing.

Nonetheless, the existing evidence may be more readily applicable to programmes that involve some degree of 'off-job' training, training arranged for employees who are co-located in workplaces and/or additional support such as tutorial-type support and mentoring.

Diversity in the Pasifika population

> '*There is …no 'Pacific community' but rather Pacific peoples who align themselves variously, and at different times, along ethnic, geographic, church, family, school, age/gender based, youth/elders, island born/NZ born, occupational lines or a mix of these*' (Anae, 2001 cited in Mila-Schaaf, 2011).

The 2013 census reported that there were an estimated 295,941 Pasifika people in New Zealand, accounting for 7.0% of the total population. The Pasifika population has increased by 11.2% since 2006 when it made up 6.6% of the total population (Tanielu, 2014).

Pasifika people describes people, cultures and languages associated with Pacific people who live in New Zealand, as distinct from the people of Pacific Island Countries, and Polynesian or Pacific people which includes New Zealand Māori.

Care should be taken to avoid the 'forcing' of a pan-Pacific or generic identity on what is by any measure a 'super diverse' community comprising more than 65 distinct groups.

Some examples of these diversities include:

- *Cultural diversities* – based on differences between the Pasifika ethnic groups. For example, the largest ethnic groups represented within the Pasifika population in New Zealand are Samoan (144,138 or 48.7% of the total), Tongan (60,336 or 20.4%), Cook Island (61,950 or 20.9% of the total), Niuean (23,883 or 8.1%), and (ethnic) Fijian (14,447 or 4.9%)[3] (Tanielu, 2014).

- *intra-cultural diversities* – for example, the Pasifika population has changed from being a predominantly 'immigrant' community – dominated by members who were born elsewhere and whose homeland values and practices predominated – to one that is increasingly New Zealand born (Mila-Schaaf, 2011)[4].

- *multi-cultural identities* - for example, it is estimated that around 60% of new-born babies between 2004 and 2013 who were identified as Pasifika had a mother who did not identify with one of the Pasifika ethnicities (Tanielu, 2014).

- *traditional diversities* and differences based upon village- or island-based heritages;

- *socio-economic diversities* – for example, around one-fifth of Pasifika people are employed in 'highly skilled' occupations[5] while around 60% are employed in less skilled roles[6] Statistics New Zealand, 2013); and

- *geographic diversities* –The Pasifika population is concentrated in Auckland (194,958 people of 65.9% of the total), particularly in South Auckland (34.4% of the total) but there is evidence to suggest an increasing 'spill-over' of Pasifika people to the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty (Tanielu, 2014).

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[3] Total figures exceed the total number of Pasifika people reported earlier because people are able to claim more than one ethnicity.

[4] At the 2013 census around 30% of the Pasifika population were born outside of New Zealand, a significant change from the percentage at the 1986 census which was 50%. Samoan (35.1%) and Tongan (37.1%) people are more likely to be overseas-born compared to Cook Island (20.9%) and Niuean (17.6%) (Tanielu, 2014)

[5] Defined as managerial and professional roles mainly in these industries: education and training (teachers); professional and technical services; health and social assistance; and agriculture (farmers and farm managers).

[6] Including role such as carers, receptionist, drivers, clerks, process workers, sales workers, agricultural workers, and cleaners.

3. Methodology

This literature review is focused on describing the key characteristics of what works for Pasifika learners in workplace settings, rather than attempting to undertake an exhaustive review of existing literature.

In line with the limited focus of the literature review, the search was restricted to published articles and reports that were publicly accessible. Generic search terms were used (Pacific/Pasifika and tertiary education, Pacific/Pasifika and vocational education, apprenticeships and outcomes, Pacific/Pasifika and training).

Searches were also conducted on the websites of organisations that have or were considered likely to have produced relevant reports, literature reviews and theses. These include Ako Aotearoa, Industry Training Organisations, the New Zealand Centre for Educational Research, other tertiary education organisations, and Government agencies (such as the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) and the Ministry of Education).

A limited attempt was made to identify applicable international literature through a search of the Australian Council of Education Research's Cunningham Library, and the Australian National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

A bibliography on research on Pasifika in higher education complied in 2011 for Ako Aotearoa (Haigh, 2011) and two substantive literature reviews completed for the Ministry of Education relating to research on Pasifika people in education more generally (Coxon, 2002; Chu, 2013) augmented the results of these searches.

All resources were placed in an online repository so that the members of the project advisory group could access them and identify any gaps that they were aware of.

Data synthesis and framework for analysis

The methodology described identified 74 titles and abstracts. After reviewing these documents, 54 were selected for inclusion including other literature that illustrated general principles or concepts. The initial organising framework for the analysis was to assess each document against the three 'pillars' of Pasifika learner success (people, practices and pedagogies and place) (Alkema, 2013).

This framework was abandoned early on in the analysis as it quickly became apparent that there was relatively little evidence about what works for Pasifika in the context of vocational education and training. A set of common themes (see *Key themes* below) emerged from the existing body of research relating to practical guidance about 'what works' and those areas where gaps in our understanding remain.

Each document was then analysed against these themes, and representative quotations were then selected to highlight important concepts or other matters that might help ITOs to make decisions about the design of interventions.

4. Key themes

Overview

This literature review has identified six key themes:

- **A: The need for new approaches:** The evidence base about what works for Pasifika learners is limited, and much of the work to date has focused on the provider-based (predominantly university) sector. Major gaps exist in the understanding of how best to configure industry training in a way that is most appropriate to the needs of Pasifika trainees.

- **B: Context matters:** There is some evidence that to be most effective interventions need to be multi-faceted, and co-ordinated. There is no single 'silver bullet' that will deliver parity of achievement for Pasifika learners. ITOs need to think about how they can align all of the areas of their operation to create an environment conducive to the success of Pasifika trainees.

- **C: Employers are central:** The role of employers and workplaces in providing culturally-appropriate environments for Pasifika trainees is not well-understood, but it likely to be highly influential.

- **D: Internal change is needed:** The way in which ITOs engage with Pasifika trainees, their fanau, and communities reflect existing cultural norms within those organisations. The literature suggests that making a meaningful and effective change to the context within which Pasifika trainees engage with and experience industry training requires attitudinal and behavioural changes for ITOs.

- **E: Mentoring can be effective:** There has been some effort in recent years to understand what makes mentoring for (Māori and) Pasifika trainees effective. A number of practical steps are identified that ITOs can take to systematise the way in which mentoring is conducted, but care needs to be taken to integrate any interventions with other support systems and ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

- **F: Measure successes:** Quantitative data is underused in attempts to assess the effectiveness of interventions for Pasifika learners, and there is scope to collect qualitative data in a more structured way. Improving the way in which information is collected and used, and engaging stakeholders in the design of appropriate measures can help to ensure that interventions are appropriately designed and tailored.

Each of these themes are discussed below.

A. The need for new approaches

Making sure that pilot interventions for Pasifika learners are designed using the best available evidence is a critical challenge for this project. Ideally the selection and design of pilot interventions would draw on an extensive evidence base that would support deliberate decision-making about what works and what does not. The research and evidence base is however rooted in provider-based training, and may be less applicable to workplace learning.

Much of the research conducted into the experience of Pasifika people in tertiary education has focused on learners undertaking study at universities and, to a lesser extent, polytechnics. Substantive literature reviews commissioned by the Ministry of Education (Coxon, 2002; Chu, 2013a) made only cursory references to vocational education and training generally, and no reference to industry training in an ITO context.

Very little is known about the practical mechanics of effective interventions for Pasifika learners and more focus is needed on describing what culturally responsive practices look like in practice (Alkema, 2013).

Similar issues apply to research about what works for Māori learners in industry training. An examination of the experience of Māori learners in workplace settings found that there were opportunities through recognition of the importance of whanau and the distinctively Māori learning styles, employers setting high expectations and providing culturally safe workplace learning environments, culturally relevant mentoring, peer support and group learning, networks of Māori role models, and team-based approach to training and learning involving ITO field staff, employers and learners (Kerehoma, 2013). See also Appendix two (Competenz, 2014).

While these interventions *may* be applicable to Pasifika trainees, the characteristics of what constitutes effective practice for Pasifika are not yet fully understood. Additionally in commenting on educational disparities for Māori, Bishop (2009) notes that effective practice needs to take account of the sense-making and knowledge-generating processes of the culture that is marginalised.

No roadmap yet

'There is still not much known about what works well, nor has there been any in-depth examination of the key characteristics of successful learning programmes for Pasifika students.' (Chu, 2013a)

Research projects need to include *'…descriptions of implementation and for testing the combination of factors to find out whether some combinations of factors work better than others. This would provide more information about 'how' approaches work, which in turn would provide more usable research that can be translated more fully into every organisation's practice'* (Alkema, 2013).

'…further research is recommended in order to formulate effective practices when engaging with Māori trainees and developing dual competencies – for both trainees and employer – to enhance and support engagement, retention, and completion…' (Kerehoma, 2013)

'…locating solutions with Māori cultural ways of knowing does actually offer workable solutions to what have long been seen as seemingly immutable problems' (Bishop, 2009).

B. Context matters

While the detailed characteristics of effective practice are not well-articulated, there is a developing understanding of what is required to be put in place in terms to provide an environment within which Pasifika trainees can thrive and succeed.

The combined and interwoven contribution made by people, place, practices and pedagogies are key to delivering successful outcomes for Pasifika learners in tertiary education (see Appendix 1) (Alkema, 2013).

The visibility of Pasifika people, cultural norms and values is an important and distinctive element of this model. This visibility is considered to be the product of a number of interrelated factors including: the numbers of Pasifika students and staff; a Pasifika staff presence in senior management; physical spaces and places where Pasifika culture and language are recognised, validated and celebrated; Pasifika courses and Pasifika content in mainstream courses; staff awareness of Pasifika cultural practices; Pasifika cultural events and art exhibitions; and active engagement and involvement with the local Pasifika community(Marshall, 2008; Madjar, 2010; Horrocks, 2012).

The employment of Pasifika staff is an important, but by no means essential, aspect of this approach. It is the values and norms demonstrated by staff that are key (Fiso, 2012; Newlands, 2011; Alkema, 2013), as well as staff who have an appreciation and understanding of cultural background and who can support culturally inclusive learning (Chu, 2013a).

Teaching and support staff can conceptualise their role within Pasifika social paradigms, for example '….teachers who are culturally empathetic and responsive to their students. In practice this means that staff "understood that to negotiate a va fealo'ai (social relationship) determined by va fealoaloa'i (mutual respect) produced màlie (results).' (Alkema, 2013)

Holistic approaches

'…take a holistic approach with Pasifika learners… where they are supported academically and pastorally in an environment where they feel comfortable and included as individuals. It is the multiplicity of factors that combine and interact that give rise to success' (Alkema, 2013)

Adopting the surrogate whanau/aiga concept, creating a sense of belonging and creating a sense of greater humanity (Marshall, 2008)

'…the presence of Pasifika staff, student associations and dedicated Pasifika space in tertiary institutions…' (Madjar, 2010)

'…while tutors with a similar cultural background to their students might have some advantage in forging a successful relationship with them, this was not essential, nor was there any association between age, gender, type of teacher training completed, subject being taught or years of experience and effective teaching. Rather the tutor's attitudes, values, behaviours, effort and skills were important alongside an understanding of and empathy towards the students' culture.' (Newlands, 2011)

This concept of visibility also extends to recognising explicitly the existing skills and competencies of trainees reflecting calls for tertiary education organisations to avoid "fixing" disenfranchised people but rather to draw on skills and knowledge that have largely been undiscovered (Bishop, 2009; Gorski, 2010; Chu, 2013b).

Involving Pasifika trainees in the design of interventions is important because it ensures that these interventions are perceived and experienced by learners as intended (Chu, 2013a). Individuals are unique, complex and multi-dimensional and their cultural world view directs how they construct their own understanding and meaning from the learning environment (Thompson, 2009).

Interventions can involve simple and pragmatic approaches such as group meetings with teaching staff (Mara, 2009). The use of group learning plans where learning objectives reflect the workplace and education needs of trainees can also empower trainees by giving them some control over their learning experience. (Tuagalu, 2010).

More complex initiatives might include the establishment of structured learning communities (Chu, 2013b), but care needs to be taken to plan these carefully and to ensure that staff are clear about the benefits and goals (McKegg, 2005).

Such approaches reflect the social nature of learning. Learners construct understanding together that would not be possible alone. Social interaction, sharing and enjoying the company of others enables the understanding and application of the learning (Thompson, 2009).

Importantly for Pasifika trainees academic success may be seen as deriving from all parties having a deep and mutual understanding of, respect for, and practice in, both Pacific and (mainstream) New Zealand social and academic cultures (Kalavite, 2010).

Involve trainees

appreciative pedagogy '…*draws out the strength of talents, skills, relationships, experiences, practices and knowledge of students that have largely been undiscovered in education particularly where they can draw on family support, have a personal commitment to success, and have access to a safe, culturally strengthening place that appreciated the great range of Pasifika ethnicities.' (Chu, 2013b)*

'*The students decided to focus their study on the quality of their relationships with lecturers' and the implications of good practice in those relationships for raising student performance. The students set up group meetings with lecturers so that they did not feel isolated or embarrassed when asking questions…' (Mara, 2009)*

'*… tertiary institutions (should) consult with Pasifika students about educational supports where special provisions are planned to ensure that they are perceived and experienced by these students as intended—ie, to support successful outcomes of the students, rather than inadvertently adding to pressures on students to drop out.' (Chu, 2013a)*

C. Employers are central

The workplace provides an opportunity for authentic, deliberately constructed and rich learning experiences. Whether such opportunities are realised is dependent on a range of factors including the tension with the workplace as a site of production, the organisational structure and employment conditions, workers' occupational status, positioning and relationships, and their engagement with organisational plans and practices. The effectiveness of workplace learning is thus reliant on a workplace's readiness to afford opportunities for learners to engage (Vaughan, 2012).

Research into the way in which workplace learning occurs has identified a number of common principles including: support at an organisational level; structured orientation to the job; using good teaching strategies that support structured learning; learning from experience; and the use of formative and summative assessments (Vaughan, 2011).

Past research into the role of the workplace in influencing successful completions appears to place little weight on the different experiences of people from minority cultures and more emphasis is placed on the culture of training within each workplace (Curson, 2004; Industry Training Federation, 2007; Piercy, 2009; Chan, 2010; Moses, 2010). Such gaps are perhaps surprising given the strong evidence of national differences in workplace cultures and norms, and the importance of workplace learning in the socialisation of employees (EFT, 2013)

There is some indications that employee satisfaction is linked to workplace cultural wellbeing for minority workers (Haar, 2013), potentially reflecting a contrast between Pākehā approaches to business management and those arising out of the cultural worldviews of some minority cultures (Hook, 2007).

Other work has noted that cultural support can provide strength to Māori and Pasifika trainees, but that adherence to some cultural norms could disadvantage them in a work context (Holland, 2012a).

Engage employers

'..just as learning is only as good as the opportunity to actively apply and develop competencies and participate in the workplace community, opportunities are only as good as their affordances—that is, their possibility for realisation or action. We saw examples of workplaces affording opportunity by aligning learning priorities at a policy level with practices that supported learners to perceive opportunity, undertake training towards qualifications, and complete the qualifications.' *(Vaughan, 2011)*

'Unless this process (of mentoring) *is considered and carefully managed it could give rise to unexpected outcomes such as resentment and dissention triggered by insensitive attempts to layer one set of cultural values on those of another. While the intentions may be good the pathways leading to hoped for outcomes are not identical for Māori and Pākehā (Hook, 2007)*

'Mentors commented that while speaking up and asking for help was comfortable for Pākehā apprentices, Māori and Pasifika apprentices were culturally disinclined to call attention to themselves' (Holland, 2012a)

D. Internal change is needed

Creating a context within which Pasifika trainees can succeed is underpinned by the cultural of ITOs themselves. Research into the effective programmes of teaching and learning in the ITP sector has identified three ways in which the relationship between dominant cultures and ethnic minority groups may be defined. These are

- A binary model of marginality where the values of the dominant culture define its boundaries vis-à-vis the 'other'. This model is characterised by benign indifference to ethnic minority learners

- A deconstructed model of marginality where there is recognition of other value systems in society but that the social standards and norms remain those of other cultures. The defining characteristic of this model is well-intentioned but ineffective strategies to achieve better outcomes.

- The reconstructed model of marginality involves staff coaching learners *'…to understand from a critical social perspective how power structures operate to construct their experiences, and then to develop effective strategies…'* to mediate these experiences (Southwick, 2014).

Such models reflect an awareness that barriers to addressing educational disparities include current educational policies and practices and the framework within which they were developed (Bishop, 2009).

Changing training practice and creating the conditions for improved systems-level performance is dependent on a commitment to: understanding ethno-cultural difference and similarities; patience; long-term engagement; information gathering; and evidence-based decision making and cross-sector learning (Rose, 2014).

ITOs are however well-placed to work with key stakeholders including Pasifika families, communities and employers reflecting their role as organisations that perform an important 'conduit' role in the industry training system (Nana, 2011).

Meaningful changes

'…what precludes significant advancement being made in addressing these educational disparities is that current educational policies and practices were developed within a framework of neo/colonialism and as a result continue to serve the interests of a mono-cultural elite.' (Bishop, 2009)

Engagement needs to*'…challenge barriers created by institutional norms and (make) Pasifika as a priority of ITO business plans', and '…can only be achieved first and foremost by changes in attitude. The capacity to affect attitudes and behaviours is influenced by many factors, including leadership in the field, access to information, goodwill, informed decision-making, a learning environment, best-quality practices, and organisational processes and procedures…'. (Rose, 2014)*

'…avoid the risk of institutional planning for Pasifika people becoming a "tick box" exercise, clear objectives need to be established and people allocated the authority and accountability to progress these objectives. Having Pasifika people appointed to senior management positions with a responsibility for Pasifika priorities will assist' (Horrocks, 2012)

E. Mentoring can be effective

Mentoring has been identified as an important way to provide temporary support for trainees to support their transition into a workplace, and into full participation in communities of practice (Vaughan, 2011). There is also some evidence that it is effective for Pasifika in provider-based training contexts (Ross, 2008; Mara, 2009) and in developing educational leadership (Chu, 2013a).

The evidence base about what works for Pasifika trainees in an industry training context has increased in recent years (Holland, 2012; Holland, 2012a; Tuagalu, 2010), although gaps remain particularly in relation to volunteer mentors, trainees where English is not their first language, and the tailoring of 'mainstream' approaches to the needs of Pasifika trainees (Styles, 2014).

We can deduce four approaches to mentoring that may be applicable to industry training, which are:

- A relational mentoring model where the worker is regarded as a valued equal who happens to have specific support needs. The relationship is one of generalised supportive friendship; (Holland, 2012)

- A traditional-functionalist model, where one to one mentoring partnerships are arranged between an experienced older mentor and a trainee, with the main aim being to assist the trainee in comprehending the course requirements and successfully completing their qualification (Styles, 2014);

- A peer support model, where knowledgeable peers are engaged to provide learners with access to learning community, proactive, structured support at key decision points, and referrals to other services (Ross, 2008; Alkema, 2013); and.

- A group mentoring model where people with similar characteristics meet together regularly in a structured session creating a de facto learning centre. Such mentoring models can foster relationships and enhance communication skills (IPENZ, 2007). (For a discussion in an ESOL context see Tuagalu, 2010).

Mentoring works

'… this programme has delivered an average increase in retention of six per cent on specific courses and one and a half per cent decrease in attrition on selected programmes. Student and tutor reported outcomes from the programme include: increased student motivation and engagement with study, increased likelihood that students will contact tutors or learning support staff when experiencing difficulties, and students feeling less isolated and more supported in their studies. (Ross, 2008).

'Researchers have suggested that individuals who have multiple sources of support fare better than those who do not.' *(Holland, 2012)*

'Everyone needs someone they can turn to for help – their boss, a supervisor, or another learner.' *(Competenz, 2014)*

'Student-student relationships are important for learning and motivation, and students felt empowered to succeed by and within cultural groups' *(Alkema, 2013)*

'Mentors' role was to share their experience and knowledge of how to get on in the workplace, manage documentation and complete the required study. Mentors were also paid a small sum.' *(Holland, 2012)*

The literature about mentoring practice in ITOs (Holland, 2012; Holland, 2012a; Styles, 2014) suggests that care needs to be taken in:

- Contextualising mentoring within a wider set of overlapping sources of support that are provided collaboratively. See Appendix three. (Beckett, 2014);

- Deciding how mentors are selected including the relative priority given to, for example, cultural affinity, geographic location, and trade skills, and using profiling tools;

- Designing induction, training and support programmes that are culturally appropriate, and provide trainees with a degree of autonomy (for example, in the selection of mentors);

- Ongoing opportunities to mentors to collaborate on complex issues, share good practice, and access to useful information about trainee progress;

- Establishing degree of formality and structure to the mentoring relationship to set clear expectations, while not rigidly defining how mentoring should take place;

- Recognising that being mentored is a skill in itself, and that a sense of ownership needs to be engendered.

- Providing appropriate tools and resources such as mentor and mentee profiles, goal setting sheets, questioning techniques templates, formative evaluation forms and effective guides for mentors.

The cultural principles that might underpin mentoring approaches have been articulated for provider-based training (Fiso, 2012). Gaps remain in our understanding about the distinctive role that culture should play in the construction of mentoring programmes in an industry training context, particularly given the interplay with the cultural norms within workplaces (Hook, 2007).

Approaches

ETITO selection criteria in order of priority were first a common cultural background, second (geographic) proximity (to allow for opportunistic interactions), and third their specific electrical trade knowledge.' *(Holland, 2012)*

'Role models from the same ethnic group who've finished their study can play a big part in encouraging other learners to sign up and complete their studies.' (Competenz, 2014)

'Some mentors felt that the apprentice should call them which while this approach may have built independence in more confident apprentices, others felt less supported. One apprentice experienced difficulties which were not picked up by the mentor until it was too late and he lost his job.' (Holland, 2012)

…a number of other mentoring induction strategies are in place, recognising that the trainees need to understand the purpose and process of the mentoring programme and how they can benefit from having a mentor.' (Styles, 2014)

F. Measure success

Efforts to independently assess and synthesize quantitative educational research are increasing internationally. For example, the Education Endowment Foundation in the United Kingdom has synthesized more than 10,000 pieces of quantitative educational research into an online tool that enables comparisons to be made about the estimated impact and cost of different types of educational interventions (What Works Network, 2014).

Other examples of the use of quantitative data to discern the effectiveness of educational interventions targeting minority learners in the international context include (Avery, 2013; Stephens, 2014).

In the New Zealand context however there are few examples of the use of quantitative data understand interventions designed to enhance the success of Pasifika learners with qualitative methods being more common (Alkema, 2013).

Possible explanations for this difference include the lack of, a failure to use, or even access available data on student outcomes (Chu, 2013a), and the use of informal or relatively unstructured approaches (Styles, 2014) which make it difficult to collect information about the actions involved in interventions, and then analyse that data to demonstrate linkages between interventions and outcomes.

The short duration of some initiatives may also make it more difficult to demonstrate direct or provable links, but establishing platforms to link trainee data with monitoring instruments may be an attainable goal for projects of a shorter duration (Mara, 2009).

Quantitative data can also be a powerful tool to verify or refute assumptions about trainees (Beckett, 2014). When combined with a well-developed understanding of how interventions work, quantitative data can also support changes in perceptions and mind-sets (Horrocks, 2012).

Measurement

'Current projects are largely based on qualitative methods.., these need to be combined with quantitative studies that look at retention and completion rates for Pasifika to ascertain the extent to which what is being done is actually making a difference to learner outcomes.' (Alkema, 2013)

'…an informal mentoring structure makes it more difficult to demonstrate a positive link between mentoring and student achievement, the impact and outcomes relying mainly on anecdotal evidence.' (Styles, 2014)

With these essential platforms combined with the student database and several robust research and monitoring instruments from this study the way is clear so that potentially, such direct cause and effect…can be demonstrated in future research' (Mara, 2009).

Mentoring workshop feedback consistently identified reading as a high need for trainees, however…only 4% of the survey trainees were considered at risk (step 1, 2 or 3) from the pre study assessments undertaken.' (Beckett, 2014).

5. Discussion

The existing evidence base does provide a broad guide to the considerations relevant to ITOs in selecting pilot interventions as part of this project. These include:

- The need to recognise Pasifika learners as individuals with multiple, and overlapping identities that can impact on their past and current experience of workplace learning;

- The importance of ITOs taking, as far as possible, a whole of organisation and whole of system approach to better supporting Pasifika learners;

- Recognising that social capital of families (implicitly recognised in TEC, 2014b)), communities, and employers provides opportunities for leverage, and that ITOs are well-placed to create sustainable systems of support given their intermediary role in the industry training system;

- Drawing on good practice, and the inherent strengths and capabilities of ITOs, to take a well-planned approach to interventions

- Recognising that meeting complex needs of individuals requires a degree of innovation and flexibility;

- That the design of initiatives will be shaped by the training models of ITOs and the needs of employers, but that trainees themselves should be involved as far as possible;

- There is a growing understanding of what works in relation to the mentoring of learners in an industry training context which can provide useful directions; and

- A reasonably extensive approach to data gathering should be considered supported by a well-planned approach to use that information for planning and refinement.

Care should also be taken to clearly diagnose the 'problem' that is to be solved, and to avoid as far as possible simply adding one or a small number of interventions as a 'bolt-on' to existing systems that are not optimally configured for the needs of Pasifika learners.

It is also important to recognise the paucity of evidence about what works for Pasifika people in vocational education and training, and the experience of Pasifika peoples in tertiary education generally. As a result, the pilot interventions are likely to be relatively experimental, will need to be adaptive to respond to changing expectations and understanding what is required, and any change in learner outcomes is likely to be incremental.

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Appendix 1– Pillars for Pasifika Learner Success

Key findings from the research

Pasifika learners come from a range of ethnicities and educational backgrounds and study across a number of education settings, from workplaces through to universities. As such, there is no one-size-fits-all approach, no one approach to learning[8] that will improve outcomes for Pasifika learners. What the research undertaken for Ako Aotearoa shows is that the combined and interwoven contribution made by people, place, practices and pedagogies are key to delivering successful outcomes for Pasifika learners in tertiary education. These can be illustrated as the three pillars that stand on firm ground established by organisations' articulated policies and values including the specific targets for Pasifika achievement.

Pillars for Pasifika Learners Success: A Holistic Learning Environment

Key themes in the Ako Aotearoa-supported research projects

People	Place	Practices and Pedagogies
Organisational leadership	Pacific spaces	Academic and pastoral support/ mentoring
Teachers who are culturally aware, knowledgeable, empathetic and responsive	Pacific artefacts	Strong connection with families and communities
Teachers who are welcoming and ensure learners feel a sense of belonging	Family-like learning environment	Collaborative approaches to curriculum
Teachers who are subject matter and teaching experts		Curriculum content and pedagogies take account of culture
Teachers who are caring and respectful		Use of Pacific languages
Teachers who set high standards, expect students to achieve, and support students to do this		Understanding and meeting individual needs
Strong relationships between students and teachers, and between students and students		Small classes/group learning
Students who are motivated		

AUTHENTIC ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES AND VALUES

The research does not identify what could be termed 'Pasifika pedagogy'. Rather, collectively it identifies what Thaman (2001) describes as a pedagogy "based on Pacific values, beliefs and knowledge systems that incorporate Pacific styles of learning and ways of knowing" (p. 6). In other words, what has been described in this body of research is culturally inclusive pedagogy.
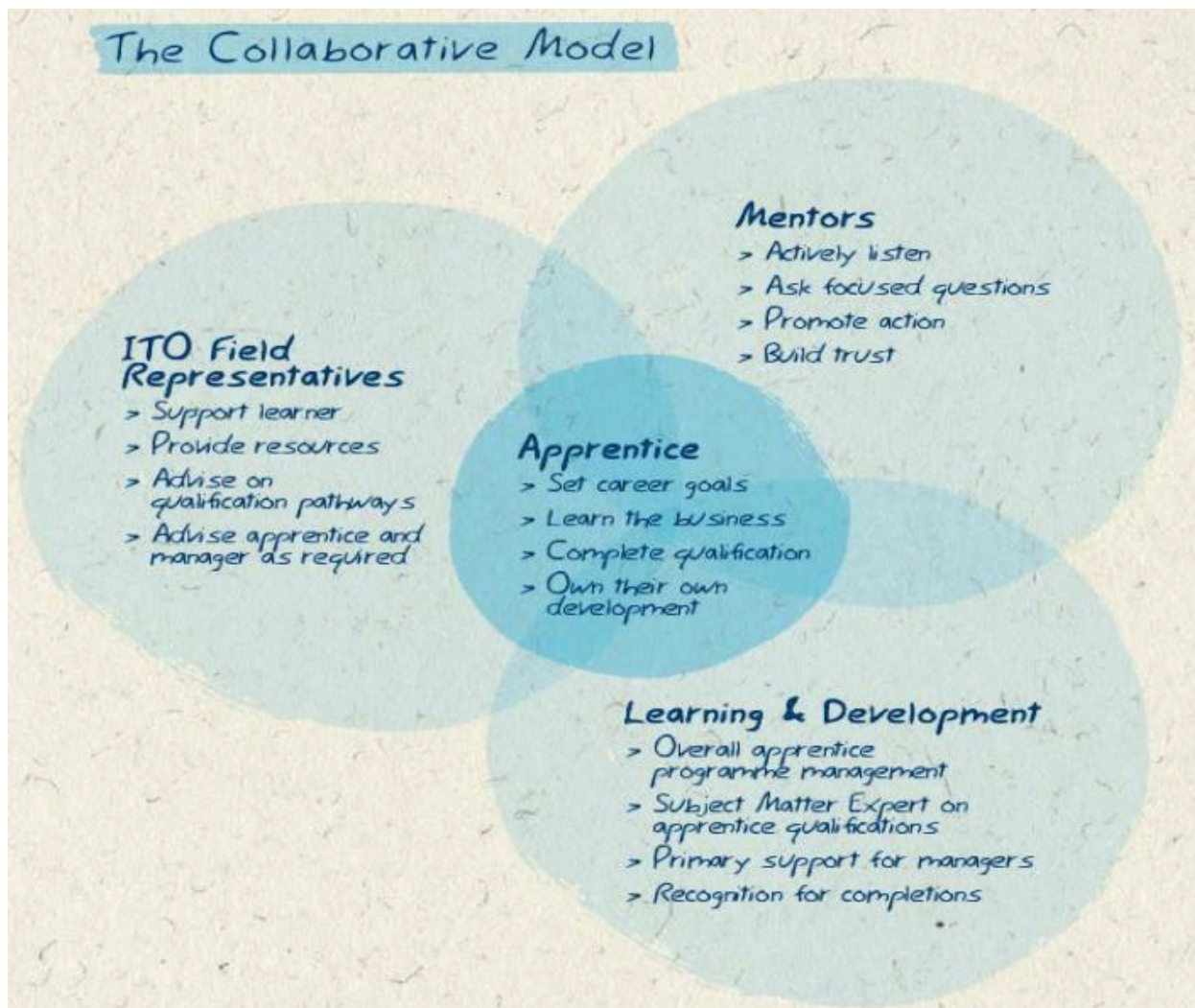
Appendix 2– Success factors[7]

2. Cultural awareness can increase enrolments and help learners complete their study

The factors marked in italics are likely to be more relevant to Māori and Pasifika learners (and learners from other smaller ethnic groups) than they are to learners from New Zealand's dominant ethnic group (Pākehā/European).

Success factors which support completion	Barriers to completion
Strongest success factors	**Strongest barriers**
• Mentoring/coaching	• Complex assessment materials
• Hands-on learning	• Complex book work
• Flexible assessment	• *Literacy issues[7]*
• Extra pastoral care (e.g. study groups)	• *Learners' pride/unwillingness to ask questions*
• Visual study materials	• Lack of motivation/work ethic
Moderate success factors	**Moderate barriers**
• *Role models of same ethnicity*	• Lack of/out-of-date careers information in schools
• Approachable colleagues	• Not understanding what apprenticeships involve
• Internal motivation/work ethic	• Negative perception of trades
• Clear career pathways	• *Family pressures[8]*
Other success factors	**Other barriers**
• *Support/mentoring from people of same ethnicity*	• Nature of work needed on block courses
• Positive recognition	• Lack of funding
• Enjoying the job	• *Attitudes: teachers/employers/families*
• Financial support	• Tall poppy syndrome
• Family support	

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[7] Competenz (2014)

Appendix 3– Collaborative model[8]

The Collaborative Model

ITO Field Representatives
> Support learner
> Provide resources
> Advise on qualification pathways
> Advise apprentice and manager as required

Mentors
> Actively listen
> Ask focused questions
> Promote action
> Build trust

Apprentice
> Set career goals
> Learn the business
> Complete qualification
> Own their own development

Learning & Development
> Overall apprentice programme management
> Subject Matter Expert on apprentice qualifications
> Primary support for managers
> Recognition for completions

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[8] Beckett (2014)