Full Report

From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of phenomenal educators for Pacific learners in New Zealand tertiary education

Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga & Janice Ikiua-Pasi

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Dedication

We dedicate this work to our dearest friend Dr Sean Fernandez who was always there along our path of learning and discovery.

Sean gave everything he could to his students and treated them with kindness and respect every day. He was a Phenomenal Educator.

"Looking through the new lens of someone who has lost a close friend.

From what I see now as an undervalued member of my whanau.

Even in death, you have continued to teach me – without the promise of tomorrow – to not just count my blessings, but to see them daily and make them known.

Tomorrow is never promised."

By Sally Lennox

Sean
The spear tipped dawn
calls your name,
Whilst the tide moves
the sun awakes the land.
Cape Reinga guides you
your final journey home
We see you
We see you
Truth speaker,
justice seeker
You were all and more.
Always invested
teaching lessons
to be a presence
in the present.
Your hues were bright
Too bright
For this earth
Wisdom maker
Challenge taker
always spot the fakers.

Never back down
always
backed it up
everyone you loved and more.
Never giving
half your cup
ensuring the vessel was full
We see you
We see you
now no more.
Hawaiki nui
Hawaiki roa
Haviki Pamamao
We remember
The Phenomenal you
The smile of comfort
The hugs of warmth
The you do you
The keeping it real
always
that is how we
remember
So
See us
Guide us
Always remembering
That
We see you
We see you
In that beautiful
Spear tipped dawn
The colours of
you.

By Janice Ikiua-Pasi

Acknowledgements

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Much of your work goes unrecognised, but we see it. We appreciate this. We thank Arden, Ivy, Sean, and Pale for their alofa/love at various stages of our project. They supported the groundwork, the formation of ideas and were caring at every moment of our discussions.

You are all phenomenal educators.

It is our intention to provide you, the reader, with positive, uplifting and inspirational content.

Smile, laugh, be grateful, grow and be happy.

Be a Phenomenal Educator for Pacific Learners.

Dr. Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga and Janice Ikiua-Pasi

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to review the findings of our project titled 'From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Highly Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners in New Zealand Tertiary Education.' The principal knowledge seekers for this report were Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga (Te Herenga Waka/Victoria University of Wellington) and Janice Ikiua-Pasi (WelTec and Whitireia New Zealand). Ivy Abella was our research friend and supported much of our work.

Taking a strengths-based approach, with an appreciative inquiry lens, the study explores how selected educators were phenomenal in their practices; and how they enhanced teaching and learning for Pacific learners in educational settings (polytechnics, private training establishments, adult education, community education and universities). Over a two-year period, we conducted a qualitative, ethnographic study that included twelve educators being observed (where available) and interviewed through talanoa. We included a quantitative measure to look at the preferred learning styles of Pacific students. A total of 135 students participated in a VARK (Visual, Audio, Read/Write, and Kinaesthetic) online questionnaire across Aotearoa New Zealand. Another 56 participated in student talanoa groups to discuss who, in their experience, were phenomenal educators.

The discussion and analysis of this report is framed around the question: "Who are phenomenal educators for Pacific learners, and what do they do in their practices". From the evidence synthesis, case studies of phenomenal educators, VARK results and Pacific learners' responses, we have developed this Kato/Gift.

Introduction

What makes a phenomenal educator? In Aotearoa New Zealand the statistics about educational issues for Pacific learners continues to be prominent with issues of completion, retention, and participation in tertiary education. However, there are many exemplars of good educators who have enhanced the academic achievement of Pacific learners. We would like to stretch this notion of a good educator further and delve into what makes an educator great. Our aim is to turn theory into practice to ensure that educators become more confident with owning their own skills and 'cultural Kato'. This will enable the question, "What can I do to help my Pacific student?" to be answered through a deeper understanding of what the Pacific learner needs for their educational journeys. This study positions the Pacific learner at its centre.

The purpose of the report is to review the findings of a two-year project: The 10 Habits of Highly Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners in New Zealand Tertiary Education. The principal researchers on this report were Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga (Te Herenga Waka/Victoria University of Wellington) and Janice Ikiua-Pasi (Whitireia and WelTec New Zealand).

This two-year quantitative and qualitative ethnographic study explored how twelve educators showed their phenomenal approaches in teaching and learning with Pacific learners, across varying educational contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand. It also included a group talanoa with 56 Pacific learners and a VARK questionnaire filled out by 135 Pacific learners across Aotearoa New Zealand. The participants were located in a range of educational settings that included universities, polytechnics, community spaces and adult education settings.

Our process of knowledge-seeking adopted an appreciative inquiry (AI) philosophy appropriate for both the aims of the project and the participants. The project explored the work and practice of phenomenal educators across New Zealand tertiary institutions to identify what makes them great. We have developed tools that can enable other educators and institutions to make a significant difference to Pacific learners in their practices.

Despite tertiary education research that supports educators and institutions, there has not been significant uptake and change in practice to bring a tidal wave of improvement in Pacific academic achievement. This research aims to shift attention from negative and deficit explanations of Pacific student achievement to a focus on exemplars of phenomenal education practices that benefit Pacific learners.

You will notice that we shift between the use of Pacific student and Pacific learner. For the purpose of this study, we use both terms as a way of acknowledging that many of our participants used both words as they were telling their stories.

Aim and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to identify phenomenal educators and teaching practices that are of immense benefit to Pacific students in tertiary education and to inform institutional and sectoral improvements. We have developed a Kato that encompasses the learnings from the project. Our aim is to turn theory into practice, and at the next level we aim to provide a wrap-around professional development programme.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

- Identify, analyse and describe phenomenal educators who have effective teaching and learning practices in place for Pacific learners.
- Ascertain the learning styles of Pacific learners.
- Develop a teaching and learning Kato (basket) for educators.

The study was guided by a series of questions that focused on the roles of phenomenal educators and the positive outcomes they have established for Pacific learners and communities. These are:

- What are the key enabling characteristics of phenomenal educators that have successful learning outcomes for Pacific students?
- How do Pacific learners engage with their educational environments?
- What types of resource are required for educators to further enable Pacific learners' success?
- What are the models of phenomenal teaching and learning that produce and reproduce continual success for Pacific learners and their communities?

Our Passion for the Study: Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners

The purpose of our study was to discover who phenomenal educators are, and what they do for their Pacific learners to enable their successful development in tertiary education. The story begins in 2017 when three educators, Pale Sauni, Arden Perrot, and Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga began a dialogue. We are close friends who had been working in Pacific communities for many decades, and we had developed a passion for improving learning and teaching methods for Pacific students. But we were not interested in average methods of educating. We were committed to life-changing methods. For us, teaching and learning was not confined to formal notions of studying in tertiary spaces, but we were interested in all aspects of learning across communities. Over the years our combined experiences as educators had also led us to become somewhat frustrated at the standard of teaching for Pacific students. We heard the common stories of educators mispronouncing the Pacific names of students and staff, and considerable evidence of a lack of cultural knowledge and skills, discrimination, stereotyping and limited expectations toward Pacific students.

Pale Sauni is an experienced educator and social worker, who has journeyed across a diverse range of settings and has always worked from a holistic foundation. Based on the binding value of alofa/love, he viewed education as emancipatory, justified and Pacific-centric. The focus of his attention was on the Pacific individual and their life. Pale thinks and leads with his heart. This is one feature that has been integral to his successful communication as an educator across Aotearoa New Zealand. He teaches in Pacific-centric terms, and brings Pacific values in simple, authentic, and meaningful ways.

Arden Perrot, who experienced the New Zealand education system, had his early ambitions set on becoming a professional rugby player. He has the institutional experience of educating youth workers in a polytechnic as well as tutoring university students. The strength of Arden was evidenced by his patience and ability to connect theory to practice. The experiences and challenges he faced at school, where educators failed to unleash his potential, have grown Arden's passion for Pacific teaching and learning. He has embraced opportunities as a way to learn and to scaffold himself. He prides himself on teaching with care and consideration for the learner.

The Research Team

Introducing Janice Ikiua-Pasi

Fakalofa Lahi Atu, my name is Janice.

There has been very little movement in the statistics of Pacific learners and their achievement levels compared to their peers within the classroom. The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) was designed to ensure everyone who completes school in Aotearoa New Zealand ends up on the same level playing field, but it still fails to address the low numbers of Pasifika students moving onto higher education. I have been asked to reflect on the reasons why this Ako Aotearoa project (10 Habits of Phenomenal Learners) is important to me. I aim to do this using my own personal narrative.

Schooling! When I was young it was just that – school. I went to school and both experienced and saw corporal punishment dished out in the classroom. I know that if my parents had been flies on the wall in my classroom and saw how many students were given the strap, or saw how my teacher hit one of my classmates six times, that they would have taken me out of class. On reflection, I do not think any of our parents really understood how the experience of school was for some of us.

I was a relatively good student, but did not always obtain A grades. I seemed to be distracted as previous school reports demonstrated. I was a "chatty student who needed to focus more." It is strange, because I now read these same reports coming in about my six-year-old daughter who is such an inquisitive and intelligent child. However, as soon as she is in the classroom her reports read, as an example, "Needs to work on recognising numbers 0-10 and needs to work on her alphabet." Yet, this is the same child who can rattle off numbers 0-100 as well as count backwards and happily sings her ABC's. When I question her about her school report, she exclaims that her teacher is not telling the truth.

Let me fast forward to where we are now in terms of the 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators of Pasifika Learners. This is so much needed in terms of breaking the overplayed and broken narrative that school reports demonstrate about myself, my child and many other Pacific learners who are misunderstood, suffering, demeaned in class, or are just bored out of their brains. Here is an example: I was able to sit in a class for junior students at a local primary school. The student teacher, who was taking a lesson about the atmosphere, asked her pupils "What are gasses?", to which a young Pacific boy put up his hand, and, with a serious face, he said "farts". Do you know what the student educator did? She said, "No we are not even going there today, I am not even going to pay attention to that," and just like that, she shut this young boy down. I was frustrated, and I spoke to several colleagues about what I could do, and one friend told me I should "go to their Board of Trustees meeting."

So I did, and I spoke about this boy and what had happened. I shared my concerns at the meeting and the Principal acknowledged it with: "Next time that happens please come and talk to me."

This is another example of broken schooling, systems and processes, that need to be reworked so that the leaner is not shut-down and that the student educator appreciates and turns any answers to their questions into a learning opportunity.

My first phenomenal educator approached me to manage the A1 netball team. I am not sure why he approached me. The passion he displayed for teaching students on the court, as well as in Polyclub, was phenomenal. He took me under his watchful eye and gave me a taster in terms of leadership, team work, and organisational skills. This educator took my learning to another level. To this day, he has continued his teaching of Pacific culture and dance, taking many students from all over the world. The fruits of his labour are further demonstrated with many of his students forming their own dance schools and companies.

There are endless stories of success that comes in the classroom from phenomenal educators regardless of the ethnicity of the educator – this is demonstrated in the many examples of the wonderful, phenomenal educators out there who are doing this work.

Take the Pakeha music educator who teaches at a secondary school in South Auckland, where 90% of the school's student population is of Pacific ethnicity. For many years, the success of his teaching has inspired his students. One student shares, "He makes sure he is a friend before he is an educator, and you don't get those kinds of people ever." Through demonstrating the importance of good, strong and positive relationships from the start, this educator also shares mutual feelings in terms of the students saying, "I want to say I'm lucky, but that's not the right word; we have wonderful kids. Ridiculous, phenomenal kids."

Another phenomenal educator was someone who had little or no tertiary education, but was employed at a tertiary institution. One of the jobs he was tasked with was raising the achievement levels of Pacific learners who were not doing so well in a specific course. The retention rate for the students was 30% when he started. So, what did he do? First of all, he looked at what the students were being taught. He noticed that the language being used to describe theorists and theories was not familiar to the students. He was able to share concepts from Pacific culture and heritage to show the connection these had to the theories the students were learning in class. He was demonstrating 'thinking outside the box'. It also helped that he understood the Pacific context, as well as culture, at such a level that he was able to make connections. Within a year the retention rates of Pacific students rose from 30% to 80%.

Once again, we pose the question: Why is this research needed? It is because Pacific learners, families and communities need phenomenal educators who can support educational achievement. Therefore, I welcome you to the 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners, where you are guaranteed to enjoy the learnings.

Introducing Cherie Chu-Fuluifaga

My parents came to Aotearoa New Zealand as immigrants from Faa'a Tahiti and Canton China. They married at a young age. My mother had had five children by the time she was 25 years old. My parents had had very little schooling with my father only reaching standard four. My mother had never been to school. After living in Auckland for many years, my parents and my five siblings moved to Wellington where I was born several years later. My brothers and sisters had completed their school years and I was the 'baby' of the family. My schooling experience up to the intermediate years (aged 11) was the highlight of my education. However, the college years were a period of turmoil for me, as I did not enjoy the school I was at. It is important for me to reflect briefly on the early years of my growing up, as these years were critical to my perspectives on learning and education. Being the youngest, learning was extremely significant as I had my parents and older brothers and sisters to learn from. This is where I learnt my culture, language, values, and beliefs that have provided me with the necessary foundations for developing other relationships.

I was a student at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) from the start of my undergraduate Bachelor of Arts degree, and then through to higher levels of postgraduate study. During my undergraduate years, I did not have a high level of support from the university services or programmes, or from the individuals providing these services and programmes. There may have been 'pockets' of support for students generally, but the services that stretched out to groups of minority students were minimal. As an undergraduate student, I struggled to focus my interest on any area of my degree. I had neither vision nor aspiration to achieve beyond the undergraduate degree. I was also unsure of my career path. All I knew was that I had ambitions to do well and I enjoyed helping other people.

After I completed my undergraduate degree, I was encouraged to embark on a one-year Honours programme. One of the academic staff encouraged me to apply for a tutor position, as she considered that I would not only be suitable, but the experience would give me new skills and a range of opportunities to assist my development. I successfully obtained a tutor position, and I was very nervous and excited about taking on such a role. During this stage of my academic programme, I did not realise how significant the impact of the tutoring would be on my future. I learnt many new and valuable skills from working closely with the senior academic staff who employed me as a tutor in their courses.

As I began to gain more skills, knowledge, and confidence, I was offered more roles. These were as head tutor, course administrator, guest lecturer, and course coordinator, all of which led to further learning. Now that I look back on my experiences, the mentorship and training, that was specifically given to me, led me to develop teaching qualities as well. In each new role, the academic staff member concerned fully encouraged and supported me. As I furthered my work experience within the school, I was also encouraged to consider furthering my postgraduate studies. I firmly believe that the experience of working within the school connected strongly with my studies.

During my time as tutor, I was assigned to a somewhat 'specialist' tutor position with the Pacific students, that encompassed both pastoral and social responsibilities. In this position, I had the opportunity to develop good relationships with many of the Pacific students. Over a period of three years, I was able to 'get to know' Pacific students, their families and communities. In some ways, this was not a typical tutoring experience, in that I was able to build some solid foundations with families and communities outside the university. With these experiences in the postgraduate and academic world, I engaged with students of different backgrounds, not only Pacific. As I began to grow in my roles, mentoring relationships began to develop between myself and some of my students. These experiences have contributed to my teaching pedagogy with Pacific students.

Looking back, I know that I had positive experiences of engagement and collaboration with senior staff members who played a significant role in facilitating my personal and professional development. Upon reflection, they were phenomenal educators for me. Essentially, it was this type of experience that taught me the power of such positive influences, and that have enabled me to help mentor, encourage and support those around me. People who have helped me to realise my potential have in fact played an important part in my life. From this type of mentoring, I have incorporated further mentoring into my work with students and other people around me.

From an appreciative inquiry (AI) perspective, my desire to work to help others is a key strength. I have been fortunate that it is integral to my current academic role. As I am someone who holds an academic position within the university, I cannot wait for the senior managers to supply me with a pool of money and resources to support the students, nor can I wait for an educational policy for Pacific students to be developed and implemented. It is crucial to act upon the needs of students now. In terms of a teaching vision and perspective, I must attend to the needs of those I am concerned with and must act accordingly. These are some of the driving forces behind this study.

Our Background and Rationale for the Study

Pacific People

Who are Pacific people? It's a question that gets constantly discussed in education. What term shall I use? What term is most suitable? Actually, there is no one appropriate response. The umbrella term 'Pacific' has been used by the New Zealand government, agencies, educational institutions, and academics to describe the ethnic make-up of people migrating from the Pacific Islands to Aotearoa New Zealand (Cook, Didham, & Khawaja, 2001). Bedford and Didham (2001) state that the term 'Pacific' has been commonly and widely utilised at all levels of society including educators, policy makers, community workers, the media, and institutions. The use of the term has often led to broad generalisations about a group of people who are extremely diverse and evolving.

A foundational document for research titled the 'Pasifika Education Research Guidelines' (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001), that was developed for the Ministry of Education in Aotearoa New Zealand, provided one definition of Pacific peoples. At the time of development, it made reference to the six Pacific nations of Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Fiji. In this context, 'Pacific people' is exclusive of Māori; and in the broadest sense covers peoples from the Island nations in the South Pacific, and, in its narrowest sense, Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand. Other research goes on to clarify the issue of Pacific people, defining them as being a heterogeneous group with different inter- and intra-ethnic variations in the cultures. Variations include New Zealand-born/raised and island-born/raised Pacific people; with these being recognised as diverse groups.

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

Tertiary Education – Aotearoa New Zealand

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has continually stipulated that one of its priorities is to increase the outcomes of Pacific students achieving at higher levels. Further, TEC believes that the tertiary education sector has a key role to play in meeting the development needs and aspirations of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. We believe that this project is in line with TEC's Pacific Operational Strategy 2017–2020, that aims to ensure more Pacific learners succeed in tertiary education.

There is growing recognition that the New Zealand education system does not adequately meet the needs of Pacific learners. There is evidence of varying support programmes that have been developed to enhance the pastoral care of students, but without any thought to the unique circumstances of Pacific learners' academic needs. Others have been superficially adapted with respect to programme materials, but without a deeper consideration of the myriad programmatic, organisational, and external factors that exist. Tertiary staff are eager for guidance to more meaningfully adapt or develop teaching and learning methods that meet the needs of these students.

Rather than focusing on these negative statistics, we must shift our whole paradigm to a strengths-based approach. This is an urgent shift. A strengths-based approach focuses on developing assets that are known protective factors, such as strong relationships, life skills, and school connectedness. In this study we were able to shift the responsibility for the perceived deficits away from the individual and focus instead on how the educator can be phenomenal and enhance the experiences of Pacific learners in tertiary education.

Success – not a grade!

What is success for Pacific people in education? Pacific scholars have tried to address this issue of success for Pacific people in all forms of education (Perrot, 2015). While there are signs that Pacific achievement is trending up and has made incremental improvements (Southwick, Scott, Mitaera, Nimarota, & Falepau, 2016); comparable to other groups, Pacific are still behind, statistically (Southwick et al., 2016).

Therefore, we raise the question: Where to next?

Our research has shown that achievement for Pacific people in education should be focused on the authentic development of self (Perrot, 2015; Chu, Abella & Paurini 2013). When education and learning environments develop students as strong positive people who have confidence in their ability, no matter what the circumstances; when education builds quality nurturing relationships with staff, educators and the school; and when environments are inclusive so that they reflect and legitimise Pacific culture, connections and values; the result is academic achievement. If educators apply the law of 'indirect effort' by steering their focus to the development of the person through authentic cultural learning environments and the building of quality relationships with students, achievement will follow.

When educators put the person at the centre, the person becomes self-determined for achievement and not the other way around. Educators who put achievement over personal development are in for an arduous task if they honestly desire success for their Pacific students. Person-centred approaches connected to learning develop Pacific students who are eager to achieve long-term.

They embody a strong sense of self, reflected in a strong identity as a Pacific person. They develop strong character, and espouse leadership. These students are then prepared for more than just education but continued positive development across their lifespan. When Pacific students are strong, they embrace their own story; when they embody self-awareness, then their learning and achievement is almost predictable. What is also rewarding is seeing the shift that happens within students when they finally feel successful (Perrot, 2015).

Pacific Tertiary Success

In the past decade, there has been a growing collection of educational research on Pacific learners, with a greater emphasis on understanding the theoretical concepts of what works for Pacific learners as they go about their educational journeys. We anticipate that this project will add another level to the research by translating the ideas into practical concepts for different educators and institutions to implement and further develop as their own. Much of the established research discusses in general what people or organisations provide to enable Pacific learners to develop.

Learning Village (Contextual factors)

The learning village looks at the importance of the contextual and institutional factors identified from the literature that have enhanced positive outcomes for Pacific students. Overall, these factors enable Pacific students to feel safe in education.

Inclusive Environments

Benseman, Coxon, Anderson, and Anae (2006) identified contextual factors that would help increase Pacific student retention. Central to the educational success of students is the connection and communication between the student, the community, and the institution. These include:

- Presence of Pacific academics and staff allied with services and programmes designed to specifically support Pacific students.
- A Pacific presence in institutions such as the provision of a dedicated space, the holding of Pacific events, and the creation of Pacific associations and a supportive environment for Pacific students.
- Provision of role models such as educators, parents, older siblings or cousins.
- Pedagogical practices that are student-centred; engage both learners and lecturers; are committed to high expectation and achievement for all students; provide availability of academic support, access to resources, accessible pastoral care; and a "staircase" environment that provides links from one level of qualification to the next.
- Accurate, appropriate, and timely information made accessible and available to all students.

- Presence of Pacific staff in leadership roles in tertiary institutions as indicated by Peterson, Mitchell, Oettli, White, Kalavite, & Harry (2006).

Several programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand have implemented inclusive environments to support Pacific students in their journey through tertiary education. An example of this is Te Rōpū Āwhina, a programme of the Faculties of Science, Engineering, and Architecture and Design at Victoria University of Wellington that produced Māori and Pacific professionals who could contribute towards community development and leadership. The principle behind the initiative was the creation of an inclusive off- and on-campus whānau environment imbued with positive values of high expectations, achievement, collective success, and reciprocity. Based on the quantitative analysis of student achievement and student surveys, results show an improvement in achievement and retention of Māori and Pacific students (Wilson et al., 2011).

Cultural Importance

Millward, Turner, & van der Linden (2012) examined the retention and success rate of students at three different campuses, that were similar despite the differences in ethnicity, socio-economic background, and previous academic success. Under-represented groups in two out of the three campuses, mainly Māori and Pacific, entered the university via the special admissions pathway, but passed their courses at similar rates to the regular entry students. Davidson-Toumu'a and Dunbar (2009) argued that education and culture should go together and that educators should be aware of how the two concepts work. They added that Pacific students should be viewed as a whole person whose world is filled with cultural roles and familial obligations, other than just being a student.

Quality Relationships

Pacific success at tertiary level is evidenced when Pacific students build quality relationships with academic and non-academic staff, and other students within their programmes. Quality relationships are defined as those that are reciprocal in nature and are intentional in their intent towards growth and development for Pacific both as people and students.

Academic Staff and Student Relationships

Maxwell (2007, p. 116) states that "...people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Evidence suggests that when educators primarily focused on the care of Pacific students, facilitated through the development of authentic reciprocal relationships, the by-product was increased Pacific academic achievement in tertiary study (Southwick et al., 2016; Chu, Abella & Purini, 2013). Students' reflections revealed that their success had more to do with the quality relationships they developed with their tutors and/or lecturers than the quality or quantity of content students received (Southwick et al., 2016; Chu et al., 2013).

The realisation of equitable academic achievement for Pacific as Pacific requires academic staff to shift their philosophy of teaching to be primarily about relationship building than content delivery.

Conceptually, the 'relationship' developed has to be seen as the vehicle that knowledge, learning, and content is funnelled through. But without a strong relationship this can be a barrier.

Chu et al. (2013) identified that Pacific students across multiple institutions felt that achievement as students came about through relationships described as respectful and nurturing. The word nurturing in the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (2020, para. 1) is explained as to "care for and protect somebody/something while they are growing and developing". This care and protection is evidenced by educators who go outside their job description for Pacific students; they:

- are eager to put in extra one-to-one time with them
- set high expectations and standards for them as students
- have an unyielding belief that they will be successful as students
- provide subtle coaching and mentoring enabling students to pursue higher level qualifications
- help them to set goals
- put in work to ensure their teaching strategies and design is student-centred and meets the needs and multiple literacies of students
- are flexible and passionate
- make an effort to connect with students' communities and families
- help students 'edgewalk' the multiple worlds they exist in
- understand, and also take time to understand, Pacific students' worlds
- make students feel proud and strong about their multiple identities and their culture
- reveal to students how to play the 'game' of academia and reflect critically on how their success as students was a form of social justice to an education system that seemed structured in such a way as to prevent their success (Southwick et al., 2016; Chu et al., 2013, Marshal et al., 2008).

This level of care from educators ultimately protected students and for many it enabled them, for the first time, to feel safe, cared for, liberated, secure, and strong as Pacific people in education.

Non-Academic/Professional Staff and Student Relationships

A lot of this care for students was also demonstrated by non-academic and professional staff. Pacific support staff were excellent, and reinforced the nurturing relationships from academic staff by also holding higher standards for Pacific students, reaffirming academic staff's belief in them, and also ensuring students knew that they believed in them as well. Support staff were consistently noted for their effort to go above and beyond to ensure that students were supported throughout their education journeys (Chu et al., 2013).

Strong Student Relationships (family)

Another relationship of significance is the strong bonds developed between students. Marshal et al. (2008), in their study of best practice for Pacific students in PTEs, found that students attributed a lot of their longevity and sustainability to stick with their course and ultimately succeed was due to the familial relationships they developed with other students. Students received considerable benefit from being able to share expertise and ideas with fellow students, and draw strength from the cultural connections they have as fellow Pacific (Chu et al., 2013). Southwick et al. (2016) discussed how students were able to draw from the 'whole group' and support each other because their programme was designed only for Pacific. Students were encouraged by tutors to look after each other, which was different compared to the competitive messages they had previously received as students in secondary education (Southwick et al., 2008)

Summary

The importance of relationships for Pacific students in education is unquestionable and undeniable. If we want Pacific students to succeed in tertiary study, academic and non-academic/professional staff have to foster quality, intentional relationships with students. Students have to feel cared for and protected by the people that are involved in their education and support. Staff, as well as institutions, also have to foster learning environments that are collaborative and enable aiga-like (family-like) feelings to be cultivated between students. Relationship-building cannot be an optional extra for educators, it has to be part of their core function.

Figure 1: Change in educators' philosophy

New Philosophy: Relationship focus

Old Philosophy: Content Focus
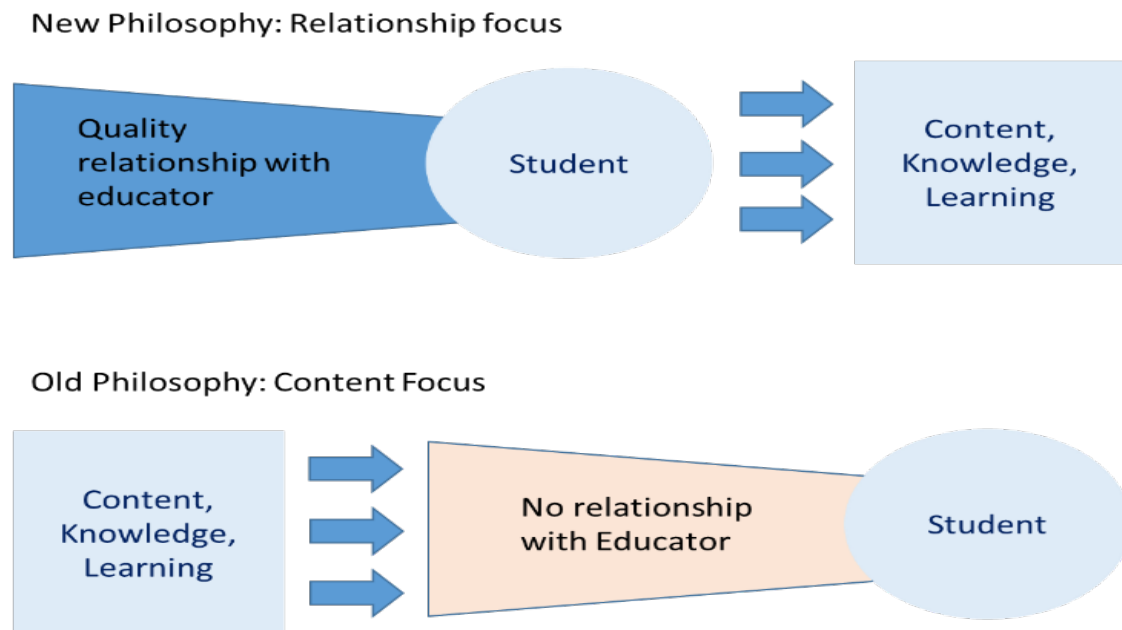
Going over the research of best practice for Pacific people within tertiary education, it is noticeable that the importance of the education context represents a strengths-based learning village. This village was not discussed, in so far as how incredible the content was that was learned in the space. What they discussed was a space where people were culturally safe in their identity and values, felt liked and belonged, could connect with other students and staff similar to them, who cared for and mentored them, and who they could talk to. This ultimately created an environment that was not about content, though content was critical. Spaces were about Pacific learners in education, thus building assets within the individual.

What was also important, and mimicked positive developmental literature, was the importance of relationships of intentionality and quality. Staff and students talk about the quality and depth of the relationship formed with students. This is not to say the staff are lenient, but quite the reverse.

Because of this strong relationship, and the understanding and care that students feel for their tutors and peers, the staff were able to push them and promote stronger boundaries and expectations.

The Theorisation of Pacific Learners as Minority Learners

The way Pacific learners are positioned and theorised about is interesting for educators; Pacific learners are often theorised as minority learners or diverse learners. But what does this really mean, and is it really true? Let us examine the research around this topic. This literature review includes minority learners with cultural identities that are different from the majority culture in the educational spaces they occupy. However, it specifically excludes learners who are marginalised on the basis of their disability, and religious or gender affiliations. Included is research about minority learners at all stages of the education system, including early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary settings. It includes the processes they encounter within education systems, transitions across settings, relationships with educators, academic experiences, relationships with other students, and the racism encountered within educational contexts. The review gathers evidence from a range of countries including New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Even when minority learners are defined by race, culture or ethnicity, there are multiple layers of identity and complexity amongst any minority learner group. Minority learners often feel a sense of "in betweenness", that can create a poor sense of entitlement and tension about their rights to occupy education spaces dominated by majority cultures. Minority learners occupy a "third space" reflecting a hybridity that has emerged from the experiences of living critically between cultures (Aujla-Bhullar, 2016).

Minority learners do not achieve at the same rate as students from majority cultures (Vang, 2005) and gaps between these groups of learners have persisted, despite considerable efforts to address disparities. Minority learners within school systems often access fewer educational resources, encounter lower educator expectations, and through encouragement to drop out or take lower-level courses, have poorer achievement rates (Stuart, Lido, & Morgan, 2011). These experiences contribute to many minority learners having a negative view of the secondary school system and higher education. Minority learners are often the first person in their family to pursue higher education and so are more reliant on educator support to guide their learning; encouragement that is often withheld (Stuart et al., 2011). Jackson and Moore (2008) describe a "doom and gloom" trajectory for black male college students who face a number of barriers within tertiary education, such as low expectations of academic staff and feeling overwhelmed by course content. Harper (2009) states that in the United States more than two thirds (67.9%) of black men who start college, do not graduate within six years, that is the lowest college completion rate among both sexes and the different racial/ethnic groups.

Minority learners, who also face economic and social barriers, experience particular disadvantages within education systems because these factors impact on academic attainment. Despite admission to tertiary education having increased for students of colour in the United States, minority learners from impoverished areas are less likely to attend tertiary education than their peers in the majority culture (Reddick, Welton, Alsandor, Denyszyn & Platt, 2011). In New Zealand, Pasifika children who come from some of the least well-off families have the lowest rates of early childhood enrolments, with 86.7% of Pasifika children enrolled in 2012 compared to 98% of European children. 68.1% of Pasifika students left school with NCEA level 2 or above in 2012 compared with 82.1% of European students. Only 11.5% of Pasifika people have a Bachelor's degree or above in contrast to 18.6% of European people (Marriott & Sim, 2014).

In particular, minority learners from indigenous populations, living in postcolonial western countries, face the biggest disadvantage. Their lower education participation rates are evident across the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Poor educational success and low secondary education completion rates have a negative impact on job and earning prospects, trapping future children of indigenous students in cycles of poverty. Indigenous students across jurisdictions struggle in primary and secondary schools that do not reflect their knowledge base or cultural styles. Even at university they report feeling isolated and frustrated, facing discrimination and having poor interactions with non-indigenous students (Bailey, 2016).

Research makes it apparent that across jurisdictions the poorest educational outcomes are experienced by indigenous learners. In New Zealand, Māori early childhood education rates lag behind European rates with 90.9% enrolments compared to 98% of European children (Marriott & Sim, 2014). Māori have lower secondary school retention, 73.7% of Māori youth aged 16 years and above are still at school compared to 91.8 % of non-Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2012). For Māori 18- and 19-year-olds enrolled in tertiary education in 2003, 52% had completed their qualification by 2010 compared with 67% of all 18- and 19-year-olds (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2012). Within the Canadian education context; in 2006, only 9% of First Nations women had obtained a university degree, compared with 23% of women in the general population (Bingham, Adolpho, Jackson & Alexitch, 2014). First Nation students need to adapt and shift to the culture of educational institutions, a process that they compare to historic colonial experiences. They experience negative stereotypes and prejudice from other students and inaccurate portrayals of their people in the curriculum (Gallop & Bastein, 2016). In Hawaii, 28% of public school students identify as Native Hawaiian or part Hawaiian. These students encounter a range of struggles, achieving at a lower level in standardised tests, that generate low rates of enrolment in tertiary education (Yamamoto & Black, 2013).

For Alaskan students, Campbell (2007) estimates 29% drop out of high school compared to 16% of their white counterparts. Alaskan students make up only 1% of students enrolled in post-secondary institutions and only 8% of those have tertiary degrees conferred (Campbell, 2007). There are similar educational disparities between Aboriginal students and the rest of the Australian population. Despite an increase in Aboriginal student participation in high school, from 35% in 1996 to 44% in 2006, this has not occurred in tertiary education settings, with a large decline in indigenous student participation after compulsory schooling (O'Shea et al., 2013).

Negative and "Colour-blind" Discourses on Minority Learners

A negative and "colour-blind" discourse exists within the literature on minority learners, that views their poor education outcomes as the result of economic deprivation, housing problems, poor family backgrounds and cultural deficits. Failure of minority learners is explained by inadequate family systems and community structures, that are seen to cause behavioural problems amongst students. Cultural deficits are also viewed as a significant factor in explaining the socio-economic status and educational failure of minority learners. George (2000), for example, claims black students belong to a culture "infected with an anti-intellectual strain that teaches them not to embrace school work." These ideas are often transmitted through educator education programmes, where trainee educators learn to encourage minority students to reduce family and community affiliations, and adopt dominant white middle class cultural practices in order to succeed (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003). A similar negative discourse attributes the poor educational outcomes of international students to cultural distance, with a focus on cultural assimilation as a means of improving student integration and success (Vu, 2013).

An assumed lack of family involvement is a significant part of negative discourses concerning minority learners' underachievement. In a study of educators' discursive positioning in relation to factors that influence Māori achievement, most viewed Māori students themselves or their home contexts as contributing to poor educational outcomes, pathologising their lived experiences (Bishop et al., 2003). Perrot (2015) says there is also a perception that Pasifika parents' lack of understanding about their children's education, and the disconnect between home and school life, limits their ability to help their children. Participants in Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa'afoi, Taleni and O'Regan's (2009) study contextualised poor oral language environments at home with the heavy socioeconomic demands in Pasifika families, meaning less time for parents to develop rich oral environments to support learning. Zalaquett and Lopez (2007) report that a lack of strong adult supervision is seen as a contributing factor to the struggle of Latino students within the education system. While Latino parents are thought to understand the value of education, they do not have the experience to assist their children due to language barriers, low income

attainment and insufficient knowledge of the tertiary education application process (Zalaquett & Lopez, 2007).

This negative discourse is pervasive and is reinforced when educators bring similar negative preconceptions about students' abilities to their teaching practice. In the classroom, they can develop low expectations of minority learners, viewing them as poor listeners, who talk out of turn, or speak too softly. Lower educator expectations are noted for Māori students at all levels impacting on their achievement, particularly those moving from Māori medium to English medium schools (Office of the Auditor General, 2012). Nakhid (2003) argues similarly that the true identities of Pasifika students are under-valued and that they are dissatisfied with the perceptions that their educators have of them. O'Shea (2013) also describes a pervasive "mindset" within the Australian school system, that seems to accept Aboriginal underachievement as normal, based on poor student attendance, a lack of systematic analysis of indigenous student performance and underdevelopment of strong indigenous educational leadership (O'Shea, 2013).

This negative discourse is "colour-blind" to the impact of culture and racism on the education of minority learners. Yamamoto and Black (2013) argue that Native Hawaiian students struggle to succeed in western-based education and economic systems. For them to succeed there is the expectation that they take on manners and values related to success in a western system. These students then struggle with identity negotiation in the school system, instructional methods and measures of accountability, that contest their own values (Yamamoto & Black, 2013).

This explains why disparities have persisted, despite education reforms and attempts to develop bicultural and multicultural approaches to mainstream education. Reforms are ineffective because they are developed within a neo-colonial paradigm, based on western knowledge that has racism embedded in the privileging of the dominant cultural practices and processes. It also imposes sense-making and knowledge-generating approaches from outside minority cultural groups, that in New Zealand, for example, fails to acknowledge Mātatanga Māori (Māori ways of knowing) (Berryman et al., 2017). Hemara (2000) considers that gaps between Māori and non-Māori students need to be considered within the context of community values and argues that the important disparity is Māori aspirations and their actual achievements, arguing that traditional values can be transitioned into contemporary contexts. Mahuika, Berryman and Bishop (2011) also argue for acknowledgement of the uniqueness of Māori learners and for assessments, that better reflect the cultural needs of these students.

Whether Pacific learners are minority learners remains a question to be debated. We are resistant to labelling them, for fear of deficit theorising. What we can say is that a number of factors identified above should be taken into account when we consider Pacific learners' journeys and the influencing factors of society and education.

Who are Phenomenal Educators?

Our study is focused on phenomenal educators and their phenomenal practices. The term phenomenal educator is derived from two words: *phenomenal*, that means "extremely successful or special, especially in a surprising way" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018b) and *educator*, who, in general, is "a person who teaches people" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018a). Simply put, phenomenal educators are successful and effective educators. But what does the literature say about phenomenal educators? How does relevant research describe a phenomenal educator?

Phenomenal Educators: Qualities

Phenomenal educators possess certain personal characteristics, competencies and qualities. These attributes are related to students' achievement (Nezhad & Nezhad, 2014). According to Edwards and Hinueber (2015), educator effectiveness is achieved when educators deeply understand students' needs. They foster a safe and positive emotional climate inside the classroom and are sensitive toward the needs and perspectives of the learners (Allen et al., 2013). Apart from considering the emotional and psychological needs of the learners, educators must also establish a healthy relationship with them to achieve positive learning experiences (Boyes, 2013). Froneman, Du Plessis, & Koen (2016) identified in their study the different educator qualities that would improve educator-student relationships as a key factor to positive learning and achievement. These educator qualities were "love and care, respect, responsibility, morality, patience, being open to new ideas, motivation, willingness to 'go the extra mile' and punctuality" (Froneman et al., 2016, p. 1595).

Educators' positive disposition influences student learning. The study by Alemu (2014, p. 632) described an effective and excellent university instructor as "respectful, fair in evaluating, cares about students' success, shows a love for their subjects, friendly, and always prepared and organised." Latif and Miles (2013) identified several characteristics of instructors favoured by students. Based on their survey, students prefer instructors who are prepared, clear in communication, knowledgeable, organised, enthusiastic, helpful, and fair. The first three characteristics mentioned are perceived to be the most important traits of an effective educator based on the study. Froneman et al. (2016) identified that educator-student interaction should be constructive,

acknowledge human rights, and use appropriate non-verbal communication to foster positive learning outcomes. Similarly, Singh et al. (2013) ranked knowledge of the subject, enthusiasm in teaching, and good communication skills as the top three desirable qualities of an effective educator based on his study. For Mitchell (2013), educator enthusiasm is connected to educator effectiveness and student achievement.

Educator effectiveness relies on the educator's holistic well-being. Enanoza and Abao (2014) analysed the participant educators' roles in relation to the five basic roles of a global educator, namely: transformer, facilitator, researcher, ethicist, and psychologist. They concluded that educators' physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual well-being have a great impact on educator effectiveness and their performance in the aforementioned roles. In Reddick's study (2006), a professor-participant shared that his racial identity helped students of the same racial identity feel comfortable in sharing their concerns with him, thus allowing him to provide better support. Klassen and Tze (2014) analysed the relationship of two psychological traits, that is, self-efficacy and personality, to educator effectiveness. They concluded that self-efficacy has the strongest effect on educators' performance.

Key competencies of educators are attributed to effectiveness. In the study of Onyekuru and Ibegbunam (2013), they found that educators' qualifications and teaching experience have a significant influence on educators' effectiveness. Warren (2016) had a similar result in his study of educator effectiveness relating to educators' knowledge, qualification, and experience.

Phenomenal Educators and Teaching Practices

Phenomenal educators exercise effective teaching practices that add value to learning and create positive effects on learners. In Latif and Miles' study (2013), effective teaching practices include providing practise questions, doing group work, using attendance and class participation in the computation of the final course grade, and grading assignments. Group work or grouping in classrooms results in improvement of students' academic standards and personal and social development (Blatchford, Baines, Bassett, Chowne, & Rubie-Davies, 2006; Hallam, Ireson, & Davies, 2004).

The literature identifies instructional strategies, that result in effective teaching. Allen et al. (2013) argued that the use of various engaging instructional formats that focus on analysis and problem-solving can lead to student achievement. Problem-solving is an effective teaching practice for knowledge foundation, collaborative skills, and necessary skills for successful lifelong learning (Beringer, 2007). It promotes active, reflective, and higher-order thinking and learning skills (Maudsley, 1999).

Classroom practices effective for diverse classrooms have also been explored. Allison and Rehm (2007) identified four effective instructional strategies for ethnically diverse classrooms, namely: use of visuals, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and use of alternative forms of assessment. Visuals are effective tools in presenting a universal, concrete, and clear understanding of concepts by providing mental images of them (Curtin, 2006), that makes them helpful for those who speak English as their second language (Carrier, 2005). In peer tutoring, students of differing abilities and background are paired up as educator and student, with resources for each other resulting in better communication, appreciation, achievement, and friendship between students (Trees, 2013). Cooperative learning groups with students of diverse background and skills work collaboratively, thus promoting cross-cultural understanding, teamwork, and interpersonal skills resulting in academic achievement (Crandall, 1999). Different types of assessment are effective in increasing student achievement, such as formative and internal assessment that support Pacific learners (Ferguson, Gorinski, Wendt-Samu, & Mara, 2008). It gives learners the opportunity to express themselves in various ways compared to the traditional paper and pencil test (Hodges, 2001). Creating journals, exhibitions, portfolios, and videos are some alternative assessment examples (Allison & Rehm, 2007).

Educators that implement activities that actively involve students in the classroom, result in higher student achievement. Interactive whole class teaching is an active teaching practice that promotes quality dialogue and discussion between educators and students and enhances inclusion, understanding and the learning performance of students (Smith, Hardman, & Higgins, 2006).

This practice involves the class asking questions, demonstrating their skills and methods, and explaining their ideas. It includes the whole class in teaching, planning, using, and sharing learning objectives (Webb & Vulliamy, 2007).

Giving importance to learners' culture is a valuable factor in learning. Maintaining the learners' cultural context and participation in culture-specific experiences, such as their first language, help in learners' development, particularly in increasing their literacy and numeracy (Tuafuri & McCaffery, 2005). Bakalevu (2001) believed that in learning new mathematics, students must first learn their indigenous mathematics.

Artefacts for learning, or any man-made objects available in the learning environment, are fundamental in engaging student learning and results in student achievement (Levin, Ching, & Parisi, 2003). Examples of artefacts for learning that are acknowledged to be effective include lesson plans (Schumacher, Grigsby, & Vesey, 2015), learning modules (Lloyd & Abbey, 2009), visual aids (Carrier, 2005), and information and communication technology (Beauchamp & Kennewell, 2013; El-Mouelhy, Poon, Hui, & Sue-Chan, 2013).

The use of creative teaching tools such as reflective journal writing to engage indigenous students are effective in democratising, questioning, reflecting, and transforming students' learning (Barney & Mackinlay, 2010).

Student immersion in communities and community participation in schools also promote effective teaching and increase in learning. Community engagement is a powerful teaching and learning strategy that positively affects student achievement. It can be attained through community service, service learning, volunteer work, work-based learning, fieldwork, and research collaborations (Bednarz et al., 2008). An example of service learning is learning with the Māori community, such as learning the protocols and proper behaviours for visiting marae. This experience results not only in enhancing formal learning but developing better understanding and appreciation of each other's culture, views, history, and values.

Appreciative mediation for learning refers to the positive and strengths-based operations or actions of educators that result in student learning. In a case study of a Pacific educator, a number of appreciative mediation for learning approaches were used such as genuine appreciation and collaboration with students, that involves having positive relationships with students, valuing students' feedback, knowing the students and their backgrounds, home visitation, having high expectations for students, and boosting their self-confidence (Abella, 2018). The appreciative mediation for learning identified in this study, as found in other studies, is an effective approach to learning. For instance, nurturing positive relationships (Hill, 2014; Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011), encouraging students to build their self-confidence (Komos, 2013), and valuing students' feedback (Demetriou & Wilson, 2010; Hopkins, 2010).

Mentoring is valued as an effective teaching and learning practice. Mentoring fosters good effects in culturally diverse settings and increases school retention rates and engagement (Bean, 2002; Koerner & Harris, 2007). The success of Nga Hoa o te Kupenga Rorohiko in increasing the number of students completing secondary schools with maths and physics achievement at a higher level is founded on the ideals of mentoring (Morgan, 2006). Chu (2018) described her own mentoring journey, the positive experiences and effects, and how mentoring can be used in progressing Pacific student engagement in higher education.

Educators and students have enumerated perceived effective practices that contribute to learning. The study of Chu, Samala Abella, & Paurini (2013b, p. 4) identified teaching and learning factors that lead to success for Pacific students in higher education, namely:

- Respectful and nurturing relationships with students
- Recognition of cultural identity, values and aspirations
- The creation of 'Pacific' physical spaces
- Incorporation of students' learning needs
- Insistence on high standards

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- Opportunities for students to pursue higher education
- Learning relationships between students
- Mentorship as a learning relationship

On the other hand, Delpit (2006) argued that educators, through their attitudes and actions, play a pivotal role in influencing students in classrooms.

She identified ten practices to help educators in fulfilling this role. These are:

- teach more, not less, content to poor, urban children;
- ensure all children gain access to conventions/strategies essential to success in American society;
- whatever methodology/instructional program used, demand critical thinking;
- provide the emotional ego strength to challenge racist societal views of the competence and worthiness of children and their families;
- recognize and build on children's strengths;
- use familiar metaphors, analogies, and experiences from the children's world to connect what children already know to school knowledge;
- create a sense of family and caring in the service of academic achievement;
- monitor/assess children's needs and address them with a wealth of diverse strategies;
- honour and respect children's home culture; and
- foster a sense of children's connection to community (p. 220).

Summary

The reviewed literature suggests that phenomenal educators are depicted as a blending of personality and skills. Phenomenal educators showcase certain personal characteristics, competencies, attributes, or qualities that stand out for learners. Phenomenal educators exude these positive traits that transform learners' learning and achievement. Phenomenal educators also possess and acquire skills that are translated into effective teaching practices that benefit the learners. Much of the research has proved the effectiveness of these teaching practices, strategies, and techniques in providing positive learning experiences and outcomes for learners.

Theoretical Framework

Research methods, such as storying, provide narratives that help to better understand minority students and their "lived" experiences of education. Three theoretical frameworks underpin alternative discourses of minority education and storying methodologies. Firstly, the post-positivist paradigm, that questions the appropriateness of scientific research for understanding human experiences, drawing on ethnography and phenomenology, to recommended narrative inquiry as a way to offset the methodological weakness of quantitative research.

Secondly, and alongside this, are decolonising theories that also emphasise the place of multiple ways of knowing the world, making room for indigenous epistemologies, that incorporate research methods from oral traditions, such as storytelling. Last is the Critical Race Theory, that has emerged from critical social theory, and also focuses on narrative methods in order to develop counter-stories. These stories address majoritarian discourses, document the impact of microaggressions in the lives of minority learners and support the development of new anti-racist pedagogies.

Post-Positivist Critique

Positivism argues that the aim of research is hypothesis testing, that usually depends on statistical procedures to confirm or disconfirm functional relationships between variables. Hypotheses are constructed in advance and the process by which these insights are developed is often unclear, so that the "discovery dimensions" of inquiry are excluded (Guba, & Lincoln, 1994). The post-positivist critique questions whether research focused on prediction and control is appropriate for understanding social relationships. Human experiences when they are constructed as quantitative data are removed from important aspects of their context, a process that is invisible and reduces the relevance of the research (Creswell, 2012). Quantitative designs can miss rich insights when experiences are constructed as data, with some arguing etic, or outsider, views may be less useful in understanding human experiences than emic, or insider, perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Positivism assumes independence of theory and any observations or facts, that are determined by research. Yet there is an increasing acknowledgement, even within scientific communities, that facts are not independent of theory and true objectivity is not obtainable (Marshall & Zohar, 1997). When values and facts are interwoven, the "value-free" positioning of quantitative research is not possible, and certainty is challenged.

Approaches that have emerged from within the critique of positivism include phenomenology and ethnomethodology and methods such as, grounded theory, ethnography, case studies and narrative research, from which storying has emerged (Creswell, 2012). Narratives, in particular, help to illuminate not only the complexity of experience, but how it is shared, given meaning and how identity is constructed. Narrative research focuses on any text or discourse, using the experiences of individuals as they are lived and told with events ordered by the narrator. Because it is acknowledged that meaning constantly shifts, narrative research is not about establishing a stable decontextualised truth but conveying specific perspectives on experiences, at particular times, in specific contexts. Questions asked are those that help researchers to interpret and understand experiences, rather than explain or predict them (Wang & Geale, 2015). These stories are sources for researchers wanting to explore the complexity of minority learners' lives and their multi-layered experiences of education.

Decolonising Theories

Storying is also underpinned by decolonising theory, that challenges western research methodologies and the exclusion of both indigenous knowledge and traditional research methods. Smith (1999) explains that research that is constructed through a western paradigm does not validate knowledge or cultural and linguistic values of indigenous people. Indigenous knowledge focuses on the way parts come together as much as the parts themselves with theories of how knowledge is constructed and assumptions about what counts as knowledge. Western science is, in contrast, a compartmentalised form of knowledge, where interdependence is viewed as less important than establishing facts and causal links.

A decolonising perspective focuses on the powerful social relationships, that have marginalised indigenous people and their forms of knowledge through the exclusion of cultures, beliefs and language. Smith (1999) argues that within academic research about New Zealand education, theories have been produced that have devalued Māori traditional knowledge. The dominance of western discourses mean that Māori stories have been re-interpreted to meet the needs of western institutions; for example, within the school curriculum, side-lining Māori knowledge and cultural aspirations, and erasing Māori pedagogy and knowledge in mainstream classrooms (Bishop, 1997). Western research has dehumanised alternative ways of knowing, sometimes subordinating them and sometimes appropriating them. Bishop (1997) also argues that explanations of poor Māori educational outcomes, have consistently excluded the consequences of the dominance of western knowledge within the curriculum.

A western scientific discourse has validated certain methods of educational research, that have met the needs of academic research communities, resulting in the loss of minority learners' voices or providing a distortion of their views. Shifting the paradigm from quantitative to qualitative methods doesn't necessarily address indigenous concerns, if the research process remains within the ideology of the dominating discourse and the relationship of the researcher and participants reflects this dominance (Bishop, 1997). While qualitative research is often described as emancipatory, it is embedded in the current order, where the researcher is an outsider collecting stories of "others" (Smith, 1999). When recording stories, researchers' theorising voice still shapes and dominates the research, by constantly reflecting and explaining the experiences of others (Bishop, 1997). When the researcher is the overall storyteller, in charge of bringing narratives together, issues of power, of content and legitimation, representation, benefits and accountability distort narratives.

To understand the experiences of minority learners, researchers must reclaim traditional indigenous knowledge and perspectives that have become supressed or devalued. By acknowledging and recognising the dominance of western philosophy, content and pedagogy in education; alternative ways of thinking

about the world, for example, Pasifika traditional values, can be integrated into study designs (Thaman, 2003).

Research conducted from within the values and traditions of Pasifika culture, for example, are ethically and culturally relevant, so have the potential to bring Pasifika voices from the margins of academia to the middle.

Indigenous knowledge also provides new methodologies emerging from oral traditions, where knowledge is shared through oral history and storytelling. Indigenous researchers identify storytelling, yarning, re-storying or re-remembering as legitimate methods of gathering knowledge. These methods are congruent with indigenous paradigms offering a constant interplay between method and the indigenous worldview. From an indigenous knowledge perspective, storying makes sense because the paradigm can make reference to relational assumptions from a tribal knowledge base and reflect local contexts.

The Critical Race Theory

Storying is also derived from Critical Race Theory (CRT), emerging from critical social theory, that emphasises the importance of social structures in maintaining the power of certain groups. This theory also views storying as a way to conduct research, that remains grounded in the experiences and knowledge of people of colour, allowing them to compose counter-stories. These counter-narratives are tools to challenge racism, sexism and classism in the cause of social justice and make change in powerful social systems, such as education.

Within Critical Race Theory, neutrality, objectivity and meritocracy are viewed with scepticism and race is considered as the central factor for understanding inequality (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Critical Race Theory foregrounds the role of race and racism in education using a framework of insights, perspectives, methods and pedagogy. It aims to identify, analyse and transform those structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions in and out of the classroom (Hubain et al., 2016).

Racism is ordinary and ubiquitous and needs to be examined beyond the individual level of prejudice and discrimination to understand how racism as a discourse pervades major social structures, such as education. Critical Race Theory has been used to interrogate inherent racial assumptions in educational theory, practice and policies and in the discourses, that are used to account for educational inequalities. It considers the intersectionality of race, gender and class, demonstrating how these elements interweave and impact on minority learners (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

It challenges traditional research paradigms, because it is orientated to social emancipation and uses student experiences as a source of strength for change.

Critical Race Theory contains the idea of "master narratives", that are majoritarian generated deficit discourses, that underpin education. This is

because these discourses do not question systems of power and privilege in school systems but contribute to and sustain these inequalities. Sometimes minority learners in education systems also tell stories in line with these powerful negative discourses because such narratives are pervasive. Master narratives emphasise power, and silence and distort the experiences of minority learners by not explicitly addressing the race and class issues underpinning their experiences (Solórzano & Yosso, 2011).

Critical Race Theory acknowledges that racism is a normal, non-aberrant feature of western post-colonial societies, and so can be difficult to identify. Actions that are termed "microaggressions", are defined as cumulative and incessant everyday actions of individuals, groups and institution policies that have negative consequences for persons of colour (Harris, 2016). Multiracial students encounter a unique form of racism because they are from more than one race and so their experiences are seldom explored separately from mono racial minority learners (Harris, 2016). Because racial microaggressions are commonplace "everyday indignities", research informed by Critical Race Theory seeks to make these experiences visible, in order to change them (Hubain et al., 2016).

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) explain that majoritarian storytelling, which underpins educational marginalisation, is supported through educational research, which erases the experiences of minority learners. They ask whose stories are privileged and whose are distorted and silenced. Those who have been marginalised are of particular research interest in order to understand how students of colour respond to educational systems, drawing on their strengths, and turning "the margins into places of transformative resistance" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Critical Race Theory privileges the position of students of colour, as holders and creators of knowledge. Their lived experiences and alternative narratives can offset negative discourses and challenge institutional philosophies, policies and practices that obscure and sustain racial inequalities ('Otukolo-Saltiban, 2012). Research makes space for students to identify ways to improve their experiences of education (Hubain et al., 2016). Critical Race Theory has also been used to understand the experiences of educators of minority learners, using their experiences to construct critical race pedagogies and as a framework for educator education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Critical Race Theory has relied on storytelling as a method for documenting and sharing educational experiences of minority learners; and developing counter-stories that run against dominant discourse of racial neutrality, merit-based systems and equal opportunities.

The purpose of counter-stories is to challenge racial and social injustice by listening to the accounts of racism and resistance.

The Study Design

Methodological Framework and Method

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Cooperrider, 2000) lends itself well to the over-arching strengths-based approach used in this study. Instead of focusing on deficits or problems of a group or organisation, AI allows for a focus on appreciating the best in people and their world. It involves asking questions to explore new potentials and possibilities and the good things that are happening. We used AI to explore, understand and analyse the data that is obtained from this study and to inform the suggestions and recommendations we develop. Our use of AI builds on previous Ako Aotearoa research completed by Chu et al. (2013) that utilised AI to explore educational success for Pacific learners across New Zealand. By continuing this AI approach, we hope to embed strengths-based mindfulness that might be taken up across other research with Ako Aotearoa.

What is Storying?

Storying is a qualitative methodology, emerging from post-modern theories, that question the possibility of scientific truth and acknowledge the fluidity of life experiences, and the meaning attributed to these experiences. This research approach provides room for indigenous epistemologies and, particularly, for oral traditions of passing on knowledge in order to share experiences, address wrong-doings and heal. The methodology can generate counter-stories that challenge racism, reveal microaggressions and their impact, and through accounts of success and resilience, offset majoritarian negative discourses and make social change.

Storying is based on the belief that, as humans, we give meaning to our life and understand its complexity, through the use of story (Trahar, 2009). Stories are symbols for collective and personal pasts, presents and futures, that are layered with sensory and emotional references, and explore relational aspects of human life (Coetzee, 2011). When a story is told, the narrator constructs their parameters of being in the world. Knowledge constructed throughout this process is characterised by multiple voices, perspectives, truths and meanings. Stories are about human experience, identity, teaching and learning, creativity and community. Sense-making is at the heart of developing and sharing stories that become vehicles for reflection on reality and can reshape human experiences. Individuals are positioned, through a network of stories that shift within space and time, so that stories are always incomplete and the process of storying is discontinuous (Coetzee, 2011).

Storying, as a method, gathers oral, written or visual narratives; but it is not an uncritical gathering together of stories. There is particular interest in how stories are constructed, for whom and why, and especially the cultural discourses that are employed in the construction of stories. Stories are products, a shaping of events in order to signify or attribute meaning, because in telling a story only

some events are selected, given cohesion, meaning and direction (Sandelowski, 1991). For Pacific people, this is a gathering of knowledge from the past, but is not necessarily knowledge about the past. Constructing personal narratives involve revision of the past, describing and modifying these through language because it is only in retrospect that we come to understand and give meaning to experiences (Trahar, 2009).

For this study, we use storytelling to capture what is placed within the story. The focus is how individuals tell themselves and the devices they use to make meaning in their stories. It differs from content analysis, where the informational content is the focus and the assumption is that there is a close relationship between the experience and the telling. In storying no such assumptions are made. The telling is all-important and the method makes room for attention to "asides" and "storied" placement of experiences as opposed to the actual sequencing of events.

Storying establishes a changed relationship that exists traditionally between a researcher and participants. Storying can often begin with the researchers' own autobiography-orientated narrative, which is associated with the research area of interest (Trahar, 2009). Informed by social constructivism, it acknowledges that insights emerge from the relationships between the researcher, and the participants and consumers of research.

Storying also provides a process that gives indigenous research participants more control over the research process. Bishop (1997) explains that storying enables participatory connectedness, where the researcher can become a participant, reducing the traditional separation between researcher and participant and promoting commitment and engagement of all parties to the research. Storying accepts complexity and diversity; it facilitates critical reflection about western assumptions and about interpretations of narratives (Bishop, 1997), including consideration of agency, discourse, advocacy, identification and positioning. In particular, stories help us to understand cultural contexts and how meaning is ascribed in minority learners' lives. Narratives shared during interviews are problematised and viewed as complex. The power balance within the research relationship is "surfaced" and articulated as much as possible within the research process. It is messy and complex with the researcher striving to be transparent about the experiences shared between the researcher and participants and where differences lie (Trahar, 2009).

Interviews can be taped, transcribed, analysed and shared and then reanalysed; but also important are feelings, hunches and subsequent conversations around these stories. These are significant reasons for the use of storying for this study.

Storying interviews can be similar to unstructured or semi-structured interviews, but are often more collaborative and interactive, so that stories are constructed jointly with the researcher (Trahar, 2009).

For minority learners, the method of storying enables researchers to be able to honour and examine the lived experiences of students inside and outside education. Storying helps to offset negative discourses about minority learners and bring into focus what is working, identifying growth and positive resistance. By focusing on strengths, storying increases student resilience at the individual and collective level (Hoy & Tarter, 2011).

Storying can also help to identify how educators can develop their own human capacity to foster well-being in minority students' lives (Cherkowsi & Walker, 2014). Stories can generate a broader set of educational outcomes and provide wider views of relational interactions within the classroom. In particular, storying can provide a basis for rethinking how we evaluate schools as communities of learners that aim to be life-enhancing to students, not a source of negative, life-limiting experience (Cherkowski & Walker, 2014). Storying methods are well suited to consider wider measures of education success, such as those recommended in respect of Māori (Mahuika et al., 2011) and Pacific students (Chu, Abella, & Paurini, 2013).

The Ethics of Storying

Ethics, in relation to social research, are defined as a "set of responsibilities in human relationships, that cover dignity, privacy and well-being of participants" (Trahar, 2014). Ethics of storying methods can be challenging and ethical issues can be difficult to anticipate at the outset of the research.

A crucial issue that arises is the "ownership" of a story, particularly, if the story is constructed collaboratively with others or with researchers (Trahar, 2014). Storying requires accountability to the spirit and values of not only the original storyteller but the researcher who is also a storyteller (Trahar, 2014). McCormack (2012) suggests that researchers need to be mindful that they do not end up being a coloniser of particular experiences through the telling of stories. Care is needed to ensure that the story written up remains the participant's story and is not transformed into a story only the researcher could call their own.

Another common ethical issue that emerges is naming participants, whose stories are made visible, either directly by a narrator or implicated or referenced in the story of another. It can be especially difficult to manage choices about whether to name people who are featured in the narrative, not all who have chosen to be named. Evaluating stories can also be difficult and researchers need to consider how the production of self-knowing and self-respectful stories, which can be fostered, are not self-limiting.

Ethically, storying must be concerned with truthfulness and relevance, but these differ from the traditional research concepts of validity and reliability. Critics of storying question the level of truth that is able to be attributed to stories, viewing narratives as vague and uncertain, not able to be determined or ever completed. Truth, however, is not about whether a story reflects the past accurately but what the consequences of the story are, how it reshapes the self,

and what new possibilities it includes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). If storying validity is considered to be this concept of truthfulness, and a story can be judged by how clearly it evokes experiences, how lifelike it is, and whether it communicates experiences to others who are not the narrator (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Reliability, as replicable findings, stable across research settings, is not an objective of storying, but the researcher is required to check on how well the story is representing experiences provided by asking participants to review and re-edit stories. Harris (2016) describes a number of strategies, such as participants checking in and peer review, that allows peers to comment on a story. Using a journal to keep reader's thoughts and feelings and observations as the storying process unfolds is another way to improve reliability (Harris, 2016). Generalisability is tested by story readers who determine if narratives speak to them about experiences of their own or others. This has been described as "naturalistic generalisability" meaning "it brings "felt" views from one world to another" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 229).

Telling stories is emotional, and researchers should be prepared in advance for managing these situations, so that storytelling promotes healing when stressful experiences are recalled. Researchers need to offer participants time to take a break, get support or stop interactions that appear to cause distress.

The Four Phases of Appreciative Inquiry

Following on from an appreciative inquiry methodology as a preliminary stage, Cooperrider (1986) devised four phases of appreciative inquiry (AI) that he called the 4-D process. They are:

Discovery – is an appreciation and discovery of the best of 'what is'. The primary task is to promote learning by sharing stories about the best times and analysing the forces and factors that made them possible. Carefully crafted appreciative questions are used to elicit the stories. Essentially, stories that give energy and vitality to the system become the focus. AI does not dismiss the problems altogether, but it offers a broader lens through which people can appreciate their system. People can interview one another to explore strengths, assets, positive experiences and successes, so that they can understand what made their moments of excellence possible.

Dream – where members can envision what is possible and build upon strengths in this way by having conversations grounded in knowledge created in the Discovery phase. The dreams have been initiated by asking positive questions and developing a picture of what the organisation could and should become according to people's deepest hopes and highest aspirations. Themes and patterns emerge that inspire hope and possibility. Underlying questions such as, "What is the world calling us to become?" and "What might we become if our exceptional moments were the norm?" are part of this Dream phase.

Design – where members devise short-term and long-term strategies to redesign the social, political, economic, and physical aspects of the group through dialogue. The task is to redesign the organisation's social architecture – norms, values, structures, strategies, systems, patterns of relationship, and ways of doing things that can bring dreams to life. In this process, commitment can be built through dialoguing, debating, and creating when everyone reaches a point of wanting to develop the shared vision of the organisation or community. In this process it is important to have an inclusive context for conversation and an environment for creating possibilities together. Provocative propositions are used to stretch the system from where it is to where it wants to be. The principles they want to live by are designed by the members.

Destiny – guided by these principles, the group works to accomplish stated goals and to be innovative in accomplishing these goals. The Destiny phase allows for 'what could be'. Through innovative ways, people can move the organisation closer to the ideal grounded in reality. Because the ideals are grounded in reality, people will have the confidence to try to make things happen. New networks and relationships can begin to affect the direction and meanings of people's actions (Ludema, Whitney, Mohr, & Griffin, 2003, p. 45).

Hammond (1996) states that before people can begin to understand AI, they have to understand the role of assumptions in organisations. Individuals make up organisations, form groups to get things done, and act according to the rules of group behaviour. Hammond & Royal (2001) define assumptions as the sets of beliefs shared by a group that cause the group to think and act in particular ways. The assumptions:

- are statements or rules that explain what a group generally believes;
- explain the context of the group's choice and behaviours;
- are usually not visible to or verbalised by participants/members; rather they develop and exist;
- must be made visible and discussed before anyone can be sure of the group beliefs.

Hammond (1996) found there was one particular question that her colleagues commonly asked when trying to use AI. Colleagues begin with the question, "What did we do well in this meeting?" Hammond (1996) points out that when asking this question, people are still operating within a problem-solving model. This deficit approach is consistent with the empowering form of action research that focuses its attention on the issues. The underlying assumption for the problem-solving model is how we can do better as a result of what we did not do well (Hammond, 1996).

In contrast, Hammond (1996) clarifies the appreciative mindset, thus suggesting "We know that we have performed well at something and thus need to explore how that happened and how to do more", which fits an AI approach.

The Place of Pacific Research

An exploration of the model of 'Tree of Opportunity' (Pene, Taufe'ulungaki & Benson, 2002) shows how knowledge can be incorporated into a Pacific framework. In this context, education or the Tree of Opportunity is firmly rooted in the cultures of Pacific societies. The strength it gains from its root source include values, beliefs, arts, crafts, histories, world views, institutions, languages, processes, skills and knowledge. This allows it to grow strong and healthy and able to incorporate foreign and external elements from the wider context without changing its main root sources or the identity of the tree. The Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2002) affirm that a model such as the 'Tree of Opportunity' promotes Pacific people and communities and their right to be empowered, to have control of their education, and of their development. The purposes and goals of education must be determined by Pacific communities, and Pacific contexts, values, beliefs and knowledge systems must be reflected in these purposes and goals. At the same time, the global forces of change must be recognised. Pacific cultures and ways of doing should be adhered to and incorporated into the processes and structures of formal education, including the research process.

These ideas are consistent with the Pasifika Education Plan (2013-2017) that has been updated to the Action Plan for Pacific Education (2020-2030) by the New Zealand Ministry of Education. It emphasises the importance of more effective engagement with Pacific educators and communities. The Ministry of Education uses the Pasifika Education Plan as a strategic planning tool. The Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (2002) were established to support the Ministry of Education's work by:

- Identifying key areas of research in Pasifika education that assist policy development;
- Developing guidelines for research and consultation;
- Coordinating and prioritising research and evaluation that assist in monitoring the outcomes of the Pasifika Education Plan;
- Providing strong links with other strategic research priorities within the Ministry; and
- Helping to make research reports available to Pacific peoples.

The argument for effective Pacific research that engages and facilitates positive development for Pacific people is critical for the work of educators in ensuring the welfare of Pacific peoples. The Guidelines acknowledge that research should be community-driven by Pacific people. Pacific models of contexts that promote success and well-being for Pacific peoples and communities are important in the development of research methods. The Guidelines present two models of well-being for Pacific people and one model of education. One of the well-being models is the Fonofale model of health (Making a Difference: Strategic Initiatives for the Health of Pacific People, 1997, cited in Pasifika Education Research

Guidelines, 2002, p.7) and the other is known as the Fa'afaletui model (Tamasese, Peteru and Waldegrave, 1997, cited in Pasifika Education Research Guidelines, 2002, p. 6). Both the models are derived from Samoan understandings and are based on the traditional Samoan fale (house). In the models' structure the different parts of the Fonofale represent the elements important for Samoan people. For instance, the roof of the Fonofale represents the cultural values and beliefs that are the shelter for life, and the foundations are the family (nuclear and extended), which is the basis for social organisation. The family is represented in the base of the house and supports the four posts that are the physical-biological well-being; the spiritual, which includes Christianity or traditional spirituality; the mental, or the health of the mind; and lastly the 'other', which includes gender, sexual orientation, age and social class. Contexts around the Fonofale include time, and the environment of Aotearoa New Zealand or island-based living (Pasifika Education Research Guidelines, 2002, p. 7).

For the purposes of this research, it is important to identify the points of the Research Guidelines that relate to educational development. The Tree of Opportunity and Fonofale models "ensure that Pacific cultures are appropriately embedded within the processes and structures of formal education to provide the foundation of all learning" (Pasifika Education Research Guidelines, 2002, p. 6). The models are important as they promote the rights of Pacific people to be empowered and to have control of their own education and development. Furthermore, in education, Pacific people must determine their own goals and purposes based on their own visions, their families and their children. Pacific contexts, values, beliefs and knowledge systems must be reflected in the educational purposes and goals as well as recognising any global influences.

The Guidelines assert that the selection and application of appropriate methodologies are crucial for the successful outcomes of research projects for Pacific people. The points made in the Guidelines that are particularly important for this study are the insider/outsider roles, employment of diverse strategies for inquiry such as life-histories and stories, and finally objectivity/subjectivity in approach.

The data collected for this study has mainly been through observations and Talanoa (the sharing of ideas, skills and experience through storytelling). As stated by Patton (1990), observations are important to enable understanding of the complexities of the situation. As knowledge seekers, data collection has been through our observations and insights with note taking of each case as it has developed. Individual behaviours, comments, discussions, interactions, and reactions have been recorded.

Ethics

This study was granted ethical permission by the Human Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Wellington. The Ministry of Education's Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (2002) informed the conduct of the research. The people discussed in the case studies were respected and they selected their own pseudonyms to protect their identity. Any information relating to the students and staff has been stored in a secure and safe place.

Method

In developing a Kato and transformative study, we wanted to change some of the traditional terminologies around research. For this study, and the journey of Talanoa alongside the participants, we have arrived at the term of "knowledge seekers" or the process of "knowledge seeking".

As Cooperrider (2000) had devised four phases of AI, we decided to adapt the AI method for the research stages for this study.

Discovery Stage

Here we are interested in appreciating and discovering the best of 'what is' in the way great educators teach. The primary task is to promote learning by sharing stories about the best times and analysing the factors that made them possible. Essentially, we are keen to build the foundations of understanding preferred learning styles for Pacific learners.

In the Discovery stage, we developed and disseminated a VARK questionnaire for Pacific learners across the tertiary sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. In this questionnaire, we were keen to obtain statistical data that gives us patterns of learning-style preferences. We are interested in understanding how well Pacific learners learn from different teaching methods.

A synthesis of relevant Pacific tertiary research was developed. We drew out the theoretical arguments of the NZ-based research as a way of building a foundation for the Kato.

Talanoa-Interviews

Vaioleti (2006) introduced the Talanoa methodology to Pacific research, and thereafter researchers have adapted and utilised Talanoa to advance the field of Pacific knowledge. Traditionally, the approach of Talanoa allows for members of a group to engage in a discussion that is usually inclusive and participatory. In research, Talanoa groupings have given life to participants' and researchers' processes of talking together in ways that are more familiar. For example, kava/'ava (traditional Pacific root drink) has been used in circles of discussions to enhance the talks that take place between Pacific people. Talanoa has been highly adaptable over the years and the emphasis we have taken for this study is that Talanoa infuses a connection and relationship between participants and

knowledge seekers. Values of respect, humbleness, and equity were brought to the forefront so that all participants felt comfortable to speak openly. For this study, we have Talanoa methodology and method as the guiding value system to demark any formality that might occur in a typical interview process. For many of our Talanoa interviews, we met over food and in informal settings that were deemed appropriate (such as cars, cafés, garden walks, community events, classrooms, gymnasiums, etc). In the case of Talanoa with students, groups of students talked together over food and drink. The use of Talanoa groups allowed students to feel comfortable with one another and the knowledge seekers and they were able to discuss ideas more freely.

Learning Style Preference Questionnaire: VARK

Understanding and adapting to different learning styles is crucial for any educator, whether they are teaching in a classroom, at a marae or in a community setting. In tertiary education, we must do more by learning to understand the specific learning styles and interests of each of our Pacific learners. Our teaching styles should be able to reflect the various learning styles of the range of Pacific learners in our classrooms. When educators do this, we can then design teaching lessons that are focused on Pacific student's learning styles. Whether that offers more options to work independently or in groups. based on an area of interest or even based on the level of understanding of the content; we serve them best by having the best teaching and resources available for them.

As we were keen to know more about Pacific learners' preferred learning styles, we decided to use Fleming's (1987) VARK questionnaire, that was developed in New Zealand and has a popular following across the globe with different types of educators. Learning styles are a popular concept in psychology and education and are intended to identify how people learn best. The VARK model of learning styles suggests that there are four main types of learners (see Appendix One for the questionnaire). These are:

- Visual images – the student prefers learning material in a pictorial or graphic format;
- Aural messages or the spoken word – the student likes to listen to lectures and discuss the work;
- Reading and making notes – the student learns best through reading and writing;
- Kinaesthetic or active learning – the student prefers to learn through practical activities.

We decided to use the VARK questionnaire as it provided a baseline, and was a useful tool for our study and for the educators. The questionnaire had a small number of participants (n=135), but it still provides some insightful information about learning styles.

There is not an extensive amount of quantitative data pertaining to Pacific learners and their preferred learning styles. It was important for us to have some idea about what students enjoy when it comes to learning. As an instrument, the VARK Inventory gives educators an appreciation of the way learners process information. It can influence how they teach. An educator with such an insight may be encouraged to make an effort to broaden their teaching style so that they may positively impact a greater number of their students. In essence, the phenomenal educators would include all modalities into their teaching.

The questionnaire was calibrated into the software programme Qualtrics with a range of questions for people to answer by ticking a box. We sent the questionnaire out to educational networks across Aotearoa New Zealand. Our colleagues and community friends forwarded the survey to their students, and/or posted the questionnaire link to their teaching courses via their websites. The questionnaire could be accessed by any Pacific student at Private Training Establishments (PTEs), wānanga/Māori universities, universities, adult education centres, and institutes of technology and polytechnics. As knowledge seekers, we used our extensive educational and community networks (e.g., Association of Pasifika Staff in Tertiary Education/APSTE) to roll out the questionnaire as wide and far as possible. It was important to have quantitative data and evidence as it would give us a clearer understanding and appreciation of the scope of Pacific students' learning style preferences.

One hundred and thirty-five Pacific students participated in the VARK inventory, which takes less than five minutes to complete, and was easily accessible via a link on their computer or their cell phone.

For the Discovery stage we also pulled together past and current research on Pacific learners to form a best evidence synthesis of what works for Pacific learners. This review of the literature helped to form the foundational pillars for the Phenomenal Educators' Kato. It is our intention to re-examine past and current research into practice. Educators and managers (who have attended Ako Aotearoa Pacific professional development workshops from 2014 to the present) have indicated that they are looking for specific tools and teaching strategies to use with Pacific learners.

Dream

In this knowledge seeking phase, we used an ethnographic method combined with Talanoa that created conversations with learners and educators grounded in the knowledge created in the Discovery phase. Through the research in this phase, we elicited themes and patterns that inspire hope and possibility for Pacific learners through their phenomenal educators. Learners and educators envision what is possible and how to build upon the strengths. An underlying question of the Dream phase was: "What might we become if our exceptional moments were the norm?"

In this phase, we obtained 12 case studies of phenomenal educators across Aotearoa New Zealand. We came to this number because it provided us with specific teaching material, in-depth Talanoa, and field observations to draw upon for the Kato. Some of the educators (n=5) who had committed to the study had to withdraw due their very busy work schedules.

Punch (2005) asserts that case studies make a valuable contribution in three different ways. First, learning can come from the study of a case in its own right. An in-depth understanding of the case is built, especially when a case might be unusual, or not yet understood. Second, only the in-depth case study can provide understanding of the important aspects of a new or problematic research area. This is particularly true when a complex social behaviour is involved. The case study approach is useful for discovering the important features, developing an understanding of them, and conceptualising them for future study. Third, the case study can make an important contribution when combined with other research methods, such as a survey. A case study can be useful to help develop a picture of the area of study (Punch, 2005).

Stake (2005) believes that the research should draw out stories from the case to convey the storyteller's perception or to develop the researcher's perception of the case. The researcher decides what the case's story is or what will be included in the write-up. The criteria of representation are ultimately decided by the researcher. A case is often thought of as constituent member of a target population, and rarely represents whole populations.

In the case studies, we were able to observe some of the educators' practice in the 'classroom'. For all the educators, we carried out Talanoa interviews. In gathering participants for these case studies, we recruited a specific selection of educators across universities, polytechnics, Private Training Establishments (PTEs), and adult learning contexts.

In selecting the phenomenal educators, the following criteria were used in the selection of the institutions:

Firstly, we wanted variances that included a spread of sites across the country and a range of different types of tertiary institutions: universities, polytechnics, wānanga, and private training establishments.

Secondly, we wanted a spectrum of disciplinary fields because this would provide us with a deeper insight into areas that Pacific students were learning within.

Thirdly, we selected on the basis of the educator's proven academic and personal success with Pacific learners, such as high levels (85% and above) of completion and retention of Pacific learners in their courses across a five-year span.

And finally, we also selected participants with at least five years of teaching experience in tertiary education.

Table 1. Details of the Phenomenal Educators in the case studies

Type of tertiary education & region	Gender	Years of teaching experience	Role	Field	Ethnicity	Pseudonym
ECE/Porirua	Female	30	Retired/early childhood (ECE) and community	ECE	Niue	Anita
Polytechnic/Auckland	Female	12	Tutor	Tertiary	Tonga	Na'i
Adult learning/community/ Canterbury	Male	10+	Teaching English as a Second Language	Adult learning	Pakeha	Tobias
University/Wellington	Female	15+	Lecturer	Tertiary	Cook Island Māori	Reina
University/Wellington	Male	6	Lecturer	Tertiary	Samoan	Stevie
Private Training Establishment/Nelson	Male	8	Senior Tutor	Building	Pakeha	Ardie
Polytechnic/Waikato	Female	10+	Tutor	Nursing	Samoan	Carli
University/South Island	Male	20+	Lecturer	Education	Fijian	The Mentor known as "I"
Polytechnic/Central North Island	Male	5+	Lecturer	Science	Not stated	Eli
Private Training Establishment/Auckland	Female	10+	Tutor	Youth Development	Samoan	Emma
Wānanga/Central North Island	Male & Female	10+	Lecturers	Social Work	Samoan	Julo and Iga

Our selection criteria did not focus on the age range or ethnic background of potential case study educators. Educators who fitted our criteria came from varying ethnic backgrounds including Pacific and non-Pacific. However, we were keen to gain an even balance of male and female for this study. From within our professional networks (tertiary and schooling) across the country, we identified twelve educators who produced successful programmes and outcomes for Pacific learners. The participants had a number of differing roles including polytechnic tutors, community adult educators, university lecturers and tutors, and PTE educators.

A selection of students (56) from different tertiary institutions were brought together in either face-to-face Talanoa groups and/or cyber-Talanoa groups (such as online Zoom rooms) to discuss what makes an educator "phenomenal".

Knowledge Seeking

Educators' Talanoa

As knowledge seekers, we visited the educators in their respective places of work or where they lived. Our preferred method of engagement was through Talanoa methodology, which has frequently been used in Pacific research (Vaioleti, 2006). We considered Talanoa to be the most appropriate approach for a study involving educators as it allows for a natural conversation to occur. Further, the principles of Talanoa infer a trusting relationship between the knowledge seekers and the educator participants.

We communicated with the educators by phone and email to elicit their interest in the study. Out of the 20 educators we contacted, 12 were deemed suitable for the study. Alongside the Talanoa-interviews, we had opportunities to view some videos of their teaching, summaries of teaching evaluations, and in some circumstances, we were able to observe their teaching in action when the timing of the Talanoa-interviews coincided with the educator's teaching period. When we started the knowledge seeking, it was evident that these phenomenal educators were exceptionally busy people with heavy demands on their time.

We had developed a flexible Talanoa-interview schedule that allowed us to talk deeply around specific teaching moments. Some of the participants preferred not to be audio-recorded and during these occasions, we took extensive field notes, that we showed them at the end of the Talanoa so they could check over what we had written and/or make changes where necessary. The Talanoa-interviews were conducted in person in a private space, such as an office, in the park, or a teaching room booked for the purpose.

Educators were asked:

From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners

What phenomenal practices do you use that produce great Pacific student learning outcomes?

Students' Talanoa

Using our educational networks, we sent out an e-flyer through email and social media to let students know the timing of the Talanoa sessions. Fifty-six students participated in the Talanoa. Three Talanoa groups (one in the South Island, and two in the North Island) were held with students who were studying in a range of institutions and courses. The sessions were held during the day at a space booked specifically for the Talanoa, and students arrived at 10am and left at 12pm. Lunch was provided for the students, to acknowledge their time and to reinforce the Talanoa value of respect and relationship. Students were given a koha/gift for their time, a book voucher.

The Pacific backgrounds of the students were: Samoan, Tongan, Tokelauan, Cook Island Māori, Solomon Islander, Papua New Guinean, Niuean, Fijian, and Tuvaluan. Their age ranges were between 18-54 years of age. Twenty-two of the students were female, eighteen identified as male and sixteen chose not to identify their gender. Students studied across PTEs, universities, polytechnics, wānanga, and adult community education. Fifteen of the 56 students were studying in postgraduate education. Students were asked:

"Have you had a phenomenal educator?" "If so, what did they do that was phenomenal and why?"

Coding and Analysis

Student talanoa data were coded using NVivo 10 (QSR) software. As we were analysing the data, we used an open-ended process in the initial coding cycle and looked mainly for emerging patterns that were linked to the research questions, which in turn were developed from the research objectives. During the second cycle, we further refined the material and began to sort the patterns into broader categories and themes. In the third cycle, we checked data that had not been previously sorted and identified outlier material. The findings presented in this report are drawn primarily from the first and second coding cycles. For the Talanoa-interviews with the educators, we crafted the stories to represent their true essence as much as possible.

Design

In this phase of the study, we developed a Kato/basket titled 'From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners'. This Kato was built from the key learnings and results from the VARK questionnaire, best evidence synthesis, Talanoa discussions, observations, and the case studies. As we developed this Kato, we used an informal network of educators to co-design and check the accuracy of our data interpretation.

From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners

The 10 Habits that the Kato covers are:

1) Fenua: The Pedagogy of reflection;
2) Moana: Know your Pacific learner and context;
3) Vaka: Educate with Phenomenal Pacific-centric methods;
4) Le Teu le Va: Building teaching and learning relationships with Pacific learners;
5) Ola: Develop Phenomenal practices;
6) Teatea: Motivation and good work habits;
7) Aupuru: Cultivate creativity and enthusiasm;
8) Putuputu: Construct a Pacific learning community;
9) Arofa: Enable mentoring to be a natural part of your teaching and manage the 'wobbles' that arise;
10) Ti'ama: Deconstruct and emancipate your Pacific learner's experiences.

Destiny

The Destiny phase explores what could be done to ensure that our Kato is practical. In this phase, when the Kato has been fully completed, we will develop a professional development programme for tertiary and adult learner educators and key stakeholders on how to work best with Pacific learners. This national development programme will start in our own institutions (the Faculty of Education at Victoria University of Wellington, and the professional development unit at Weltec and Whitireia New Zealand). We will then evaluate the uptake of the programme, the changes staff make to their teaching, and the impacts on students. Based on the evaluation, we will make improvements to the programme and then offer it nationally.

Limitations of Our Study

Participants in this study were recruited from people within our own educational networks. As a way of extending the regional, disciplinary and institutional range of the sample groups, we used snowball sampling techniques. This gave us the opportunity to include participants in the study who we did not know personally. Snowball sampling (or referral sampling) is a method that begins with non-probability convenience sampling whereby a research participant is asked to recommend or name another prospective participant, who then offers the name of another prospective participant and so on. The number of participants grows like a snowball. This is a form of chain sampling that is useful in studying hard-to-reach people and can provide considerable insight into social networks that are not easily accessed by outside researchers. One limitation of snowball sampling is that the reliance on referrals increases the possibility that individuals may be excluded if they are not members of networks. We observed this limitation operating in this study. We noticed that in some instances, phenomenal educators were not part of our Pacific networks. Therefore, we acknowledge this limitation.

Another limitation in our study, is that we were not able to locate a phenomenal educator who specialised in online or distance learning. Therefore, the findings may not be exactly relevant to these domains of learning.

We also point out that we did not focus on ethnic-specific Pacific data for this study and we acknowledge this as a limitation. We also acknowledge that we have not focused on more detail for Pacific groups such as people with disabilities or LGBTQIA people.

Summary of Methods

The main sections of the methodology are:

Discovery

- VARK Questionnaire on Pacific learners' learning style preferences
- Best evidence synthesis of the Pacific tertiary literature

Dream

- 12 case studies of phenomenal educators
- Talanoa group discussions with Pacific learners

Design

- Kato: From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific learners

Destiny

- Dissemination of the Kato combined with a professional development programme

The Phenomenal Educators

As each story of a phenomenal educator is read, a hashtag(#) is positioned in front of the title (e.g. #The Pioneer-Educator). We decided to use the hashtag as a means of thinking about future ways to increase exposure about what makes educators 'Phenomenal'.

#The Pioneer-Educator

The use of the term 'Pioneer-Educator' is in reference to developing, or being the first to use or apply, a new teaching method, area of knowledge, or activity. As knowledge seekers we start with the Pioneer-Educator, because much of Pacific education in Aotearoa New Zealand has been carved out by our pioneers who migrated to New Zealand. Many of the phenomenal educators in the Pacific community are women who have worked tirelessly on the frontline of the community. This is also part of the migration story. Our exemplar story is about Anita, who was the youngest child in the family.

Anita, the Pioneer-Educator, came to New Zealand from the island of Niue at a very young age and was thrust into marriage with a man who was 15 years older than her. Everything she learnt about New Zealand life was from him, and she had to learn very fast about New Zealand culture and everything that came with it. This meant it was about the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. She raised her children on her own for long periods of time as her husband was usually away working on a ship. By default, both of the parental roles, both mother and father, rested heavily on her shoulders. She worked as a cleaner, and when her husband was away, she had to take her children with her. While cleaning and emptying bins she taught her children to work hard. This was instilled into all her kids from a very young age.

After years of cleaning at a local college in the evenings and early mornings, Anita spotted an advertisement in the newspaper about a qualification, the Early Childhood Education Teaching Diploma. Her initial dream of becoming a nurse had been put on hold as she needed to earn money to survive and put food on the table for her family.

She enrolled in the Diploma, and after a successful journey of study, Anita joined the ground-breaking cohort of Pacific women who were the very first to obtain their Diplomas in Early Childhood Education, in Wellington, New Zealand. It was not easy; there were often times of frustration during her learning, particularly about a theorist called Jean Piaget. She struggled to understand how this French theorist was even relevant to her Niuean world, as well as trying to understand all the big "palagi" words (New Zealand European). But she persevered with her study, aiming to learn "palagi" words and thoughts, and the ways of the Early Childhood sector.

Anita became a significant and vocal advocate for her children, and other children, to learn about their Niuean culture. Teaching and learning was important in the home environment. She would use the Niuean language with her own New Zealand-born children. To highlight the Niuean culture and language, Anita and some of her colleagues formed the very first Niue Language Nest in Wellington. Back in the 1980s it was uncommon to have a Pacific female, let alone a Niuean female, who was an early childhood teacher. Anita and her colleagues were the exception to the rule. They were the pioneers of community education for children.

Their vision was simple, teaching and education was about the nurturing of young Niuean children engaging in Vagahau Niue/Niue language. As a result of the development of the language school, parents became part of the transformative educational journey with their children. As an empowering tool and process, Anita and other teachers encouraged young mothers to come on the journey of learning Vagahau Niue with their own children. It was a way to reconnect the New Zealand-born Niuean mothers with their traditions, values and identities. This was education at the grassroots. It was about the people and challenging the status quo of the English language.

There were many successful outcomes of the nest; one of the successes was that two of the parents who attended the language nest with their children went on to study to become early childhood education teachers. Following this, their own children became teachers, teaching Vagahau Niue to the next generation of young Niuean children. As a pioneer educator, Anita was instrumental in having a vision; she took risks and used her courage as a young migrant woman to develop a centre that had ripple effects for the next generation of Niueans. Even though English was not her first language, nor New Zealand her birth country, Anita used her passion for the language as a way to develop a model of education that suited the needs of the Niuean community in Wellington. She knew what was required for her people.

Anita is now retired, but being a phenomenal educator does not mean that she has to stop teaching. She continues to teach her grandchildren the language, as well as others who are keen to learn Vagahau Niue. Anita's past students often refer to her lessons as engaging, interesting, accessible, and easy to learn for people with limited knowledge of Vagahau Niue. In 2018, she continues to teach young adult learners Vagahau Niue. She maintains her passion as a phenomenal educator at the 'young age' of 70 years!

Anita is the phenomenal Pioneer-Educator.

#The Contextual Educator

Na'i is a Tongan lecturer who has worked in polytechnics and a university for over 25 years. She is an educator who works around the clock in her local community. She runs youth groups and after-school homework centres for parents and students. Na'i speaks with passion and love for her Pacific community and people in New Zealand. This is a major driving force for her as an educator. She works for an equitable education system. Na'i announces to me that she prides herself on always developing a strong and solid rapport with all of her students. For each course that she coordinates at the university she ensures that her lecture room reflects her own teaching philosophy. She calls this attention to place-based learning. But rather than book the marae for her lectures, Na'i makes use of spaces within the university. She mentions that university educators teach in atypical lecture rooms. Some of the more antiquated lecture rooms are like halls that seat hundreds of students.

"This is cold distance" – the phrase she uses to describe the lecture room.

Na'i works with the timetable and room administrators at least a year before the course is set in the system. She makes sure that she has a flat or one-level lecture room to teach in. She says that in her experience, polytechnics are more familiar with flat classrooms, but universities still have big lecture halls. The point is that she believes that classrooms encourage and facilitate a relationship of equality between her and her students.

Na'i states that in her experience, in large sized university classes, Pacific students will usually gravitate towards the back of the lecture room.

"There are several issues with sitting in the back row."

She believes that sitting in the back row does not facilitate effective learning or teaching. Students will be distracted – observing other students on their laptops or cell phones or just staring at the back of people's heads. In some ways, students turn off as they are located far away from their lecturer. Choosing a flat-floored classroom is not the only consideration for this educator. In planning for her teaching year, Na'i ensures classes are set at convenient times of the day, especially for her Pacific students. She is based at an inner-city campus and she knows the majority of Pacific learners live at home with their families in the suburbs. Some of the students have responsibility for caring for younger family members before school starts in the morning while older family members are at work.

> "...you know our students cannot make a class at 8am, or 9am. Many of them look after their families, their siblings. And for many of them they have to travel in to the city by bus, train and bus again. Being in the Humanities department means that they have to come up from the train station. It's not the same for Commerce students who can go to their classes right next to the station. We have to factor these points into our

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timetabling. You know, all of this impacts on them, on our teaching – it will make a difference to their participation and access to the university."

Early morning classes are not suitable for many Pacific students or their families and communities. Na'i goes on to say that educational organisations need to be made aware of the contextual challenges for students. She believes that educators need to be conscious of the realities of Pacific students as it is not an even playing field. Not every student has the same cultural capital, and phenomenal educators understand this and they make sure their teaching and classes reflect these fundamental differences. It is evident that Na'i's connection to the Pacific community enables her to know about the financial and social conditions of the students. But she points out that such knowledge is learnable – especially for educators outside such Pacific circles. There are ways to gain this insight, and much of it comes from talking to other Pacific staff (general and academic), as well as the liaison staff who go out to recruit students from selected schools.

> "Lecturers can get into schools on these visits and learn from the school. Get into it. Gain the exposure and learn. Its ako! Learn! Step outside of your comfort zone, your neighbourhood."

Na'i emphasises the notion of reciprocal learning or ako. The educator must be open to learning about Pacific people and their lives. This generates authentic relationships and processes of learning together. It allows educators to build and develop their teaching philosophy, even if they have never had formal educator training. The best way to learn is being connected with people, being interested in their lives. She indicates that a teaching philosophy is the overarching framework of how teaching and learning is for learners, and, specifically, Pacific learners.

#The Reflective Educator

"Hello, I am Tobias. I don't perceive myself to be a phenomenal educator. But I have a commitment to students to be the best educator for them."

This opening line from Tobias demonstrates his clear ethos as an educator. He is in his twenties and works with adult learners in the community. Many of his students are of Pacific ethnicities but there are a considerable number of other learners who are from diverse backgrounds.

> "I am a Pākehā. I was born in the central South Island region. I was brought up in a rural community. Pretty white as someone would describe it!"

Tobias talks about how he left his farm home for university studies. But he did not complete his degree.

> "I was immature and lacked the preparation for independent learning."

He decided to take a year overseas working in the Australian outback and he says that this built the maturity into him.

> "I connected deeply with an Aboriginal community and it was there that I learnt how to be an educator."

He talks about how one family that he became very close to invited him to stay with them for a month. It was the quiet nights and sitting in the dark, under the moonlight, listening to the stories of the family and the elders that he attributes his learning to.

> "We talked till the early morning. And quite simply, that is where I became the reflective educator."

Me: "Tobias, who is the reflective practitioner?"

Immediately, his eyes light up.

> "Well let me reflect on that important question," he says, as he laughs.

> "Growing up in rural New Zealand – it was always about the individualistic culture. I hardly saw or met people from different cultures. We were Pākehā, through and through. My family and I only interacted with other Pākehā people who looked like us and spoke like us. They were wealthy people too, like us. I didn't even know how to say hello in Māori. Being reflective means that I have to know who I am and where I came from, in terms of my background. Because all of that influences me as an educator."

Tobias discusses how Pākehā people who are his age, regularly say that they do not have a culture. He adamantly disagrees with this idea. Tobias' experience in outback Australia with the Aboriginals led him to see how distinctive differences existed between himself and his Aboriginal host family. These were not negative

differences, but differences that were to be embraced and provided him with clear insight into how people lived and learnt things about the world.

> "Living is learning and learning is living. Simple, right?"

Tobias teaches adult learners in a community organisation. Upon returning from his overseas experience, he decided to take up teaching English as a second language. He obtained a community liaison role alongside the teaching role. When we look at Tobias' student evaluations of his teaching, it is evident that they love his classes and they attribute their educational success and learning to Tobias.

Tobias firmly believes that he must be a reflective educator. He has a diverse group of students every year who come from a list of diversity: migrants and refugees, and those from different ethnic groups, socio-economic backgrounds, religions, and ages. He firmly believes that because his students have so much global knowledge and skills, that he must be reflective.

What is reflective, in practice?

"Reflective means that I am open to seeing learners for who they are. I can't just expect that the students will get this."

At this point, Tobias picks up a hefty ring binder containing English as a second language content.

> "I have to adapt my teaching to the needs of my students."

He also reflects on his own background and reminds himself daily that his default lens of living is westernised, and that his students may not share the same cultural base. Tobias points out that reflection requires a high level of honesty, that is, being honest about whether his teaching method on any given day is of benefit for the class. He consistently asks his class to provide feedback about his teaching processes; about whether they have learnt anything from the content and whether they understand the material. He says this is not compulsory for the students to do, but a box is placed at the back of the classroom and any written feedback can be placed there, confidentially. He giggles: "Lots of my students write their names on the feedback – we have such special relationships, that we are all pretty honest with one another."

After each class, Tobias grabs himself a cup of tea and reads through the feedback. He says that this is not about having a break, it is about taking the time to appreciate his classes, and his students' ideas. This is a reflective and grounding process for him. He comments that this feedback, in the most informal sense, enables him to be a stronger educator. He does not take personal offence to any criticism. The feedback becomes part of his pedagogical Kato.

> "In this way, I am being a current and more knowledgeable educator. I teach to the contexts of my students. Simple as!"

#The Creative Educator

"I am a creative type of teacher. Creative in the sense that I design ways of learning to stimulate people's skills and talents – whatever these might be."

As a university lecturer, Reina sees that the main form of assessment in New Zealand universities is writing essays.

> "Essays. 2,000 words. 3,000 words. 5,000 to 10,000 words at the post-graduate level. Essays prioritise the English language. Important for some, yes. But this is not the only way to assess knowledge, especially that of Pacific students. Assessments should definitely be creative and not just in education or humanities. Pacific learners come from cultures where knowledge is presented in non-written forms, mostly. Take the process of tatau – or traditional tattooing. The whakapapa of one's family, and lineage, is represented in every symbol, every mark on the body. Now, that's stunning knowledge – it goes back through the generations. Can't find those stories in a textbook."

In the beginning years of her first course, she was committed to a major form of assessment that exemplified Pacific knowledge systems. The mode of assessment was the foundational method for her first-year university course. Students were encouraged to respond to a question, as if they were answering a typical essay question. With a 70-80% Pacific student population in her class, she taught her students to look at themselves and within their cultures. They were encouraged to include their families, via Talanoa or conversation, to discover and learn about their Pacific stories. They were directed to apply culture to their learning. In response to the research question, the students would present to an audience – and, in the early days, this was in a community library. An open invitation was extended to families, friends and any interested members of the students' local communities. Dissemination of Pacific knowledge was also about the greater purpose of raising consciousness for Pacific people. Topics that had currency in challenging the Western world. For example, nuclear testing in the Pacific, the Mau movement, Polynesian Panthers and the Dawn Raids, were some of the topics that students selected. It was about the heart and the passion for learning.

The method of engaging in an oral presentation and drawing out Pacific knowledge gave the students ways to dig deep into their own unique traditional values and beliefs. It was a process of challenging the typical western essay writing assessment that has been the standard method for decades in university education systems. Essays reinforce written knowledge. Students who were not of Pacific ethnicity were also immersed in another unfamiliar knowledge system. It challenged their perspective of the way they viewed the world. Reina sees that this form of cultural and creative assessment is critical for her course, as she teaches about the Pacific. Reina is adamant that she has a clear vision for her course, and for the assessments, to meet that vision.

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The vision extends beyond the course and is also about advocating for Pacific people in human rights' issues, for example.

She provides meaningful feedback to her students. She sets up a panel of creative colleagues to support the process of giving feedback on their assessments, so that it is an objective process. She designs formative and summative feedback to engage her students and as a way to build a relationship.

> "It is reinforcing their learning and keeping them in contact with me over the course."

Reina encourages the students to talk to her face-to-face about their assignments. Sometimes, she meets with students in small groups outside lecture and tutorial times. She uses assessment results to feed into processes for the improvement of the course as well. If something is not working or if students do not enjoy the assessment, she tries new methods. As a creative person and educator, Reina is not afraid to take risks. She is often described as open-minded. Her creative connections with people in the creative industry also supports her development of innovative ideas and teaching strategies. She bounces ideas off of her colleagues and students.

> "I want students to learn from one another."

This comment shows one of the philosophical principles about her course, and it is made clear from the start. In the first class, students have to sit on the floor in a circle, then they remove their shoes, and move one space to the right. At this point they are facing another student's shoes. Reina asks the students to stand in the shoes that they see in front of them.

> "I challenge the students at the first class. They have to feel it. Not just sit in a lecture room. They have to move beyond their own comfort zones. The students laugh mostly, but they get it and it quickly builds a relationship amongst them."

For Reina, the creative element is always about extending to the community. She is known for bringing in some of the biggest names in the Pacific creative world, as guest lecturers or panellists. They deliver lectures in creative modes. Poetry, dance, plays, activist speeches are just some of the variety of teaching that the students get to enjoy. The attendance rate is high and usually the students bring other friends to the class, to learn and enjoy.

> "I love being creative, and my students flourish in their Pacific creativity."

#The Respectful Educator

My name is Stevie. My cultural upbringing has imbued in me the value of respect in relationships with other people. My parents raised me with the understanding that I should never consider myself as being superior to anyone else. I would be expected to treat a cleaner with the same respect as my manager at work. Everyone was to be treated with equal respect. To earn people's respect, you must display respectful behaviour toward them, regardless of their status or position. The value of respect has been significant in my life and I have made it one of the foundations that I operate on in my personal and professional life.

I use the value of respect in my teaching. For values to be truly shared they must be deeply supported beliefs about what is important to the people who hold them. Other people may have a different meaning for the word 'respect' based on their culture's processes. Respect may also be related to hierarchy; for example, in Fa'asamoa culture, respect is shown by the younger members of a family serving the older members food and drink. My case study will show how respect is important in the development of a teaching relationship.

Dr Joe was my primary teacher, a person who had a positive influence on my life, and encouraged me to grasp new opportunities. As I became more involved in experiences that built my skills and confidence, I was keen to take some of my own learnings and share these with the people around me, through my teaching.

An example of this is provided by Lauaki's story. Lauaki was a student in my undergraduate class when I tutored in the School of Education Studies. We knew each other through various student activities and as friends. Then Lauaki's father passed away. This life-changing moment for Lauaki was an experience that connected us more. It was clear to me that she needed support to get over her father's death and encouragement to continue her studies. While I was Lauaki's tutor, our relationship was also based on respect for one another. In the previous year my father had also passed away. We were able to share our stories of loss and this unified us. Lautaki went on to successfully complete her studies.

It was not until later on that I found out that I had had a significant impact on Lauaki. She was speaking to a Masters class about her learning journey and began with a personal story. She explained how one moment changed her life. She related how she and I were sitting on the stairs looking out into the rain, and I asked her what she wanted to do with her life. She said she did not know. I said, "You should think about postgraduate studies as an option." She said that she had never thought about pursuing postgraduate study, and that this was the turning point for her.

Our mentoring relationship continued during Lauaki's postgraduate study. We were also friends who shared a common interest outside the university context. Within the university context we established a mentoring relationship with one another, and other Pacific students. Through the mentoring process, advice, knowledge, and experiences were shared. Lauaki became a tutor in education

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courses, attended international conferences in Vanuatu and Fiji where she was a co-administrator, and also presented academic papers. Lauaki took the initiative to help others, and she would often discuss this with me. She talked about potential issues or challenges that were occurring and how to find solutions. In these discussions she asked for advice to enable her to create an informed solution. Lauaki was showing initiative as a young leader. The relationship between Lauaki and I was a good example of a relationship being built up over several years and over a range of different experiences.

I have developed similar significant teaching and learning relationships with others. Being a lecturer has allowed me to turn opportunities into positive experiences and initiatives for individuals.

The position of lecturer assumes a teacher-student relationship where the lecturer is facilitating the learning of knowledge and skills by the student. However, I have firmly held to my principles and values that a lecturer can also supply opportunities that are typically above and beyond the 'normal' teacher-student relationship within a tertiary institution. Therefore, while I facilitated students learning to fulfil their degree requirements, I also deliberately provided experiences that they may not necessarily have had in other tertiary institutions or programmes. The inspiration to do this was based on my own experiences as a post-graduate student.

"Overall, it has made me a better educator."

#The Passionate Educator

Passion cannot be faked. Passion is a motivational factor that affects the performance of both educators and students. It drives the teachers to achieve better student outcomes. Passionate educators create an effective learning environment and increase the learning potential of Pacific students. Ardie is a Pākehā educator at a private training establishment, who is described by his colleagues as passionate. He is always giving his best effort to grow, improve and help his students to succeed. He constantly works hard and does everything possible to improve his own teaching skills, including putting in longer hours. Ardie radiates a positive attitude. Instead of seeing problems in students, he always tries to find strengths and solutions. He sees diversity as a strength. He ensures that he has a solid knowledge and understanding of Pacific cultures and people by immersing himself in a wide variety of experiences in local Pacific communities. This might be anything from attending Pacific food festivals, to attending church services and sporting events that involve Pacific people. Ardie is well-known for supporting the extra-curricular events of the students in his classes. He believes that he has, and keeps, an open mind about any challenges or opportunities for Pacific students. Ardie loves working with Pacific learners. His eyes light up as soon as he starts talking about his experiences with them. He states that educators who truly love working with students are much harder to find than most people think.

As an educator, Ardie demonstrates and exemplifies confidence when he is teaching. In his class he is a master of the subject and has a deep knowledge of the course material. This is clear through both his delivery and the PowerPoint slides he uses. The slides are not text-heavy as he uses mainly photographs and images, that he talks about with a high level of confidence. Connected to his confident teaching approach is his understanding about what motivates his students. He spends time with Pacific learners, talking about their interests, as he is aware that each student has a different set of motivators.

> "Sometimes it's an internal drive – you know the motivation to do well. Sometimes the motivation is focused on being the best they can be for their families."

These conversations allow Ardie to know all of his students, and not only by name. As an example, when Samoan students talk about serving their community as one of their external motivators, he takes this into account when developing his course and teaching programme. He might invite family members, friends, and community people to an evening where the students can display some of the building projects that they have created for their assignments. Ardie is passionate, and he is not afraid to show it. He clearly loves what he is teaching.

The students state that Ardie is always ready in class, waiting for everyone to arrive.

> "That's respect, too!"

The students' evaluations point to the skill that Ardie can energise a classroom without difficulty and achieve it with passion and perseverance. Attendance in class is not compulsory, but Ardie experiences a 95% attendance rate in classes on most days. Students complete his course, and they achieve excellent results.

> "I think that passion fuels passion in a subject and in the career. Students want to be motivated. They don't want to spend an hour on a bus, to come to class and get bored outta their brains. I have to make it (the topic) connect to them as well."

The Pacific students acknowledge his passion that is demonstrated through his behaviour and energy. He is constantly smiling and shows he is outwardly happy. Another significant feature of Ardie's passion for teaching is that he teaches longer than the allocated time of the class. After class, he spends quality time talking with the students, usually about the topic that he has just taught in the lesson. I noted that the students appear to respect Ardie more because of his passion both for teaching and for them. Their presence in classes and engagement with him are heart-warming to witness. The passion also extends beyond the teaching. Ardie brings in industry employers throughout the course, so that Pacific students can be mentored into specific employment. This takes time, preparation and commitment on his part. Outside of the institution, he is on the phone or visiting potential employers before the teaching year begins.

> "It's not really part of my job, but who cares. What is the point of teaching students in tertiary, if we can't get them jobs as well? Got to do it!"

As a passionate educator of Pacific learners, Ardie is distinguished by his commitment to their achievement. Commitment is an essential element of Ardie's successful teaching. He is concerned with the development of his Pacific students and he keeps students learning. Ardie is hands-on in the teaching space, and works in small groups as much as he can. The students say that he cultivates their interest in learning. He provokes them with stimulating questions, and shows them examples of buildings that are relevant to their own background, such as designs of Pacific fale/houses. When he shows his commitment to students' learning, they feel motivated. As a committed educator, he aims to recognise and fulfil his responsibilities to his students. Notably, the student evaluations of Ardie often describe him as "loyal" – that is a trait that students do not usually use to describe their teachers.

> "As a teacher, I am engaged in my profession and I am committed to Pacific students and their learning."

#The Connector Educator

Carli is an educator at a polytechnic. She excels at developing connections with the Pacific communities that her students are involved with. Her connections are ongoing, authentic and appreciated by students.

> "Relationships are vital for Pacific people. It is the blood for so many of our cultures. Collectively our values are dependent on the relational lives we have held for generations."

Carli states that as an educator, building connections with communities is only one part of her teaching pedagogy. These connections are made to enhance her own awareness and recognition of her Pacific students. She continually comes back to this being about knowing her learners. Knowing her learners is not just confined to what makes them tick in the classroom, but part of it is about the ground work that she does before her teaching semester begins. This ground work is critical, because of the diversity of Pacific people and the evolving identities of young Pacific people. She gets involved with institutional orientations with new students and their families. She is involved with Pacific orientation weeks and also makes sure she knows what schools the students have attended. Through attending these orientations, the students start to see who she is as a potential contact or as their tutor on their courses. She says, "I am putting a face to a name." This is a necessary step in the relationship building, even before classes start. Pacific students have talked about how isolating it can be to study in tertiary education. They express that they sometimes feel like the only brown Pacific face in the classroom. Carli believes that the presence of Pacific staff at the polytechnic helps the students to overcome their fear of isolation and disconnection.

> "I have heard students say how invisible they feel."

Carli says that parents, and extended family members, are welcomed by the staff of the institute at orientation, and Carli ensures that she also introduces herself to them. As she can speak Samoan, she finds it a useful tool to connect with Pacific students and families. She says that sometimes she already knows members of the Pacific communities, but this is not always the case. She informs me that she thinks she does not fit the Pacific stereotype of someone who goes to church every Sunday and comes from a big family. She wants this point to be made clear for the study because she has heard staff saying, "Oh it's easy for you Carli to make connections with the Pacific community because you go to church and you are Samoan." Carli believes this is an excuse, and these ideas can make Pacific people take on stereotypical roles. She notes that she has to work very hard to build connections and relationships. Such commitment is made outside of teaching hours, and she is not paid for it. She terms these hours as the invisible hours. During these hours, she spends time talking to students individually and getting to know them.

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"I get to know them, what makes them tick. I get to find out a bit more about some of their families and challenges in life too."

Through this process of building connections, Carli has become well-known at the institution, and students who are not in her classes often come to talk to her or ask her for advice.

"My knowledge of them and of the polytech allows me to connect up the dots. I can take students to support services if they need help. Or sometimes, we just talk about their day-to-day lives."

For Carli, being the connected educator means that her lessons are taught in culturally meaningful ways. Her discipline is nursing and much of the scientific content is usually presented through the western lens. She provides examples of these concepts in traditional Pacific ways and notes that this knowledge is not written in textbooks. She will also ask her parents or members of the community to help translate some of the terms into Pacific-centric terms, using the Pacific languages.

"I see students really connect with the material more deeply. It is cool."

Carli's connection extends beyond the polytechnic, and she has developed relationships with significant leaders of churches and Pacific groups. Her reasons for this are based on community needs. They look to Carli to support their younger youth who end up disenfranchised in the school system. Carli finds ways of creating pathways into education so that the younger Pacific generation do not end up without focus, on the streets or unemployed.

"I also educate members of the community about what it means to be a tertiary student. You know of course many of these students are the first in the family to attend some form of tertiary education and they just have no idea of what that entails. The long days. Financial costs of the student loan. Independent learning. Freedom. All of this can be a minefield for many families to get their head around."

Carli also connects with support services in her institution. As a tutor, she takes a holistic view of support, ensuring that a wrap-around approach is taken. By this she infers that Pacific learners have histories where they have experienced major challenges or come from families that are unable to support them as students. The concept of the village comes up and this is evident in her classroom – where there are places for students to meet support staff who visit regularly, an accessible kitchen with supplies, access to computers and printers (for free), and social support information.

"Connection goes beyond the knowing of names – if we are true in the sense of being an educator, we have to do it right."

#The Mentor Educator

This educator wanted her story to be presented in first person, "I", with no pseudonym.

I am a university educator. I focus my attention on building individual's confidence and growth as they take on each challenge. It was clear, that if I encouraged individuals to use their strengths as much as possible, this would help them and the group to grow. Paying attention to people's strengths is key in mentoring relationships. Sharpening their existing skills is necessary, as well as encouraging their positive qualities. After the mentor has developed a strong rapport and the mentee has gained confidence, then the weaknesses can be addressed, one at a time. My experience with small group mentoring was that constant encouragement to individuals was necessary, and beneficial, in getting them to understand that they had considerable potential and strengths in a variety of areas.

A story that exemplifies the point above is about one of the students in a group who I had initially thought of as being too quiet and shy to speak out in front of the group. From my past observations of her at the university, she preferred to listen and support other people from 'behind'. However, on an interpersonal level, she was very comfortable with individuals she knew relatively well. I encouraged her to take on the responsibility of moving the younger members of the group along. As she was of Samoan ethnicity, and a more senior member of the group, she could use her knowledge of Fa'asamoa (Samoan culture) to keep some of the younger Samoan individuals in line. I also encouraged her to speak up at our class meetings and take charge of group situations. It was important to mentor her one step at a time. Not overwhelming her, but taking small steps to enable her to grow is important in the relationship. Each process looks different and means something different to each mentee. Each mentee learns at a different pace during the process of mentoring.

It was important to provide praise when she was able to speak out and lead the group. An example of the mentee's ability to 'speak out' took place at a dance practice for the group. Some of the younger students were not paying attention to the dance teacher and were 'playing around' during the practice. She decided to take charge and told the students to behave themselves and pay attention to the dance teacher. This was something that she would not usually do. She had a lot of administration experience through working at the university and was also able to use her skills to help the group. For instance, I asked her to take on the group's travel plans, so she was able to use her excellent administration skills and knowledge to make the necessary bookings. During the student trip, she also exuded confidence in providing the necessary leadership to support the group. I found that this student, who was always willing to help because of her kind nature, was a leader waiting to be developed.

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As she was known as a quiet individual in different situations, other people had not encouraged her to look at herself as a leader. From my experience, the quieter individuals can exert more influence than those individuals who have the louder personalities. This was a key learning point for me as a mentor. Status, family position, and title, for example, can give you a position of leadership and responsibility, especially in Fa'asamoa. Those who do not receive this type of leadership and responsibility through hierarchical lines can be neglected and not encouraged to be people of influence.

When working with a small group of young people over a short period of time, the priority was on quickly developing a good relationship. Establishing rapport with the group members was also important during the group's formation and development. I developed relationships that were based on values such as honesty, trust, and respect. While the relationships varied from lecturer-student, friend-friend, and mentor-mentee, these three values (honesty, trust, and respect) were the ones that were widely shared. Rapport involved respectful behaviour to the other person, not using any status position, and never assuming that one was better than the other. Also, it was important to get to know the mentee well. Being genuinely interested in their life and showing positive regard has been invaluable in developing rapport and good relationships. Through building a good relationship with the group members, it was easy to identify their key skills and strengths. It was evident that the students put trust in me, and would come and talk if there were issues. The development of good relationships was an ongoing process in the planning of the trip. An important point to consider in mentoring, is that relationships change. Some relationships became stronger, and some became weaker. This was evident within this group process.

As everybody had busy lifestyles, with the pressures of family, study, church, work, sport, and other activities, it was not always possible to see everyone together. The strong relationships were with those individuals who I saw on most days of the working week. On occasions when we were having coffee or lunch together, we were able to take time to talk about the trip, and get to know each other better through the conversations. The face-to-face interaction was particularly important, as it was an appropriate and effective way to communicate, rather than through email. In my mentoring experience, the use of email is not the best form of communication. Ideas can easily be miscommunicated through email. Email messages are only really useful for communicating important information, such as meeting dates and times.

As a mentor, I facilitated the 'drawing out' of these factors to ensure that the student became aware of their strengths. For example, one person in the group was clearly good at public speaking and networking with other people. I encouraged her to utilise these skills in the various activities we organised, such as public performances, or engaging with sponsors to raise funds. Some of the students were not even aware they had special skills or talents.

This was more evident with females, as the males in the group appeared to be more confident of their key skills. Some of the students' strengths included having Māori cultural knowledge, being a good organiser, a confident communicator, an exceptional dancer, and an encourager of others. However, it was also necessary to set small challenges for the students; they were then able to use their skills/strengths to meet the challenge and to facilitate the group as a whole. An example of setting a challenge for an individual was with a young woman who was a confident communicator with small to medium sized groups. The group had organised a major fundraising concert, and the young woman was designated the role of Master of Ceremony (MC). Although she admitted her nervousness and anxiety, she took on the role and performed very competently as the MC. This experience gave her the confidence to overcome her fears about speaking to a large audience. She took on the challenge, and stepped outside her own perceived comfort zone.

In my experience, the insecurities an individual has about themselves come from within and may also possibly reflect other people's opinions. However, when a mentor highlights the strengths of the mentee, these perceived insecurities and negative thoughts will diminish. Once the mentee improves and they begin to overcome their self-doubt and insecurities, the mentor should ensure they continue to encourage and praise them as this will lead to further improvement. Students who are being mentored usually display positive attitudes and are interested in their progress. Sometimes they will ask questions such as: "How am I doing?", or "Do you think I'm making good, or not so good, progress?" It is important to have reflective conversations on a regular basis with students, for example, once a week, focusing on positive factors, rather than negative issues. In the mentoring process, it is also important to ensure that praise and encouragement is not overused, as it might appear less meaningful.

#The Growth Educator

Eli is a polytechnic educator. He developed a Leadership Cluster that was to take students' mentoring to a new and different level, to take them further in their own leadership development.

This is Eli's story:

When the group initially formed there was Dr Lui, myself, a postgraduate student from Papua New Guinea (PNG), and a Fijian student in the final year of completing his undergraduate degree. After a couple of meetings, two more students joined the group – a Fijian woman (who was in the final year of her teaching degree), and a Niuean woman studying for a postgraduate diploma. The student from PNG was a mature student who had been involved in the education sector in his own country. He studied here as a recipient of a NZAID scholarship; his wife and son also joined him in Wellington for the 2 years of his Master's degree. He termed himself 'the reluctant leader', as he had been pushed to be a leader. The Fijian student previously lived in Fiji, but came to Aotearoa New Zealand where he had settled in a provincial area to teach in a private primary school. He then decided to finish his engineering qualification. He was extensively involved with the Fijian community in Wellington and was a leader of the youth at his church. In the previous year, he had held the position of President of the Fijian Students' Association. Both these students were participants in our Pacific Students' Leadership Development Programme. The Fijian female student was the president of the Fijian Students' Association at the time of the Cluster meetings. She had been encouraged to attend the Leadership Cluster by the Fijian male student. The Niuean woman had been in a mentoring relationship with Dr Lui and myself for two years, and had been involved in various leadership initiatives and tutoring positions. Everyone in the Cluster had had different experiences of leadership, but were also very familiar with the overall style of encouragement and 'possibility making' with Dr Lui and myself.

At the Cluster meetings, we were encouraged to look closely at ourselves as leaders, and at the leadership activities happening around us. The group's vision was 'to be better leaders'. The shared vision for the Cluster allowed members to see and develop their potential.

We were all interested in leadership development as a way to enhance our personal and professional lives and to help one another through an appreciative process. Members were encouraged to discuss one good observation, and/or experience, about leadership that they saw around themselves. Thinking about and selecting a good leadership example provided a positive approach to the group discussion. The group was also encouraged to discuss a specific issue or challenge that they were facing in their own leadership. Sharing a leadership challenge enabled the members to learn lessons and provided insights into the challenge.

We were learning about leadership from the stories that we were discussing.

In order to help each other, each Cluster member provided a positive view on any challenge shared by any other member. The group was able to utilise their leadership knowledge and give an alternative perspective. This process enabled group members to think, learn, discuss, and grow together as a group. We were all keen to be better leaders.

As a Cluster, we decided to meet for an hour every three weeks. This timeframe was important; it gave us enough time to observe and engage in leadership activities, and provide us with experiences to draw on and discuss at meetings. I provided hot drinks and food for the Cluster, as sharing food demonstrates the communal nature of our Pacific cultures.

The format of a typical Leadership Cluster meeting was for the facilitator to set the scene for the group for the discussion and encourage everyone's participation. I took on the role as the main facilitator and organiser. I was able to draw on the understandings and learnings from my experiences of other education initiatives. As the facilitator of the Leadership Cluster, I was able to gain further experience of leadership development. In my role as a facilitator, I ensured that group members were reminded of our purpose and to think about an issue/challenge that they had been involved with or had observed in their leadership activities. We continually looked for positive stories and cases of leadership development to share. Through our discussion together as a group, we learnt to apply an appreciative perspective to ourselves. The stories and learning points provided specific enabling factors and principles for us as students of leadership to consider personally and also for our communities.

By drawing out the principles and key lessons through an appreciative framework, we were able to develop our own knowledge of leadership. As a group we provided advice and feedback to one another. It was important that we used an appreciative approach, so we were always focusing on the positive. We aimed to maintain a positive attitude and never applied a deficit perspective to any challenges that were raised. We found that we were able to successfully identify learning points from the challenges that were raised. Our discussions helped modify our personal attitudes; enabling us to be more positive about a particular situation. One of the students talked about how his perspective had changed when approaching problems, and of being more aware of the negative attitudes being expressed to him at his workplace.

Cluster meetings were not just about our mentoring process; as a group we engaged in activities that helped to enhance our own development. One initiative we took charge of was the organisation of a welcome event to mark the beginning of the NZAID Pacific Students' Leadership Development Programme. We worked together to organise and coordinate the evening and to engage the local Pacific community with the students who had come from around Aotearoa New Zealand to attend the leadership programme.

More importantly, we aimed to challenge ourselves, taking our own development to the next level. For example, the group member who had called himself 'the reluctant leader' partnered with a fellow Cluster member to co-host the evening as the Master of Ceremony. Initially, he wanted to have a less public role; but with constant encouragement, he willingly took it on. We all worked together in the initiative, that ensured we had a mentoring process in place. This meant that no one person worked in isolation for the event. Clear communication and an appreciation of one another were the two factors central to the way we worked.

On another occasion, three of the Cluster members were invited to be on a panel discussion for a postgraduate class. I was the facilitator and it was my role to organise and mentor the panel of students. Their primary task was to talk about their success as young Pacific students. For panel members, it was the first time they had spoken to a postgraduate class. Prior to the class, they were anxious but excited. One of the panel questioned what he had to offer a postgraduate class of mostly experienced educational professionals. It was clear to me that the panel members would need some encouragement. But it turned out they needed very little encouragement. Moreover, the panel was also involved in leadership as this activity was about challenging oneself and taking the lead to educate others about leadership development, and the experience of being a successful Pacific student. The panel shared their experiences and learnings on leadership development with the focus on exploring and understanding what was possible and what worked for Pacific students studying in tertiary education. The students talked about the influence of the Leadership Cluster on the direction of their lives and how it enhanced their university experiences. The class was encouraged to ask questions and challenge them on any point. These two experiences involving the Leadership Cluster in other leadership activities were important as they encouraged us to understand leadership further. We were also able to demonstrate the learnings we had gained in our Cluster discussions.

The Leadership Cluster was learning 'beyond the leadership textbook'. We were 'living the realities' of leadership and the appreciative discussions allowed us to consider leadership possibilities a lot more. We could have read more widely on leadership, but the group discussions proved more valuable as we were able to utilise an appreciative framework of dialogue. The facilitators of the Leadership Cluster always wrote notes after each meeting in order to collect the various ideas being discussed. The knowledge generated by the group assisted its members in their leadership practice. This was a strength; the reaffirmation of knowledge within a group of Pacific students. Furthermore, it was important for me as a mentor to provide specific learning opportunities for Cluster members, so they could experience leadership development.

#The Innovative Practitioner

Emma's innovative teaching methods make her a phenomenal educator. She says that she spends hours researching the most effective and innovative forms of teaching in higher education. She also looks for ideas in schools and alternative education centres. Her research covers a wide range of education, formal and non-formal. She states that it is important because higher education does not have a great diversity available. Her area of research most often covers indigenous ethnic teaching. Emma reckons that these areas provide methods of teaching that are outside the box and can be effective for Pacific students.

I ask "How do you start your classes?" She says she always tries to get to class before her students.

> "This sets a great example for them. Doing this also shows that I am being respectful toward my learners. I'm there, ready and waiting for them. Sometimes with music playing, and I greet them as they come in."

Emma makes sure her classroom is tidy. If she has a flat classroom, she organises the tables into groups for any activities or discussions.

> "It is all about making a real effort, showing this effort, and being consistent about it."

Emma usually plays music through the computer system – island music or a song related to the topic of her lesson. I ask, "What is the reason for playing music?"

> She says, "I sense that it adds to the positive and inviting culture of my room. First impressions are everything. Music can bring people together. A quiet room is somewhat uncomfortable. If a student is by themselves, at least there is no awkward silence around when there is music playing in the background."

She also believes that music forces students to speak over the sound of the music and it creates a bustling atmosphere because of all of the voices. In her first class of the trimester, Emma always introduces herself through her personal story.

> "I bring myself to the students. But I am careful to not overshare. I disclose relevant information, a bit about my background and a bit about my family."

This is a way of quickly developing rapport and trust with students. Sharing stories helps to generate connections and relationships. Emma shows some images about her background to the class, so that the students can have an idea of her identity. After her introduction, she invites each student to introduce themselves. In this way, she can start to learn names and connect the names to a face. Through this process, she can also initiate a quick conversation with students and start to build a relationship.

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Emma says her innovative practices are a way of keeping her students highly motivated and on their toes. Each lesson is different and she likes to use different modes of teaching every week. These can range from watching documentaries, visiting places, starting with a debate or pop quiz, using technology to engage in creating an argument, or requesting students to present in class.

> "I have to be innovative. My students are usually youthful. I teach youth development. Well, my work needs to reflect what they also do in the real world. This is where theory meets practice. Always keep it real and current, relevant to the industry."

She notes that her colleagues often find it difficult to understand what she does, but she encourages them to find their own way of being innovative. But she also shares her ideas and concepts so that her department becomes more familiar with what works for Pacific learners. This allows a community of educators to informally gather together to discuss the learning experiences of the students. Innovation in her teaching appears to encourage teachers and students to explore, research and use all the tools they can to uncover something new. It involves a different way of looking at problems and solving them.
Innovation improves education because it compels students to use a higher level of thinking to solve problems. An innovative practice that Emma is known for is her use of a co-participatory method. During her classes, Emma develops activities that give Pacific students the autonomy to develop other activities for students in the class, based on their cultural understandings. All students in the class have the opportunity to participate in the process. But she finds that for Pacific students it can be a process of decolonising their minds.

> "In most cases, Pacific learners are told what to do – in their homes, churches, etc. But when you, as the teacher, give them the power to make decisions – it really changes things. They grow their minds, gain new skills and confidence. It's awesome."

Emma is the Innovative Practitioner.

#The Creator-Educators

Julo and Iga. This case study is a combined story of Julo and Iga who are two educators who work together in a wānanga.

The creator is a person or thing that brings something into existence. What strikes me when I finally get to sit down with Julo is that she is more than excited to talk about education and her journey with Pasifika learners. I am taken aback by this woman who manages to juggle kids' sports practice, work full-time, participate herself in sports and ensure that everything in her home runs according to plan. Her day starts with a very early wake-up as her children attend school in the city, so the "school run" requires more time to sort out before going to work and teaching classes at a tertiary provider whose philosophy is based in Te Ao Māori. Teaching in a Te Ao Māori setting was not an issue for her as a Samoan, and she continues to push through the boundaries that were enforced since colonisation, placing "Māori" in one box and "Samoan" in another, when in reality Aotearoa New Zealand is an island in the Pacific Ocean. She admits she never wanted to be a teacher and that the thought of even being an educator had never crossed her mind. Julo has now completed her Masters in Education, but she explains that doing the programme happened by chance due to her friend who was studying for her Masters, so she decided to jump on board. She is very happy she ended up in her current teaching role, "I believe in serendipity and that I am exactly where I am supposed to be."

Julo pays tribute to her lecturers; explaining that she was late for her first day in class, due to her not knowing where the lecture theatres were at the university, and when she did finally arrive the lecturer said, "Oh, the Chinese are coming to study!" and, yes, she was offended. However, upon reflection, she felt she should not have been offended as this was typical Island humour. It made her determined to work harder. Gifted with a beautiful Samoan name, which is thought to be rather long by her non-Pacific colleagues, this same lecturer was the one who pronounced and said her full name properly. When speaking to her, or asking her questions, he would always refer to her by using her full name. This interaction made a lot of difference and thus a mutual respect was formed. She also refers to this lecturer as someone who challenged her in her work and studies, and it is because of these challenges that she applies this lens to her teaching.

Another lecturer whose teaching Julo found inspiring because she allowed her students to "think outside the box" and bring this creative inspiration to her classroom.

Julo and her husband Iga are educators who I deem to be Phenomenal Creator-Educators. They create strong bonds with their students and, more importantly, they create a classroom environment that encourages students and ensures they are excited about learning.

They also create assessments that are in line with the learning outcomes, but also ensure students are not getting lost in the curriculum being taught. One of these assessments directly connects into each student's culture – as students have to create a framework that comes from their own culture and show how, in essence, this framework will create wellness for the families and communities they will work with in the future.

Julo takes the lessons she learnt, and the examples her previous lecturers showed her, into her own classroom. She wants her learners to have the best experience when they are in a space that is "inviting" as well as "safe". From the outset, she informs her students that she has very high expectations of them and that she will challenge them every step of the way. In saying that she also explains that she aims to allow her students to "freely think" and therefore her assessments do have an element of creativity connected to them. When I asked her why, Julo says,

> "I want to teach them and I want them to be able to learn and express themselves in a way so that when they are writing the poetry does not die."

Students often come to Julo's classes with very little or even no writing experience at all. Teaching the Certificate in Social Services, Julo explains that the "writing is something students struggle with". So how does this Phenomenal Creator ensure that students can write? Firstly, Julo holds 'Write Nights' where students can come in the evenings and have allocated writing time.

She ensures that her lessons are thoroughly prepared and that she explains things thoroughly. She has at least two lesson plans available. The first one is the lesson she plans to teach; the second one is a back-up lesson plan, so if the first lesson doesn't go according to plan because, for example, things such as guest speakers not turning up, technology not working, and perhaps the need to move classrooms, which takes up time. Thus, she aims to ensure that her students are learning each step of the way. She teaches in a Noho Marae setting; students come there for block teaching that starts on Friday night, runs all day Saturday into the late evening, and then Sunday as well. Therefore she "needs to be prepared".

Julo works closely with her husband Iga, who is also an educator. Her husband was born and raised in Samoa before coming to New Zealand as a young adult. He has also just completed his Masters in Professional Practice. In 2014, the enrolments of males in their course was very low, so they both decided to connect with males they knew who were working in Social Services in their local community and would benefit from coming on board to learn more in order to improve their practice. Julo and Iga approached these men, built up good relationships and, as a result, they had an increase of over 60% in the number of males taking their course.

Furthermore, Iga started up the "Café Club for Dads" as they could see a great need for men to be able to be in their own space, to freely talk and discuss the issues they were experiencing, as well as providing encouragement for them to be even better fathers and partners. The men meet at least once a fortnight and have their time together. Iga has started his own Facebook page for dads where he demonstrates and does live posts of himself engaged in various positive activities, such as playing sports with his kids, singing songs, teaching and giving general life advice to the men who tune in. When I attended their class symposium for the end of year assessments, it was evident, from the tears, accolades, and words of thanks for Julo and Iga, that their students were very grateful and appreciative of the learning that they had experienced.

> As one student shared, "I wish that they could be shared with the world because their hearts are right where it matters the most – with our people."

Julo and Iga are both Phenomenal Creator-Educators.

Pacific learners' preferred learning styles

As part of our exploration with Pacific learners we were keen to ascertain how students viewed their own learning. We used the VARK questionnaire as it has a long history with learning organisations globally. We acknowledge that as a tool, it has roots in a western paradigm. Perhaps, future research studies can take the VARK questionnaire and adapt it to meet the needs of Pacific groups. Of the 135 student responses to the Visual, Aural, Read/Write, and Kinaesthetic (VARK) questionnaire, 54 of the learners were multimodal having a near-equal preference for each of the different learning modes.

Twenty-two learners had a single preference for the Visual (V) mode; this preference includes the depiction of information in charts, graphs, flow charts, pictures, film, and videos. Layout, whitespace, clear headings, patterns, designs and colour are important in establishing meaning. Learners with a strong visual preference are more aware of their immediate environment and their place in space.

Nine learners had a single preference for the Aural (A) mode; this mode describes a preference for information that is spoken or heard. Learners with this modality report that they learn best from discussion, oral feedback, asking questions, oral presentations, classes, tutorials, and talking with others.

Fifteen learners had a single preference for the Read/Write (R) mode; this preference is for information displayed as words, either reading or writing. It means that learners prefer books and handouts. In practice, they are keen to use quotes, lists, texts, books, brochures, handouts, manuals, email, mobile chat, texting, and discussion boards. They have a strong connection with words.

Thirty-five learners had a single preference for the Kinaesthetic (K) mode; in this mode, the learner prefers experiential and practical hands-on learning. The learner is connected to reality, either through experience, example, practise or simulation. It is often referred to as learning by doing.

According to Fleming (1987), these are the sensory modalities that are used for learning any information. During the processes of training, teaching, coaching or mentoring, VARK seems to reflect the experiences of our learners. It is important that there is some overlap between them. A learner can be a combination (multimodal) of VARK. For example, a learner may have a preference for using Visual and Read/Write (V and R), or Aural and Kinaesthetic (A and K) or all four (V, A, R and K).

Based on these findings, Pacific learners do not fit into one preferred mode of learning. However, the findings do indicate that Pacific learners have a varied approach in terms of how they learn.

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Pacific Students' Talanoa of their Experiences with Phenomenal Educators

The following attributes, skills and qualities of phenomenal educators were identified by the students when they were presented with the following key question during Talanoa: "Who is a phenomenal educator for Pacific learners and why?"

A phenomenal educator has the ability to develop authentic relationships

The most frequent response was that a phenomenal educator develops meaningful teaching and learning relationships with students, a response that was also evident in the Chu et al. (2013) Ako Aotearoa study. They are confident and able to build trusting relationships with students in order to create a safe, positive, and productive learning environment. Safe refers to a culturally safe space where students feel acknowledged and do not experience racist attitudes or discrimination in any form.

A phenomenal educator demonstrates respect to students

In a phenomenal educator's classroom, each student's ideas and opinions are highly valued. This educator creates a welcoming and warm learning environment for all the students. Students feel safe to express their feelings and, because of this, they also learn to respect and listen to other students. Student's Pacific names are pronounced correctly, and they are not typecast into stereotypes. First and foremost, they are respected as individuals who have diverse backgrounds. Respect from the educator is demonstrated by listening to students, looking after them, giving them time to be who they are, acknowledging their cultures, and using their languages.

A phenomenal educator creates a sense of belonging in their classroom

This educator provides a supportive and collaborative environment where students feel that they are an important and integral member of the class, and that they can depend on their educator and the other students in the class. A phenomenal educator is approachable, and builds rapport easily with the students. Students state that it is easier for the educator to foster belonging in smaller classes, rather than in large lecture theatres, though that isn't entirely impossible. Also, the educator providing kai/food at the start of a course facilitated a sense of community, togetherness, and belonging.

A phenomenal educator is warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring

This educator is approachable, not only to students, but to other staff on campus or in the educational organisation. They generally have a caring reputation, that is well known to many people. This is an educator whom students trust and know they can go to with any problems or concerns. Phenomenal educators possess good listening skills and take time out of their busy schedules for anyone who

needs them. They have time to take people out for coffee, or have a chat after class, to talk through what is going on in their lives.

A phenomenal educator sets high expectations for all students

Phenomenal educators know that their expectations greatly affect their students' educational achievement. They therefore communicate the expectation that their students will succeed, not fail. A phenomenal educator expects their students to succeed or define their own success. Pacific students need someone to believe in them. They need a wiser, older person to believe in their abilities, set the bar high and then create an environment where it is okay to fail.

A phenomenal educator has a love of learning and teaching

They inspire students with their consistent passion for education and for the course material. They are constantly renewing themselves as an educator to provide students with the highest quality of education possible. This continual learning and growth undertaken by the educator could be in the form of professional development workshops, working and living in the community and/or volunteering in the Pacific community. An example that came up regularly at the student talanoa was attending Pacific community events. This educator has no fear of learning new teaching strategies or incorporating new technologies into lessons, and always seems to be the one who is willing to share what they learned with their colleagues. Their love of teaching or passion for the work, includes commitment to students' success. To a student, this means a teacher should "always be willing to help and give time".

A phenomenal educator is a leader

Phenomenal educators focus on shared decision-making and teamwork, as well as on community building. They communicate to their students that leadership is for them by providing opportunities for each of them to assume and take up leadership roles. In some cases, these phenomenal educators have had prominent roles (e.g., youth worker, workshop facilitator, mentor, etc.) in the community that has enabled them to be phenomenal.

A phenomenal educator is adaptable

They are openly flexible and adaptable when a lecture or lesson is not working. They take time to pause in class, and observe the level of student attention and enthusiasm. This educator can change their teaching approach on the spot. This educator assesses their teaching throughout the lessons and finds new ways to present material to make sure that every student understands the key concepts.

A phenomenal educator works together with other colleagues

This educator asks for suggestions or help from other educators, graduate students, or staff. The people that they work together with are individuals who

share similar ways of working. They see this as a way to learn from their colleagues. A phenomenal educator uses constructive criticism and advice as an opportunity to grow as an educator.

A phenomenal educator maintains professionalism in all areas

This professionalism is exemplified in their personal appearance, organisational skills and preparedness for each day. Their communication skills are clear and exemplary, whether they are speaking with a student or a colleague. The respect that the phenomenal educator receives because of her professional manner is obvious to those around them.

A phenomenal educator has clear objectives

Students talk about phenomenal educators who are clear about their intentions for teaching and this is demonstrated in their teaching methods and curriculum. They have a plan and they are clear about their plan. Making a plan does not suggest that they have a lack of creativity in the curriculum, but rather gives creativity a framework in which to flourish.

A phenomenal educator has a sense of purpose and knows about motivation

Educators with a sense of purpose are clear about their teaching in class and day-to-day work. They are able to see the big picture and can ride above the hard and boring days because they have a vision for their subject area and the students who take their classes. Students also said that educators of this type are highly capable of engaging and motivating students to learn.

A phenomenal educator knows when to listen to students

A phenomenal educator actively listens to their students. They are genuine about their listening and are not distracted by outside disturbances such as text messages. They take the time to listen to their students either before, during or after class.

A phenomenal educator develops and demonstrates a positive attitude

Phenomenal educators have an upbeat mood, a sense of vitality and energy, and see past momentary setbacks to the end goal. Positivity breeds creativity. A positive educator is someone that students want to go to class to learn from.

A phenomenal educator has a sense of humour

The use of humour makes an impression. It tells students that their educator is real and can relate to their lives in some way. It reduces stress in a classroom, and provides periods of light relief when learning difficult and challenging concepts.

A phenomenal educator uses authentic praise

Students enjoy encouragement but state that it has to be real encouragement. They believe that there is no point to praising work when it is only 50% of what they are capable of. The praise can be communicated verbally or as summative or formative feedback on written work.

A phenomenal educator can take risks

Risk-taking is a part of the phenomenal formula. Pacific students enjoy seeing their educators try new ideas and methods in their teaching. This could be about stepping outside of the educator's comfort zone or trying out a method they have acquired through on-going learning. Some will also watch closely how an educator handles any challenges in their risk-taking.

A phenomenal educator is consistent

The notion of consistency infers that educators have integrity and they will follow through on their word with action. This allows students to rely on the educator when they are in need. This consistency is also evident in the educator turning up to class on time and replying to email or online questions in appropriate timeframes.

A phenomenal educator is reflective

Phenomenal educators take time to reflect on their methods, their delivery, and the way they connect with their students. Reflection is necessary to identify any weaknesses that can be strengthened with a bit of resolve and understanding.

A phenomenal educator enjoys their work

It is easy to identify an educator who loves their work. The students state that this type of educator emanates contagious energy. Even if it is on a subject like information technology, the subject comes alive with the educator's passion about the subject. If an educator does not love their work or subject, students state that it comes through very clearly during their teaching.

A phenomenal educator adapts to student needs and welcomes changes

A phenomenal educator can change or adapt their plans or course schedule to accommodate the needs of students. They can also change their classroom or assignments to keep students connected to the course. As students develop, teaching methods need to as well. This educator does so through their connections with students and knowing their students' learning needs.

A phenomenal educator takes the time to explore new tools

With the advance of technology, phenomenal educators can acquire new resources and tools that stimulate interest in their teaching and course curriculum. They are not afraid to push for technology in the classroom or use technology in their teaching. This educator supports students if they do not have access to technology and offers flexibility if students do not have the appropriate means.

A phenomenal educator knows how to provide student support

There are days when Pacific students will need support. This could be in the form of listening, counselling, or through giving advice. Phenomenal educators are usually well-connected to other support services in the educational organisation and/or wider community, and have a deep understanding of the purpose of the services. They will refer students to the relevant service.

A phenomenal educator is comfortable with Pacific cultures and people

Phenomenal educators are comfortable with Pacific students, people and their cultures. They are learned people who can create teaching environments that include Pacific learners, rather than exclude them. Being comfortable with Pacific cultures and people is about being aware of cultural protocols and values.

A phenomenal educator brings fun into the classroom

"Don't be too serious" is the overwhelming statement from Pacific students. Some days, "fun" should be the goal. When students feel and see an educator's humanness, it builds a foundation of trust and respect. Fun and education aren't mutually exclusive either. Using humour can make even the most mundane topic more interesting.

A phenomenal educator teaches holistically

Learning does not happen in a vacuum. The physical, spiritual, cultural and emotional all have a major impact on the educational process. It is important for students that educators (and the educational model) take the whole Pacific person into account.

A phenomenal educator never stops learning with Pacific students

Phenomenal educators find time in their schedule to learn alongside their Pacific students. Not only does it help bolster their knowledge about Pacific students but it also puts them in the position of a learner. This could be through the process of conversation and/or attending Pacific students' extracurricular events. This provides the educator with a perspective about the Pacific student's learning process.

A phenomenal educator is a master of their subject

Learn, learn, and never stop learning is the mantra here. Phenomenal educators know their own craft. In addition to the methodology of "teaching", they master their own subject area. Phenomenal educators stay current and a step ahead of others. How does this affect Pacific learners? Students believe that when educators are the master of their subject, that it infuses a passion for their teaching and this is continued in their desire for students to do well in their subject area.

Summary

Pacific students across Aotearoa New Zealand have a diverse range of learning styles and many enjoy a range of learning methods to suit their changing environments. The participants drew on their experiences of teachers and educators who stood out as phenomenal educators in their lives.

The Kato

About the Kato

Kato is a Niuean word meaning a handmade woven basket. In Niuean custom, the Kato is usually gifted between people. We decided to use the concept of the Kato for our educator's toolkit as it is about gifting change or transformation to the educator. The Kato or gift is a living and breathing thing. Pacific students want their educators to bring their Pacific cultures into the classroom and into their teaching, and to demonstrate 'phenomenal' teaching practices that are habitual. It is often said that habits are hard to break.

We hope that these habits of phenomenal educators will be hard to break!

Who is the Kato for?

This Kato was developed for tertiary educators and other educators who educate or teach Pacific adult learners in tertiary organisations (formal and non-formal) in Aotearoa New Zealand. Essentially, the Kato is for anyone who wants to be a better educator.

What is the Kato's purpose?

To support educators in planning and developing teaching and learning theory and practices for the success and development of Pacific learners we have identified the teaching and learning skills of educators that have benefits for effective teaching. Cultivating effective teaching and learning habits enables educators to be good learners and teachers.

How can I use this Kato?

The Kato is organised around a set of 10 Habits of phenomenal educators. They can be used in order from one to 10 or they can be used separately depending on what you need for your teaching. For example, you may want to focus on planning or reflection and awareness. The Kato can also be used as a "checklist" for identifying your teaching and learning needs as well as identifying the skills you already have.

The educational approach embedded in the Kato

The Kato starts from the premise that all Pacific students, regardless of their situation, have something meaningful to contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand society. It is important to enable Pacific students to participate in their courses by building their motivation; increasing their engagement and sense of belonging; providing them with opportunities; empowering them in their learning; reinforcing their capacities; enabling them to establish and maintain effective relationships; and enabling them to connect with Pacific learners, families, and communities in a Pacific-centric manner. An appreciative approach, grounded in transformative learning theory and practice, is crucial.

This Kato for educators includes developing:

- Knowledge about how to educate Pacific learners;
- Skills such as relationship building, understanding Pacific values such as respect, and effective cultural communication;
- Attitudes and behaviours that resonate with Pacific learners, such as respect for diversity and acceptance of others.

The appreciative approach of the Kato builds on the lived experience of Pacific learners. Our intention is to support the well-being of Pacific learners through authentic and meaningful learning experiences. We would like this Kato to create opportunities for growth between Pacific learners and their educators based on mutual understanding and respect; and to create cross-cultural understanding, opportunities, and events for students and educators to learn together.

When we provide Pacific learners with opportunities for growth, we create a stronger community overall.

Whatever your teaching situation, we offer this Kato to help you improve your practice and to inspire you to teach better, more effectively, and with greater self-awareness. Our goal is for you to achieve success with Pacific learners.

Strengths-Based Development

This section covers strengths-based approaches to working with people. The rationale for using this approach is that the strengths-based literature involving Pacific students shows that learning environments that foster individual's strengths, reflect nurturing and care, and centre on development of the person, result in academic achievement, student fulfilment, and continued positive outcomes.

Positive development of people

Humanistic theories of the early to late 1960s began to move away from the deficit reductionist view of the world. Drewery and Bird (2004) state that Abraham Maslow (1968) and Carl Rogers (1961, 1962) were the pioneers, and were coined 'new age' because they wanted to know more about potentialities rather than flaws. Central to both philosophies was the idea about what it meant to be human; a holistic view based on "maximizing human potential, self-direction, freedom of choice and holism" (Drewery & Bird, 2004, p. 281). They believed that people were more than just the sum of their parts, that they had to be viewed as a whole person. Maslow focused his work on his pyramid of human needs that defined the peak human experience as being self-actualisation. However, it could only be attained through the satisfaction of the lower levels. Rogers, who is considered influential in the discipline of counselling and client-centred practice (CCP), stipulated that one of the six conditions that must exist between counsellor and client to bring about positive development and personal growth in people was unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1961). Rogers (1989) believed in total acceptance and 'prizing' of the person; meaning behaviours, feelings and attitudes considered positive or negative were accepted and acknowledged. This meant the counsellor, in a non-possessive way, needed to care for the client. This acceptance, according to Rogers, needed to be authentic and genuine, and the therapist needed to understand that what is most personal is universal. People present different behaviours, feelings and attitudes, and that is okay because underneath it all exists the shared aspirations of all people. Through this lens therapists can view people with genuine care, empathy and understanding, which creates environments that foster change.

Strengths-based approaches to working with people really began to prosper in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Psychologist Martin Seligman (Snyder & Lopes, 2002) guided the discipline of psychology away from its post-World War II deficit reduction-based approach into a new 'strengths-based' way of thinking. Previously the discipline of psychology had been entrenched with problem-based inquiry, which focused on what was wrong with people, what their problems were, and how they could be fixed (Neely & Holt, 2011). Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000), and others, felt that there was more to psychology than just pathological ideas about humanity.

This limited view of people did not take account of the joy, happiness, hope and resilience that existed in the world. The untold story of human psychological strength had not yet been accounted for, and soon other theorists found inspiration and a new division of psychology was born.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is traditionally grounded from Positive Psychology (PP) and can be considered as part of the movement (Neely & Holt, 2011). PYD is also a strengths-based approach to and perspective on youth and adolescent development. PYD is in line with PP, in that it positions all young people in a situation of potential power and strength. The majority of young people are happy and not 'raging' hormonal animals as they are traditionally described in the media and in early research (Conway, Heary & Hogan, 2015). Similar to positive psychology, PYD went against the traditional understanding and perceptions of young people centred on risk reduction (Neely & Holt, 2011). Traditionally, up until the early 2000s, being young was viewed as a time of 'storm and stress', crisis, and risk (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010) and even today these outdated perceptions of young people permeate through the literature and media (Beals, 2014). However, not all young people experience development this way. PYD theorists (Neely & Holt, 2011) postulate that all young people have potential for positive development and change over their lifespan and the majority of young people experience positive outcomes.

The potential for lifelong change is described by Conway et al. (2015) and Neely & Holt (2011) as relative plasticity and is a key idea behind PYD. This concept refers to the idea that people's development is 'bendy', flexible, and is continuously adapting and changing across our life span. PYD theorists believe that this has a lot to do with the fluidity of peoples' social realities. People cannot be viewed in isolation; but the context in which they have developed and are developing, paints the perfect picture needed for understanding them. The tapestry of their everyday lives, their personal biographies, their interconnections, are all important for truly getting to know who they are as individuals and, also, who they are as members of their communities. PYD as a perspective is powerful for this very reason, as it does not seek to separate the young person from their community.

The holistic nature of PYD has also gravitated its philosophical foundations towards theories that situate development in the context. PYD scholars refer to one in particular, Urie Bronfenbrenner and his social ecological theory, as foundational towards the PYD movement. Bronfenbrenner's ideas have entrenched themselves at the core of the PYD perspective (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010). The main idea being that the contexts people develop in influence and are influenced by the individual. This quality enables multiple 'truths' and different understandings of development to be embraced and embedded within PYD. It also paves the way for cultural 'knowing' to be seen as more "truthful" in understanding the development of a person.

The cultures people come from, shape them; therefore, it is important to view development through their unique lens. In Aotearoa New Zealand this is important as Māori and Pacific models of health and well-being identify the importance of the context on the individual's positive development (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010).

What is interesting, are the connected parallels of indigenous models of 'being' in Aotearoa New Zealand, such as Te Whare Tapa Whā, Te Wheke, Te Whāriki, and Fonofale. These frameworks focus on the strengths of, and the importance of, connections for individuals, families, communities, culture, and 'spirituality' that traditionally are left out of developmental texts (Harms, 2010). These frameworks embody positive development as they harness the strength of the individual and the social and contextual factors that shape positive outcomes. For young people to thrive and achieve positive outcomes consistently, their development needs to be more than just individual transformation. Development needs to be thought of as a community response; it needs to exist outside of programmes, or the work done with professionals' development needs, and be grounded within communities as everyone's job.

The evidence shows that development needs to be at the forefront of educational outcomes, not achievement. The point is that development occurs in fluidity between the person and their context (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010). Therefore, the phenomenal educator needs to be centred on developing the individual. If education in Aotearoa New Zealand can create environments and optimal experiences that enhance individual strengths and development it is more likely that the students will want to succeed rather than having to be dragged or pushed. However, if educators insist that learning be based on content mastery only, without development of the person, they will continue to struggle to get through to their students. What this often means is that educators themselves need to learn ways to better enhance their teaching, and shift their philosophy on learning towards the development of their student. This is why we are exploring what takes an educator from good to great, the top 10 practices of phenomenal educators of Pacific students, and how their practices connect with development.

Positive Youth Development

This section will look at understanding some of the key models and philosophies of PYD practice and synthesise the key ingredients to identify best practice when working with Pacific students in tertiary education. Positive youth development, as a theory of practice, has been mainly confined to those working with young people within community settings, including youth workers and youth development programmes. PYD is not purely focused on young people who are considered 'vulnerable', but is for all young people. It assumes that just because young people are not 'at risk' does not mean they are fully prepared for the world (Pittman, 2017).

Aotearoa New Zealand has the highest suicide rates of young people in the developed world, with 606 New Zealanders dying during 2016 and 2017 (Ministry of Justice, 2017). Issues like this suggest the importance of positive development for people's health and well-being, and their educational achievement. Education needs to transcend the classroom and personal development needs to exist outside of programmes and professionals (Roehlkepartain, Benson, & Scales 2011). If educators incorporate a strengths-based approach into their practice, grounded in the development of the individual, it serves to better prepare people holistically for the world.

When young people gain a mixture of positive experiences within different organised social and contextual settings, positive development takes place (Neely & Holt, 2011). Exposure to consistent positive experiences has a cumulative effect on the development of assets, strengths and protective factors in people (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998). This cumulative effect has been described as similar to negative experiences, where 'they cascade into one another. However, the cumulative effect of positive experiences needs to be explored in more depth (Roehlkepartain et al., 2011).

Developmental Assets Framework (DAF)

Benson (2007) developed the assets framework from the research undertaken with over three million young people by the Search Institute in Minneapolis (Roehlkepartain et al., 2011). Neely & Holt (2011) describe the assets framework as the building blocks of human development. The findings from this research led to the development of the Developmental Assets Framework (DAF). The DAF is made up of 40 developmental assets that, when present within young people, increase the likelihood of positive outcomes (Roehlkepartain et al., 2011). Of the 40 assets, 20 are internal assets that develop within the person and 20 are external assets that are facilitated through relationships, families, and communities. To make these assets more transferable, the Search Institute has situated the 40 assets under eight broad categories; four each for the internal and external assets.

The internal assets are commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity; and the external assets are support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time (Neely & Holt, 2011; Farruggia & Bullen, 2010).

Farruggia & Bullen (2010) noted from the findings that assets and risk-taking behaviours had a strong correlational relationship. People with low levels of assets were more likely to demonstrate high risk behaviour compared to people with 30+ assets. As the identified number of assets increased, so did people's ability to restrain themselves from high levels of risk-taking behaviour, and vice versa. These findings were consistent across a number of demographics such as age, gender, and ethnicity, suggesting that DAF could be universally significant (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010).

The Search Institute continued their research to find out what assets were present or promoted when positive outcomes were enhanced and aided in reducing risk-taking actions (Benson et al., 1998; Scales, Benson & Mannes, 2006; Roehlkepartain et al., 2011). A study of 99,462 young people showed that when young people had between 0-10 assets, 53% reported they used alcohol three or more times a month or got drunk one or more times in a period of two weeks. Whereas, those with 30-40 assets reported only 3% alcohol use (Benson et al., 1998). Scales et al. (2006) and Roehlkepartain et al. (2011) noted that assets predicted risk and thriving simultaneously, and the power of the DAF came down to its cumulative effect of protective factors for people who tended to do better than those who had less factors present.

Benson et al. (1998) discuss the importance of collaboration, community and caring adults outside the family as crucial for the development of assets and if they were armed with the knowledge of the importance of assets, it would lead to families and communities creating a web of asset development. Asset development needs to become a social norm for communities as it has the potential for lasting change, not just a quick fix. Scales et al. (2006) highlighted the extent to which adults within the community were building quality relationships for young people outside of their family. DAF promotes the idea that assets should be communities' core function and for educators, as members of the community, to create asset building learning environments.

The 5+1Cs

Another model similar to the DAF is the 5+1Cs created by developmental psychologist Richard Lerner. Lerner's 5+1Cs are broad categories that align with the eight broad categories of the DAF (Farruggia & Bullen, 2010). The 5+1Cs also situate development both within the individual and their contexts.

5+1C's (Neely & Holt, 2011)

1. Competence – positive regard for one's actions to do well in a domain specific area;
2. Confidence – self-worth and self-efficacy and one's global self-regard;
3. Character – respect for social and cultural rules;
4. Caring and compassion – sense of sympathy and empathy for others;
5. Connection – positive bonds with people; and
6. Contribution – give back to community and society.

According to Neely & Holt (2011), when people had all five Cs present then 'contribution' would appear. In essence the six Cs also encompass the eight broad categories of the 40 developmental assets:

- Competence – social competencies, commitment to learning, constructive use of time
- Confidence – positive identity
- Character – positive values, boundaries and expectations
- Caring and compassion – positive values
- Connection – support, empowerment
- Contribution – empowerment

Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa

In 2002, New Zealand released its own positive developmental approach under the original Ministry of Youth Affairs (Faruggia & Bullen, 2010). People involved in youth development all around New Zealand were engaged to feed into the strategy and through that process the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (YDSA) was developed. The YDSA was meant to be the first point of reference, however this didn't happen. Nonetheless, the one sector that did make use of the YDSA was the youth sector itself, and today it is still one of the most widely known, used, and referred to PYD frameworks by youth development practitioners in New Zealand. Similar to the DFA and 5+1Cs, the YDSA takes a holistic approach to positive development focused on where and how youth development happens, which ultimately leads to positive outcomes. The YDSA has six principles (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2002).

These principles are:

1. Shaped by the 'big picture'. These are the values and belief systems; the social, cultural, economic contexts and trends; the Treaty of Waitangi; and international obligations such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. Being connected. This is through positive connections with others in society, and includes whānau (family), community, their school, workplace or training institute, and their peers.
3. Consistent strengths-based approach. Building young people's capacity to resist risk factors and enhance protective factors in their lives.
4. Quality relationships. That everyone is supported and equipped to have positive relationships with young people, and young people build quality relationships with adults.
5. Fully participate. Providing opportunities to increase their control over what happens to them through being informed, organising themselves, having an effect on outcomes, making decisions, and being involved in follow-up.

6.   Good information. Youth development is continually informed by effective research, evaluation, collaboration, and information gathering.

The common thread across all positive development frameworks is the importance of positive experiences, shaped through the building of protective factors and by taking a strengths-based approach. These assets are developed through people having positive connections to their different worlds such as school, friends, family and community, as well as forming positive quality relationships with significant people within those worlds. When the settings and people are geared towards viewing people as assets to be developed and not problems to be fixed, people feel safe, nurtured and positive outcomes naturally occur.

An analysis of best education practices for Pacific learners

Best education practices are inclusive and effective, and include a wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches that have a positive effect on students' learning, attitude, and achievement (Arendale, 2010). This section provides a review of the literature on best education practices that contribute to the success of Pacific learners in tertiary education. It looks into the pedagogy and factors that benefit and improve outcomes for Pacific learners. It also describes what these effective approaches look like in practice.

Using online resources and databases such as ERIC, EBSCO, Proquest, Index New Zealand, and Google Scholar, a range of educational publications from 2013-2020 were reviewed. These included government and agency reports, journal articles, and theses that provide substantial information about the subject. To make the search focus relevant, the following key words were employed: Pasifika, Pacific Peoples, Pacific Island/er and their corresponding sub-groups in conjunction with key phrases such as Pacific education, learners, tertiary education, university in New Zealand, best practices, effective practices, student success, and equity.

Alkema (2014) reviewed key themes, methods, and factors that contribute to the success of Pacific learners in tertiary education across Ako Aotearoa-funded projects from 2008 to 2013. The New Zealand tertiary sectors covered in the research included workplace training, private training establishments (PTEs), institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs), and universities. Eleven Ako Aotearoa-supported research projects, three of which were nationally funded, were compared and analysed.

Based on the report, Alkema (2014) identified key recurrent themes that stand as the three pillars of delivering positive outcomes for Pacific learners in tertiary education: people, place, and practices and pedagogies. These pillars are combined and interwoven under a strong foundation of the organisations' policies and values. People, as one of the key themes, pertains to teacher and student characteristics, traits, or roles that lead to success. Teachers are considered central to student engagement and achievement. Teacher qualities include being culturally aware, knowledgeable, empathetic, and responsive; welcoming and accommodating; subject matter and teaching experts; caring and respectful; and also setting high expectations and providing support to students, and having positive relationships with students and vice-versa. While on the student side, success is attributed to having strong student-to-student relationships and strong personal motivation.

Place is another key theme; it refers to the physical space and the "feel" of the space. Having Pacific space and a space where you can see yourself as Pacific are essential to educational success. Through this space, Pacific learners are represented and validated. There is a sense of belonging, and "feel" of the space welcomes you and makes you feel that you are important (Alkema, 2014).

Finally, practices and pedagogies refer to putting the teachers', and the organisations', values, beliefs, and attitudes into action. This includes academic and pastoral support and mentoring; strong connection and relationship with families and communities; collaborative, cultural, and inclusive approach to teaching and learning and the curriculum; valuing and using Pacific languages; and a focus on student needs and approaches to successful learning (Alkema, 2014).

Theodore et al. (2018) identified the factors that help and hinder the successful completion of Pacific graduates from all eight New Zealand universities. A total of 365 Pacific graduates participated in the 2011 baseline survey that asked about the factors that hinder and help the completion of their qualification. Participants from this study are part of the Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (GLSNZ), which is an ongoing 10-year longitudinal project that investigates the outcomes of graduates from eight New Zealand universities. The study showed that 69% of Pacific participants were females and 32% of them had children; 62% of Pacific participants were undergraduates, with an average age of 29 years, and 50% of them were the first in their immediate family to attend university. The majority of Pacific participants were studying Humanities or Education.

Based on the survey, the significant factors that help Pacific graduates to complete their qualification were family, university-academic factors, student or personal factors, friends, university-other, religion, financial, partner, other support, peer support, and employment (Theodore et al., 2018).

Family (46.5%) was the most frequently identified factor that helped qualification completion, referring to family members who were the source of love, encouragement, and motivation for the students. Second to family was the identified factor of 'university-academic' (30.6%), which is the support that Pacific participants received from supervisors, lecturers, tutors, and mentors that helped them complete their qualification. They described academic staff that motivated and encouraged students positively as understanding, empathetic, enthusiastic, friendly, respectful, and approachable.

Self-confidence, commitment, determination, personal effort, self-belief, perseverance, a fear of failure, and hard work were some of the student factors or personal attributes and behaviours that student participants identified as factors that helped them with qualification completion. Friends from both within and outside the university were identified by 22% of participants as a factor that helped them succeed. Friends, just like family, provided support, encouragement, and motivation that helped Pacific students to complete their qualification. 'University-other' factors refers to non-academic staff, and university facilities, resources and services that helped 13.9% of participants in completing their qualification. This factor included administrators, Pacific student support services and staff, Pacific support groups, Pacific communities, and Pacific equity programmes. Religion was also instrumental to university success for 9.8% of the participants.

They refer to religion as their church, faith, spirituality, or belief in God and/or Jesus Christ as a reason for their achievement (Theodore et al., 2018).

Chu, Glasgow, Rimoni, Hodis, and Meyer (2013a) reviewed a decade's (2002–2012) literature on effective teaching in tertiary settings. The report highlighted that culturally responsive and inclusive teaching and learning practices help students achieve. The research also indicated that linkages between the educational institution and family, home, and community promote success among students.

Hargraves (2018) suggested four culturally responsive strategies that effectively support Pacific student success in education, and what it looks like in practice: having high expectations for Pasifika students; "knowing students as individuals, the culture with which they identify and what this means for them; developing strong relationships with Pasifika students and families; and enacting effective pedagogies that are discursive and collaborative" (p. 3). The research indicated that teachers have low expectations, deficit thinking, generalised assumptions and stereotypical views of Pacific students that negatively influence the way they teach Pacific students, such as reducing the cognitive demand of students' learning. Hargraves (2018) suggested that teachers need to be aware of their deficit attitude towards Pacific students and focus on teaching with high expectations and challenging learning tasks, and by appreciating the context of the student as an individual and involving them in their learning.

Learning about your students and valuing their identity and culture is an effective strategy to support Pacific students. This can be practised by sharing your own culture and story as their teacher, that encourages students to reciprocate (Hargraves, 2018). Another strategy is developing strong relationships with Pacific students and families. This includes treating students with dignity and respect, such as pronouncing their names correctly and not using put-down words. Pacific parents need to feel comfortable and involved with their children's school and their children's progress, so schools need to share information about the school system and their children's achievement, and include parents on school activities. Finally, pedagogies that are flexible and individualised, which are based on the collaborative effort of students, are essential to Pacific success in education. This can be achieved by empowering students with their own learning, offering opportunities for them to use their own language, and integrating Pacific culture into the classroom to name a few (Hargraves, 2018).

Research was conducted on how tertiary education organisations can increase participation, achievement, and completion of Pacific learners in a tertiary setting and, eventually, employment in high-growth and high-demand industries. According to the report by McNaughton, Fraser, Rosedale, and Oldehaver (2014), Pacific learners must be enabled, starting at college with their achievement of NCEA, through to tertiary study, by facilitating students in their course selection and employment pathways, by providing evidence-based academic counselling, and by ensuring effective delivery of literacy and numeracy teaching in the core subjects, especially STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Chauvel (2014) confirmed the importance of professional development of staff to ensure responsiveness to Pacific learners and more effective teaching. In order to do this, tertiary education organisations (TEOs) must recognise and support teachers who are already providing quality education for Pacific students. These exemplary practices must be captured, shared, and disseminated. Development of tools is necessary to support implementation of professional development within each organisation, while external professional development must be organised and presented in a way that is convenient for teaching staff to attend.

Lee and Toso (2015) explored the experiences of two early childhood lecturers (one European and one Pacific Island) on their teaching and learning collaboration to increase Pacific student retention and achievement. They identified practices that work for both students and lecturers. Using the metaphor of weaving, the study emphasises the importance of partnership, support, and sharing of expertise. As a result, several different strategies were developed. One, adding and engaging Pacific flavour, knowledge, and experience in teaching and learning. Two, teachers being aware and honest about the cultural divide, differences in the cultural capital of students, and valuing the knowledge that students bring to class.

Three, devoting practical sessions, from 10 to 15 minutes of the lecture time, to prepare and settle the class. Four, involving the Pacific support liaison person in the learning process. Five, doing quick activities like discussion of jargon and terminology. Six, the use of educational technology to keep students informed, such as providing a brief summary of each session and all the additional materials needed, and making them available online. Seven, learning together as students and lecturers. Finally, enforcing teaching collaboration or partnership (Lee & Toso, 2015).

Porter-Samuels (2013) reviewed the literature on teacher cultural responsiveness and how it can help raise Pacific students' achievement. Seven guiding principles of a culturally responsive teacher that are inter-related and inter-linked with factors that support Pacific learners were presented. One, teachers who are culturally responsive understand that Pacific people are diverse in culture, language, history, and ethnicity. This means that teachers must understand, appreciate, and be open-minded about the heterogeneity of Pacific people. They must find opportunities to get to know their students and even their families. They must learn to find ways to incorporate the cultural knowledge that their students bring to class and perhaps experience first-hand their culture by attending local Pacific events. Two, culturally responsive teachers understand the culture of power. This means that teachers must examine and self-critique their own culture, beliefs, understanding, values, and attitude in order to avoid the perpetuation of stereotypes and bias and in order to genuinely help Pacific students take charge of their own learning. Three, teachers who enable the development of an individual's identity are being culturally responsive. This happens when teachers validate students' identity based on how students see themselves, and not by making assumptions about their identity. Four, teachers must reject deficit explanations and stop blaming Pacific students for underachievement.

To do this, teachers must hold high expectations of their students and, at the same time, provide them with opportunities and support to assist their learning. Teachers must focus on student capability and not their ethnicity or socio-economic background. They must involve family and community when support is needed and make an opportunity for students to use their first language as a show of strength. Five, culturally responsive teachers build good and positive relationships with students by creating a space that is inclusive, caring, supportive, and safe. Teachers must be role models of positive attitude by showing empathy, pronouncing students' names correctly, encouraging students' feedback, and believing in students' potential. Six, teachers who are culturally responsive make learning relevant and authentic by putting Pacific flavour and context in their teaching environment and content, considering the learning styles and needs of the students, and tapping into the family and community as part of the teacher's rich resources of knowledge. Finally, teachers must continuously reflect on their pedagogy through professional development and self-reflection (Porter-Samuels, 2013).

From Good to Great: The 10 Habits of Phenomenal Educators for Pacific Learners

Houghton (2015) argued that the use of a formative approach to assessment is effective in engaging students, particularly Pacific, in their learning and achievement. He added that assessment must also be culturally responsive by making teachers aware of their own bias, assumptions, and expectations and how they are being reinforced by the school and the education system. Teachers must also recognise and respect the prior knowledge, values, and culture Pacific students bring to the classroom.

Nanai, Ponton, Haxell, and Rasheed (2017) explored the best practices and successes as viewed by 11 Pasifika students within a faculty of health programme. An online survey and talanoa were conducted to gather data. Based on the study, different factors that helped students achieve and succeed were identified. The Pasifika Learning Village, an initiative of the Pasifika Student Support at Auckland University of Technology, was found very beneficial to students' success. By providing them with a cultural space that is familiar to Pacific students, like the fono room that was part of the initiative, was seen as being helpful to the students. Institutional contribution such as the accessibility of student support and learning communities, and the presence and availability of Pacific support staff providing both academic and pastoral support, benefit Pacific students. Integrating Pacific flavour in the curriculum, having more Pacific role models, and including other family matters as a reason for extension processes, not just limited to funerals, assist students in the success of their study.

Ali and Narayan (2016) examined the factors that hinder and help the achievement of Pacific students in completing a tertiary accounting qualification. Second- and third-year Pacific students participated in a survey questionnaire and focus group. The findings of the study suggested several factors are beneficial to students' success: institutional support such as help from lecturers, peers, learning support centre, and online resources; assessment methods that have more practical components; and a culturally responsive pedagogy that incorporates real life examples based on their context.

Dutton, Mayeda, Keil, and 'Ofamo'oni (2016) discussed the importance of the ethnic-specific equity programmes of tertiary institutions to support the achievement and success of Māori and Pacific students. Ninety high-achieving students participated in 17 focus groups. Based on the study, ethnic-specific equity programmes contributed to student success by providing a safe space for Māori and Pacific to embrace their identity and ethnicity. These programmes also provided role models for the students, like Māori and Pacific tutors.

Filemoni, Horrocks, Wong, Paurini, and Perrot (2014) evaluated the Pasifika Trades Training Initiative, developed by the Tertiary Education Commission, through a case study of seven Pacific learners who were part of this programme, and they included church ministers, and academic, administrative, support, and allied staff at Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec).

Different factors leading to the success of the Pacific learners were identified. The full involvement and support of the institution and the community, particularly the church ministers who helped on the initial recruitment and provided pastoral care, was a factor that helped students succeed. The church ministers provided a clear vision for the students of where their course would take them, which helped in student success. Another factor that assisted student achievement was the recognition that some of them needed assistance with their literacy and numeracy skills.

Southwick et al. (2017) examined the pedagogical approach underpinning the success of Whitireia Community Polytechnic programmes particularly the Bachelor of Nursing Pacific, the Bachelor of Nursing, and the Bachelor of Social Work. The study concluded that creating a conducive and safe environment for students to learn, providing a culturally responsive pedagogy that gives importance to the culture of the students, and helping students to navigate and edgewalk between two different worlds are beneficial for students' achievement.

In the study by Luafutu-Simpson et al. (2015), 55 Pacific students from three tertiary institutions identified factors that supported them to succeed in tertiary education. First, the effective support they received from the institution that included the lecturers, tutors, and other staff, and the programmes and services initiated by the university, all helped students achieve. Second, through this support a connection was developed between the students and the academic and administrative staff that was transformed into a good relationship beneficial to students' success. Finally, external support from family, community and even Study Link were vital to students' success in tertiary education.

Chu et al. (2013b, p. 4) identified teaching and learning factors that lead to success for Pacific students in higher education, namely:

- Respectful and nurturing relationships with students
- Recognition of cultural identity, values and aspirations
- Creation of 'Pacific' physical spaces
- Incorporation of students' learning needs
- Insistence on high standards
- Opportunities for students to pursue higher education
- Learning relationships between students
- Mentorship as a learning relationship

Summary

The reviewed literature suggests that phenomenal educators are a blend of personality and skills. Phenomenal educators showcase certain personal characteristics, competencies, attributes, and qualities that stand out for the learners. Phenomenal educators exude these positive traits that transform into learning and achievement on the part of the learner. Phenomenal educators also possess and acquire skills that are translated into effective teaching practices that benefit the learners. These effective practices involve people, place, pedagogy, programmes, and policy. Much of the research has proved the effectiveness of these teaching practices, strategies, and techniques through positive learning experiences and outcomes.

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As a result of our findings from the VARK questionnaire, the literature review, and talanoa with students and phenomenal educators, we have developed the following 10 habits of phenomenal educators:

1. **Fenua**: The pedagogy of reflection
2. **Moana**: Know your Pacific learner and context
3. **Vaka**: Educate with Phenomenal Pacific-centric methods
4. **Le Teu le Va**: Build teaching and learning relationships with Pacific learners
5. **Ola**: Develop phenomenal practices
6. **Teatea**: Instil motivation and good work habits
7. **Aupuru**: Cultivate creativity and enthusiasm
8. **Putuputu**: Construct a Pacific learning community
9. **Arofa**: Enable mentoring to be a natural part of your teaching and manage the 'wobbles' that arise
10. **Ti'ama**: Deconstruct and emancipate your Pacific learners' experiences

Habit 1 Fenua: the Pedagogy of Reflection

The word 'fenua' is a Tahitian word meaning the land you stand on. This habit is about finding out where you belong as an educator and as a person.

Knowing yourself well as a person and an educator will positively impact your teaching of and your relationship with Pacific learners. Every educator needs to be a good learner and be open to learning. It is particularly important when it comes to working with Pacific students.

When an educator is confident about and aware of themselves, then they can make a focused effort to appreciate and understand their students without making judgment or exhibiting prejudice. They can see the diverse viewpoints of their learners and acknowledge them accordingly. Being sincere will enable you to guide your learners and gain their trust. Being reflective is a necessary step toward becoming a phenomenal educator. Self-reflection means to observe and analyse yourself in order to grow as an educator. Knowing yourself as an educator facilitates tolerance and understanding of others. Awareness of your own identity will help you empathise with others.

Increasing self-awareness as an educator is an on-going process and helps to strengthen the relationship between you and your students. Relationships help people to see who they are and why. Therefore, your level of self-awareness will change according to the development and strength of the relationship with your students. Being aware of 'who you are' can encourage you as an educator to reflect and evaluate your teaching skills and knowledge. While this could be confronting for many educators, the reflection allows you to clarify what you bring with you to the teaching space and to your teaching.

Self-analysis involves critically analysing your own cultural assumptions, misconceptions, stereotypes, biases, and expectations. Cultural misunderstandings can arise; for example, an educator might believe that 'disengaged' Pacific students will sit in the back row of a class, However, this perspective may be in conflict with the cultural principle of respect. The Pacific student might actually be keeping a respectful distance between themselves and the educator. Through being aware of your own world view you can review and analyse your culturally learned assumptions, some of which may be culturally biased. Developing positive attitudes towards cultural differences and gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and world views outside the educational institution is important.

For example, attending Pacific community events will broaden your view of Pacific people and will lead to greater understanding of the Pacific cultures. As we gain more awareness and knowledge about our Pacific learners, we will be better equipped to educate and challenge other people about their stereotypes.

Reflecting on your teaching performance is essential to improving and refining inclusive educational practices. Think critically about your experiences and explore your behaviour, thinking, and emotions as well as identifying opportunities for improvement. Develop a structured approach to reflective practice, utilising reflective writing, peer learning, and feedback as tools to explore and assess your work analytically.

The three elements of cultural learning (as shown in Figure 2) are awareness or attitudes; knowledge; and skills.

Figure 2: The reflective educator
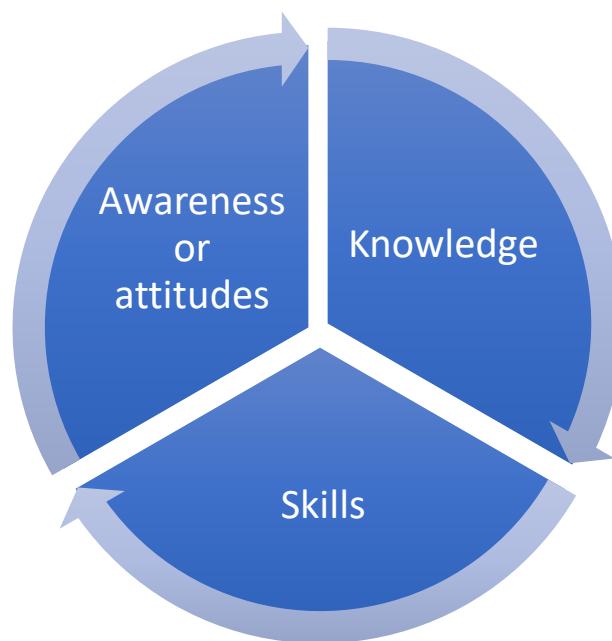
Habit 2 Moana: Know your Pacific Learner and Context

Moana represents a vast ocean such as the Pacific Ocean, Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa. As Epeli Hau'ofa (1939-2009), a Tongan and Fijian writer and anthropologist, writes – "the Moana connects us". The Moana is deep and many stories, myths and legends are told about Moana; stories about islands, atolls, seafarers and navigation. For Habit 2, think of Moana as the place where we find out what connects us and separates us as Pacific people.

This habit is about doing the necessary background work, even before you meet your students. Be a transformative educator by gaining a deeper understanding of Pacific learners. There is a symbiotic relationship between teaching and learning, and educators also need to be good learners. Pacific people are diverse and there are many factors that influence their lives. It is essential that educators understand this diversity and respect it. Take the time to know and understand who your Pacific learners are. This takes commitment and patience.

Visit Pacific spaces and places (communities) and immerse yourself in events that Pacific people participate in, so that you are exposed to the different languages, values and cultures of Pacific people. Attend Pacific festivals, church services, or sporting events. Some educators have stated that it is a good idea to have a grounding in Māori tikanga/protocol and culture as it enables them to clarify their thinking and learning about Pacific people.

Who are the Pacific people in Aotearoa New Zealand? What are the different Pacific ethnic groups? What is the Pacific population in Aotearoa New Zealand? Where do they live? What are their forms of employment? What are their rates of educational success? There is a lot to know about Pacific learners and their communities. Learn about the history of Pacific migration to Aotearoa. Explore some of the big stories in history, for example the Dawn Raids – a crackdown on Pacific overstayers from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s; and the Polynesian Panthers – an activist group of young Pacific men who aimed to address inequalities and injustices against Pacific people in Auckland in the early 1970s. Also, you could access information and stories about Pacific people, the Pacific diaspora, Pacific youth cultures, Pacific labour, and Pacific cultures. These events have shaped Pacific people and their lives in Aotearoa New Zealand. The more knowledge you have about Pacific people, the deeper your understanding will be.

Learn how to pronounce Pacific colleagues' and Pacific learners' names properly. To learn about the various pronunciations, access awarua.com via the Ako Aotearoa website. Practise as much as you can or work with a fluent speaker to support you in your language development. If in doubt, ask Pacific people you know how names or words are pronounced. Practise makes perfect!

Make use of Talanoa/communication to find out what has been the experience of Pacific learners and Pacific staff in your educational institution. Take time to talk and learn from staff, students, and communities who are active with Pacific student development. Find out about support services and pastoral care available for Pacific learners, so you can refer students, if required, or, as an educator, make use of the services to gain advice from specialists. Also, there are external Pacific networks that provide advice and support.

Learning about your Pacific students can take place in the form of meetings or informal chats. Inviting people out for coffee or lunch, dropping in to people's offices, and being involved in Pacific initiatives are great ways to understand Pacific contexts and cultures. Initial and on-going dialogue between educators is critical so that educators are addressing the needs of Pacific learners. Since students continually transition in and out of educational institutions, educators must remain flexible and respond to these changes.

It is important to know about your institution's policies, strategic plans, and/or guidelines that are relevant to Pacific students. What types of policies support Pacific learners? Are there specific resources allocated? What else is required? Does your institution have target rates for Pacific student participation, retention and completion? Get to know the educational policies and plans set by the Ministry of Education, the Tertiary Education Commission and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), as starting points.

Be mindful not to make assumptions about your students. Get to know your students as individuals.

"When I began my apprenticeship to become a university lecturer, the very first thing I learnt was to ask myself: "who are the learners and what do they bring with them to my lecture room?" Getting to know your class is possibly one of the most important considerations for any educator, and every lesson plan, scheme of work, and lesson I taught was informed by my relationship with that class."

Preparation for your teaching

As you prepare for your teaching you can consider the following questions that will help you to get to know your Pacific learners and their context:

- Who are my learners and how many of them will there be?
- What are their ages, their previous educational experience, their educational level, their life and their work experience?
- How do they prefer to learn?
- Why can some students confidently tackle the subjects they study and succeed, while others can't? How do they do this?
- What are some of the personal characteristics of your learners (age, gender, cultural background, profession, background, family life, etc.)?
- Are there any barriers to their learning such as literacy or numeracy issues, or lack of computer skills?
- Why are they taking the course?
- How will they use their knowledge?
- What do they already know about the topic?
- Are there any prerequisites?
- How will they be studying this topic? (Face-to-face, distance, blended, etc.)
- Are they novice or expert learners?

Habit 3 Vaka: Educate with Phenomenal Pacific-Centric Methods

The Vaka or boat travels the Moana with its people. On the Vaka people have different roles and jobs. A Vaka can carry people for a great distance or a short distance. A Vaka has an important function – to assist in the journey of Pacific people.

It is the educator's responsibility to be clear about their teaching. The educator's goal is to facilitate successful learning and achievement, but before this happens, the educator must learn as much as possible about Pacific people and Pacific learners, for example, reading relevant material about Pacific people, culture, literature, and research, can help to facilitate an educator's learning. However, nothing is more valuable in terms of learning about Pacific people than being connected to your Pacific learners and their communities. Pacific content and examples will help make your course more Pacific-centric. It also allows other non-Pacific students to learn about the Pacific cultures.

Observe other educators' practice in the Pacific community or within your institution, particularly those who have had years of success with Pacific

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learners. Gain some learning through professional development programmes on how to educate Pacific learners.

An educator who is respectful of Pacific students can create a trusting and empowering relationship. The value of respect underpins many Pacific cultures. As an educator you can demonstrate respect with your use of the Pacific language (e.g., correct pronunciation of names and Pacific concepts) and your behaviour towards your students. Students enjoy learning when they are respected by their teachers. Respect has the potential to build strong relationships with Pacific learners, resulting in an enhanced learning and teaching approach overall.

Consider the ways in which students from different backgrounds approach and interact with their education, and proactively strive to make your teaching and educational environment inclusive from the outset. For example, peer learning can help facilitate positive educational outcomes.

When planning your classes, ask yourself: What do you want your students to learn? How do you intend to teach it? What challenges might occur? What will you do to overcome these issues?

When you are planning your course, break down the material into manageable units, so that students will be better able to learn it well. Students learn more at the beginning of the class than at the end, so prepare your content's important points up front. Don't be afraid of repetition, and after each lesson include a summary of the main points. Develop innovative assessment measures that reflect the Pacific learner's needs, such as weaving, art, performance, oral presentations, models, dance, etc.

Ideas for taking a Pacific-centric approach:

Traditional teachings, oral histories, traditional knowledge, and legends: Stories can provide a Pacific point of view and give insight into the world view of Pacific peoples. This will help non-Pacific people understand and become more aware of the Pacific perspective.

Community (institutional and external) support: Contact with the Pacific community can provide support for students and resources for your department, where they may be able to guide projects, provide a Pacific perspective to the course curriculum and provide opportunities for authentic learning.

Studying Pacific topics: In relation to your subject area, examine issues/topics/subjects related to Pacific communities/people and study the impacts of these issues on individuals, peoples, and communities. Relate these issues to other issues that exist in other areas of Aotearoa New Zealand society and the world.

Community-based examples and resources: During community-based programmes, resources should come from the community itself, so students

relate well to the course material because it is concrete, authentic and familiar. Examples include questions containing subject matter from the community or local area, and community resource people. Also, material could come from the everyday life of community members.

Guest speakers: Invite speakers from Pacific communities to address students on topics connected to your course content. Guest speakers could include political leaders, community elders, people engaged in delivering services to Pacific people/communities, resource people, leaders, and current community development experts.

Delivery and methodology: Incorporate the Pacific way of teaching into the classroom by getting away from books and lectures and moving more into observing and experiential learning. This teaching approach uses Pacific cultural values. With a Pacific-centric way of doing things, students have first-hand awareness and understanding of Pacific people. Finally, conducting activities that emphasise the feelings of being connected and supported (with others and the community) give a Pacific feel to curriculum delivery.

Resources: Develop Pacific-centric resources and research as you plan for future teaching. Make a library of the resources and let other 'experts' help you.

Habit 4 Le Teu le Va: Building Teaching and Learning Relationships with Pacific Learners

Le Teu le Va signifies cherishing, nurturing and caring for the va – the relationships between us and within us. When we tend to the va we are creating an equitable balance in an ongoing relationship.

The 'Heart' of a Phenomenal Educator

To be able to build effective teaching and learning relationships with Pacific learners, an educator brings the 'heart' to the centre of the connection. A phenomenal educator has 'heart' if they are serious about their Pacific learners. The educator cares for the needs of their students and shows it. A mentor with 'heart' goes 'the extra mile' to support their students. As an educator, expect the best from your students and provide the best teaching for your students. Demonstrate your 'heart' for educating through your behaviour and language.

Become familiar with your learners and see their strengths and weaknesses. Set goals for yourself and your students and communicate them clearly. Have a plan for each class, but do not overpower them with too much detail.

The Phenomenal Educator is a Relationship-Builder

Why is it important to build relationships with Pacific learners? What sort of relationships should educators and Pacific students have with each other? Should they get to know each other as individuals or maintain a barrier?

The way that a lot of teaching and learning relationships work in tertiary education is based on inequality. Educators have the knowledge and teach and the student learns, or doesn't. The educator has the authority to determine the quality of the student's learning. Pacific learners often attribute their educational success to someone who has cared, who has understood their contexts, and has supported their education. The concept of 'relationship' is one of the most utilised terms in Pacific education. But what does this look like in practice?

The values of trust, honesty, respect, and empathy give life to the teacher learner relationship; and, if these are not established from the outset, teaching will not function effectively. For instance, trust is demonstrated on the educator's part by such behaviour as keeping their word, always turning up for student meetings, and keeping regular contact with the students. Once the student feels that they can trust their educator, the relationship will develop. The student feels more comfortable knowing that they are being supported in the best possible way. They feel they can ask questions about things that they need help with.

Respect is gained when the educator displays behaviour and attitudes that are respectful of the student. Respectful language should be used to encourage and support the student. "Put-downs" or insulting jokes are not appropriate, nor are culturally insensitive comments. An educator will gain respect when a student sees that they are genuine, honest and display empathy. Being empathetic to students and making the effort to understand their needs and frustrations is essential to good teaching and learning practice. Empathy builds awareness of individual and cultural perspectives and assists in developing teaching that is relevant and accessible for students.

The life of a learner should be well-understood, so that the relationship is developed according to the learner's contexts. Receiving appreciation and encouragement is important for the learner. They must believe in themselves and the phenomenal educator must show this belief in them. Confidence in the learner must be nurtured so that they become independent learners.

Teaching and learning relationships are not just about the one-to-one relationship. It is the relationship expressed during classes. The space between learner and educator. This could be described as the va. Making yourself available to students during office hours or at other times to offer advice around their coursework or on their future career options is appreciated by students. Interacting with students in a professional and friendly way will help them learn and improve teaching and learning relationships.

Get to know your Pacific students
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Educators must be willing to get to know and recognise each individual Pacific learner. Knowing your students' names and pronouncing them correctly enhances their learning and helps to shape an environment of mutual respect in the teaching space. Be effective in establishing your leadership, and develop a teaching persona to foster participation and enthusiasm among students. Phenomenal educators know how to create and sustain a distinctive tone and mood for their classes that expresses to Pacific learners, 'this is your space'. Your teaching persona could include how approachable you are as an educator. It can also express your ability to build rapport with your students. The educator's persona is about establishing respect and leadership in the class. This makes it easier for the educator and for the student to meet each other's expectations. You can be friendly in the context of the teaching room. But don't act as though you are like your students as there still needs to be some clear boundaries. Keep the focus on learning. The implications of your teaching and learning relationship with your students is practical and professional.

Practise Active Listening

To establish a strong relationship, the educator needs to be a good and active listener. Listening shows respect, builds relationships, increases knowledge, and generates ideas. Being a good listener does not come naturally for everyone but when an educator is an effective listener, then stronger and deeper relationships are developed. Active listening involves listening carefully to students, respecting their opinions, and acknowledging what they are saying.

The skills of listening and communication are important for phenomenal educators. The value of active and appreciative listening is part and parcel of being an educator who demonstrates positive behaviour.

Being able to skilfully listen is critical in a teaching and learning relationship. Listening and communication skills are part of the educator's self-development and they should be constantly aware of the need to keep developing these skills. Ideas are generated through active listening.

Pacific Spaces for Pacific Learners

Pacific learners need physical spaces within educational institutions for them to use for their studies, to eat and drink, to have a break, and/or use for their student meetings. The space can be critical for the enhancement of students' cultural identity, and as a way of building a sense of belonging. Physical spaces do not have to be located in Pacific support service areas. Educators can build spaces too.

Create a place that is familiar, comfortable, and safe for Pacific learners. This has proven to be successful for developing good relationships with the Pacific students.

"We would congregate in the Pacific room to converse and socialise. As the Pacific room was open during the day, Pacific students could freely use the room

as they wished. The Pacific room was clearly identifiable, and was controlled by me, Pacific tutors and staff of the school."

The space should be accessible, fit the needs and contexts of Pacific learners, and reinforce Pacific students' place within an educational institution.

What can happen with a Pacific Space? Pacific spaces foster community and a sense of belonging. Give the space an identity and 'heart'. Decorate the space so that it reflects the students' identities. Students and/or communities could also donate cultural items.

Hold an opening or celebration for the space and invite families and/or communities to come along. If there is a kitchen in the space or nearby, have some tea, coffee and biscuit supplies for the students. Eating together in the room is a way to share talanoa/conversation and to be with one another

If the space is big enough you could hold classes there, or student meetings. With Pacific spaces, students are more likely to stay on and talk with one another afterwards. Physical spaces facilitate the process of conversation and relationship-building between students and educators.

Habit 5   Ola: Develop Phenomenal Practices

In many Pacific languages, Ola means life or to live. We want Ola to signify the life of phenomenal practice. That is, phenomenal practice is a living process that can enable Pacific learners' lives as well.

How do you make a lecture, or presentation, good or great?

Informative and interesting are two words that Pacific students use when they are describing a good presentation. The points are clear and are supported by evidence and illustrations. The educator is also able to communicate that there is no other place they would rather be than in front of their students. Give your full commitment and passion to the subject you are teaching. Bring enthusiasm, energy and delight to your teaching.

Intonation and voice are important. When speaking and presenting in class you should exude confidence and present your arguments persuasively. Self-awareness is vital; learn to be aware of all elements of your presenting style – how you look, how you sound, how you move and the type of impression you are making with the audience.

Be brave! Video record your teaching so that you can see what you are doing and you can then make any required changes. Look for any mannerisms you have that could distract students and make the effort to change them.

Encourage questions and discussion, and encourage class involvement. Encourage students to give their own perspectives or opinions.

Explain issues in more than one way and use examples from different cultures.

Communicate your enthusiasm for your topic through your body language. You don't have to stand behind a lectern all the time; move around the space and interact with your class. This is seen as a good strategy by students. You could ask them to write their ideas on the board or explain a key concept that they are familiar with from their own culture. The main point is to break up the monotony of teacher-centric teaching.

Leave enough time at the end to summarise the key points from your class and end the class with closing comments, and if appropriate, a Karakia/Blessing.

Your objective is to make the students glad they came to your class, that they learned something, and that the content of the lesson was relevant for them.

Using teaching tools

Teaching tools can stimulate learning and retention. What tools are available to engage learners? They could include email, clickers, web pages, podcasts, webinars, and blogs. These are high-tech tools; but even low-tech equipment, such as PowerPoint and the whiteboard, can also promote interactivity.

You can use the whiteboard to emphasise your main points or arguments, or to underline key words or conclusions. Students can also write their ideas on the whiteboard, as part of class discussions. When writing on the whiteboard, try to avoid having your back to the students while talking. It is better to write in silence and then turn round to face the class before talking. Old school 'show and tell' is still a great teaching tool. Students appear to remember more when visual elements are used in addition to speech and text.

The clicker is an interactive technology. It is a transmitter device that allows educators to ask questions and immediately collect and view the answers from each student. It allows educators to see how well students have understood a concept.

The use of email can offer flexibility in course communications. Educators can communicate to the class via email – answering questions about assignments or following up on a question. You should set clear boundaries with your students about the times when you will respond to email. Some educators use Facebook to communicate with classes. This should be handled carefully. The main point is to make sure everything stated is clear and consistent.

Videos, podcasts and internet are other ways for learning to extend beyond the classroom. Some educators like to record their lessons, and make these available for students to access at a later stage.

Questions to ask: What does the technology add to my teaching? How will it help my students to learn? Would the class still have been effective if I hadn't used this technology?

To PowerPoint or Not to PowerPoint? That is the Question!

PowerPoint is a widely-used teaching technology; however, there are some problems that can occur for both students and educators. Ask yourself: Does PowerPoint enhance my teaching? What does my class gain by seeing these slides? And what do they lose?

PowerPoint slides should be simple with text kept to a minimum. Overcrowded slides are distracting; ideally, follow the 5 by 5 rule – five words per line and five lines of text per slide. Using a small font size makes the slides difficult to read; ideally, a 30-point font size should be used. When you are planning your PowerPoint slides, think about how you would like your students to divide their attention between you and the slides. There may be parts of the class where you want the students' full attention on you, and not on the slides. In this case, you should turn off the presentation.

Slides should be bold and simple. Ideally, they should have just one or two ideas, or a diagram or a picture. Key points can be illustrated very effectively using diagrams and pictures. Make sure the PowerPoint works for you, and does not replace you. If you are not talking to a particular slide during your presentation – turn it off.

The PowerPoint presentation should spark discussion, so take the opportunity to generate conversation. For example, you can use a statement or image and ask students what they think. A common strategy used by educators is to send their PowerPoint presentations to the students by email or to upload them on an online portal system, after the presentation has been given. This will allow students to be active listeners in class, rather than trying to write down everything shown on the PowerPoint slides.

Educators should, of course, always have a backup plan ready if the technology doesn't function properly.

The First Class

Plan for your first class carefully. Aim to establish a one-to-one relationship with each Pacific learner or with as many as possible. Show an interest in your students. Show them that they mean more to you than just merely names on a list. Learn your Pacific students' names and practise their pronunciation. Introduce yourself and give some information about your own background. Don't share too much information, but enough to connect with the learners. You could prepare and learn a pepeha or mihi (an introduction) and introduce yourself to the class. You could use a fun icebreaker at the start and then ask students to go round the room introducing themselves and providing a little bit about their background.

From the start, set out the expectations and rules for the learning environment. These could include teacher availability, lateness, extensions, office hours, learning objectives, assignment details, and expectations for their learning.

Ensure you are explicit about your availability, and provide your contact details and expected response times to emails. You could put these on PowerPoint, or BlackBoard, or as part of your email signature.

Find out how well-prepared students are for the topic you teach, by enquiring about their previous courses. Engage your students in the subject immediately. You could include a "hot" topic that stimulates debate and challenges the students. Ensure you have relevant Pacific content and examples, that are clearly evident in your subject.

The teaching space

Tip: Create an inviting space

Set up your classroom so that it is comfortable and inviting. If you have a flat classroom, you could arrange tables in groups so that students can work in small groups. You could have music playing in the background as students come into class.

Show your enthusiasm for your subject and show why your subject is important for your learners. Express your expectations and give the students a sense of the difficulty of the material. Demonstrate your expertise.

Make your lessons and teaching relevant to the Pacific learners in your class. Connect with your students. Connections are important, particularly in larger educational institutions. Pacific students generally come from communal cultures, so it is important to connect them quickly to other people in order to avoid isolation within the university. This is even more critical for postgraduate students because of the nature of independent study. Your knowledge of Pacific services and Pacific colleagues will be beneficial here to create those connections.

Connections with and between students can be created through communal activities such as sharing food. You might bring some light food to share or you could have a bowl of fruit or other snacks at the back of the class for students to grab. Students will start to feel a part of your class, see your respect and have a way to talk to other students – over food! Some educators with small classes may have access to a kitchen and/or bring coffee/tea supplies for students to have mini breaks and some informal discussion during class hours.

Be flexible in your approach by creating a variety of activities and resources that allow students options in terms of how they access and demonstrate their learning. Be ready to adjust activities or class plans depending on student needs; whether it's the needs of a student with vision, hearing, or mobility impairment, or the learning needs of the class. Incorporate opportunities for student

feedback throughout your teaching and respond to this feedback by adjusting the class and the content accordingly.

Being flexible also refers to taking advantage of learning opportunities, extending discussion points and discussing any challenges. Leave time at the end of the class for reviewing and repeating the lesson's key points. Gather feedback about your teaching and/or your students' learning. This could be verbal feedback at the end of class or you could have a box in class where students can put their confidential written feedback.

Habit 6   Teatea: Instil Motivation and Good Work Habits

In the Tahitian language, Teatea refers to clear sky or clear light.

This Kato is about personal management. Tertiary education or adult learning is a very different environment compared to schools and workplaces. Students need to discover how difficult the tertiary landscape can be to navigate. New students at tertiary institutions need help navigating their new environment and educators can help to facilitate this navigation. Early on in your course, spend time in class providing students with the information they need to know. For example, class start and finish times, what tutorials are about, course requirements, assessments, specific terms that your subject area often uses, how to withdraw from courses, support organisations on campus, and even providing information about where things, such as good cafes, are on campus. You may need to discuss issues around students being late to classes or unable to submit an assignment on time.

Educators should help students to make the transition to tertiary education as empowering as possible. There is a lot to learn. If you can post on the tertiary institution's learning management system helpful web links and information about your course, it will give students a place to access key material.

Cultivate good work habits and prepare your students for their learning. Be inventive in teaching them how to read, how to take notes, and how to think.

Create intermediate deadlines to help students manage their time, avoid distractions and lessen the problem of procrastination.

Developing good literacy practice is beneficial for students. Encourage them to practise reading aloud, uninterrupted, then paraphrase what they have just read. A reading aloud exercise enhances four skills: meaning, vocabulary, tone and secondary meaning. Educators should identify students who have literacy and numeracy issues and recommend that they get training and support in this area.

Notetaking and effective writing, particularly for assignments, are important skills for learners. Get students to practise taking notes in your class.

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Effective writing requires practise, discipline, repetition, and feedback from both the teacher and the student. When you give out an assignment that requires students to write, provide a hand-out with information and tips that the students need to consider when writing their assignment.

In-class writing exercises will help students to improve their writing skills. If referencing and citing sources is important for your subject, make sure you spend time showing students how to do it. Also, distinguish between language used in conversation, texting or social media and the writing that is required in class and for assignments. Encourage simplicity and clarity over complexity.

Find ways to stimulate class discussions. A great way to do this is through small group work. Break your class into a number of manageable small groups and provide them with a topic to discuss; for example, they could discuss a specific point in a reading, or a YouTube video or podcast, or have a discussion about an assessment. Move from group to group, listening to how they address the question. Just observe the groups, rather than becoming involved with their discussions. A spokesperson from each group can then report back to the wider class for further discussion. Creative methods can also be included, such as role playing or debates. The idea is for the students to take ownership of their learning.

A few helpful tips for small group activities:

Begin with a simple group task. Once the group is established and gets to know each other better, you can choose more complex activities.

Have an active and a quieter activity. Try to alternate between an active and a reflective activity. This way, you will keep your group motivated and interested.

Be flexible. Consider the needs of the learners and how the group is coming together. If a problem arises, you should address it, and, maybe, review the activity you set and think about what might be a more appropriate activity. Get feedback from the learners on the kinds of activities they like. It may also be a good idea to choose and plan activities together with your students.

Less is more. Don't try to do too many activities in one class. Do a maximum of three activities per class.

Try using a single-session activity when the students don't know each other very well. Facilitate single-session activities on a regular basis to help build positive group dynamics.

Try a project when the group composition is relatively stable and the students know each other well enough. Get them to work on a project over a period of a few weeks to reach a specific goal. You could also get students to carry out a project that they create themselves.

Motivational Learning

Motivational learning involves setting goals or milestones with your students. Goals help the learner to meet a challenge or complete an assignment. You can tap into the learner's strengths and use them to support the learner as they work towards achieving specific goals.

Focusing on the strengths that the learner brings to the classroom and building on these strengths is important. If the learner is unaware of their knowledge, skills, talents and gifts, then it is vital for the educator to facilitate this realisation.

Conversations with students and observing their progress over the course will help support this process. This may take some time, depending on the quality of your relationship with the student. This is why it is important for the educator to know and have a good understanding of their students, and to be genuinely interested in their learning.

For effective teaching and learning to occur, educators should believe in their students from the start of the course so they can reach their full potential. Having this belief in your students is critical for motivating them.

Use past achievements as a motivational and learning tool, and discuss these with the learner. It is important for the educator to identify the skills and knowledge that the learner brings with them, but that they may not talk about openly. For example, some Pacific students have leadership roles in their churches or families, but they may not realise or discuss how these leadership skills and knowledge can be transferred to an educational setting. Discussing this with your student and helping them to identify what they are good at, could result in them becoming motivated to use these skills and knowledge.

As an educator, you can motivate and nurture your students, and help them visualise what is possible for them in the future.

Feedback, Feedforward, Encouragement and Praise

Feedback is a key part of the assessment and learning process. Learners need to know how they did in their assignments. They need to know whether they passed, what they answered well and what they could have done differently. Learners also want to know 'where to from here?'. This is known as 'feedforward'. Feedback focuses on students' current performance, while feedforward looks ahead to future assignments and offers constructive guidance on how the student can improve. Therefore, in your feedforward, direct your learner to what they still need to know and what they can work towards or build on.

Figure 3 shows how a phenomenal educator takes into account the cultural differences that might exist between themselves and their Pacific learners. The one-way, teacher-centric approach is not a supportive model, and it is necessary to consider how you deliver your feedback, feedforward, encouragement and praise to your learner, so that it becomes a conversation.

Figure 3: A positive approach to providing feedback
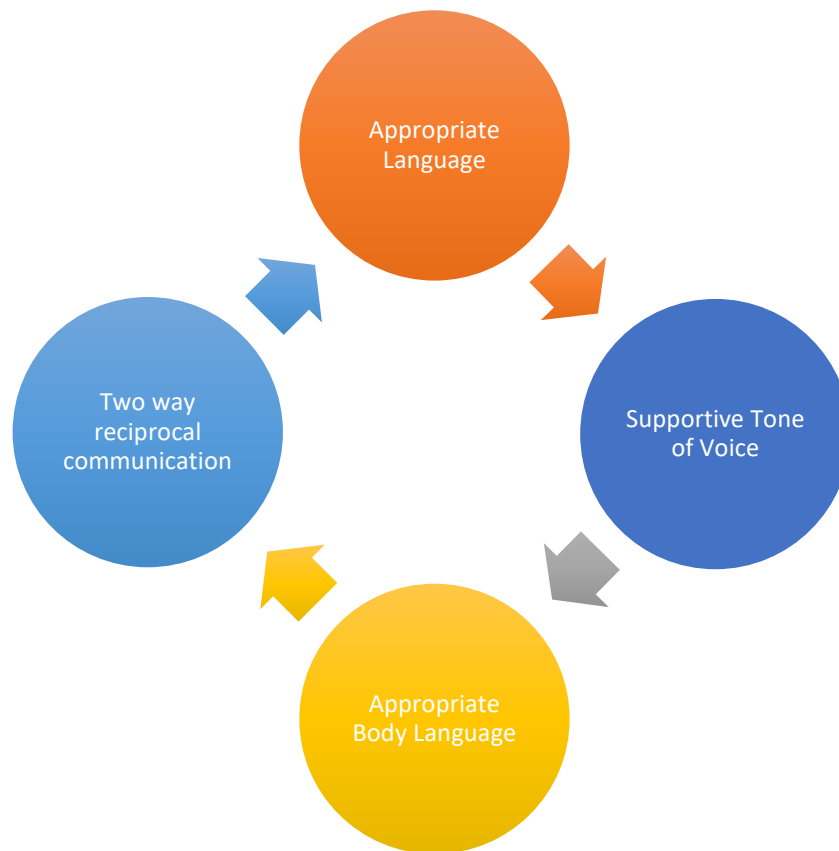
If the learner has not met the required standard, they need to know what they need to do in order to get to where they need to be. Encouragement is important, and no matter what, the learner also needs to know what they have done well.

Guidance and encouragement are key methods for motivating your learners. However, it is one of the hardest skills to master as an educator. But educators are in an important position to motivate and encourage their students. For this Kato, we see it as encouraging the 'heart' and it has the potential to transform students' lives. Encouragement requires verbal reinforcement of the learner's strengths and showing them that they believe in them and their abilities.

Encouragement is most effectively provided in a face-to-face interaction and this is especially true for Pacific students. They like and need to hear what is good about themselves. Expressing high expectations for the learner shows that the educator has faith and confidence in them to do the best they can and the student will make the effort to live up to this expectation.

Educators need to reach beyond the student's self-doubt, and show them that they have abilities and strengths and how these can be used in their lives. People can change in a positive way when their achievements are celebrated. At first students might feel embarrassed, but it is evident that when Pacific students receive praise and positive feedback and it is shared in front of their peers, their eyes open up, shoulders are pulled back and a big smile appears.

Habit 7   Aupuru: Embrace Creativity and Enthusiasm

The meaning of the Tahitian word, Aupuru, is 'to treat with kindness'.

Creativity

Creativity and innovation can be successful for courses. Know when, where, and how to use it. Look for ways to learn as well as teach, and try to look beyond the conventions of education. Break out of fixed habits in your teaching. Experiment with your teaching methods, regularly.

Today, it is easier than ever to learn about creative teaching. There are many resources including books, training courses, online courses, and educational programmes that can help you develop creativity and innovation in your course.

Learning about things other than your specialist subject is important too. Creative educators bring more to class than just a knowledge of teaching and their subject. They are educated in other areas, and can draw on their experiences and outside interests in class. You can talk to and learn from other educators who have implemented creativity in their courses and assessments – creativity that motivates and interests their Pacific learners.

It is important to be aware of Pacific knowledge systems and cultures as it is important to incorporate them in your classes to facilitate Pacific students' learning. Incorporate texts that are Pacific-oriented, or Pacific research, in your discipline.

Consider ways that Pacific knowledge and cultures can be represented and reflected in your class content, classroom space, assessments, and teaching pedagogy.

You could invite guest speakers who are experts in a specific topic to talk to your students. Maybe even have a panel of experts speak to your class.

Learners respond positively to teachers who don't follow the same old steps, in the same old way, day in and day out. They appreciate teachers whose classes have surprises and elements of fun. Explore using new technologies with your students, including using various forms of multimedia in your teaching.

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It doesn't matter if you don't use the ideas you collect straight away. The important thing is to collect and organise them in a way that makes it easy to try them out when the right opportunity presents itself. It's these ideas that will nudge you along the road to creativity, especially as you begin to adapt and experiment with them.

We often tell our students that practise makes perfect, but it's important that we apply this to ourselves. Skilled people in all fields, from dancers to chefs to teachers, reach the highest levels through practise – they didn't get there overnight. But creativity and knowledge of other cultures takes discipline and patience.

Teach in places outside of the typical classroom or lecture hall. If you are teaching history, perhaps visit the local museum.

Develop methods of assessment that acknowledge your learners' varied learning styles, whether these are audio, visual, reading/writing or kinaesthetic or a combination of some or all of these styles. Assessments can be used to represent the different forms of Pacific knowledge or learning. This is a strengths-based approach, where educators start with what cultural capital the Pacific learner brings with them.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is a teaching strategy. An enthusiastic teacher:

- Is energetic
- Enjoys teaching
- Conveys a love of their field
- Has an aura of self-confidence
- Embraces their students in the moment

An enthusiastic educator brings excitement, enjoyment, and anticipation to their teaching, engages students to participate and stimulates them to explore the subject. A teacher's enthusiasm can ignite the curiosity of students and jumpstart their motivation to learn. Teacher enthusiasm can lead to better teaching evaluations, better student performance, and better student attendance at class.

Pacific learners thrive with enthusiastic educators and respond well to them. Think of each new semester as a new challenge. Rather than being comfortable with the "I have taught this content for 10 years", mentality, stretch yourself to think of it afresh for each new student cohort.

Communicate your enthusiasm; show your passion for your subject. Communicate your enthusiasm through your tone of voice, body language, and

eye-contact with students. Use statements such as, "the thing that really fascinates me about this is...", as it helps students to realise that the subject can indeed be really interesting, and that you, as the educator, are clearly enthused about it.

Habit 8   Putuputu: Create a Pacific Learning Community

Putuputu means 'to gather together' in Tahitian reo. Gathering together is a reference to the creation of a learning community.

How can you create a Pacific learning community for your learners? What factors can enhance their learning? What are your students' needs?

Learning does not always occur in isolation for Pacific learners. The building of community fosters students' cultural identity and encourages a sense of belonging. It brings their lives and interests to the forefront of education, rather than hiding it away.

If there are support services or groups that facilitate the experiences of your learners, connect these to your class. Provide information about the services that are accessible, or invite support staff to visit and speak to your class.

Depending on your educational institution, these services could include:

- Accommodation
- Financial advice and scholarships
- Counselling
- Mentoring
- Learning support
- Medical
- Library
- Recreation
- Chaplaincy
- Pacific Liaison
- Marae
- Careers
- Pacific support and spaces

Encourage students to learn from one another. Develop small group, homework centres, or buddy systems as ways for Pacific students to learn outside your formal teaching session. Perhaps an assignment could involve group work for students or you could prepare a service project for students to be active interns in the community.

Invite prospective employers or industry people to speak to students about possible career paths. Develop pathways for internships for students during their holiday breaks.

Familiarise yourself with relevant workshops and/or activities that are taking place in your institution that support Pacific students and student learning, so you can inform students and connect them to these events.

Form a classroom community where students come together as a class to work towards a common goal. A classroom community helps students feel valued and connected to the teacher and other students in the class. You can create a community class and design activities into your teaching routines, so that students feel they belong to the group of learners in the classroom.

There are many benefits of fostering classroom communities. Here are just a few:

- Fills students' needs for belonging, because they know they can both contribute to the community's success and benefit from its rewards.
- Provides a way for all students to be included.
- Allows students to form and maintain positive relationships.
- Teaches students social skills, the importance of collaboration, and a sense of responsibility towards others.

Take stock of the pastoral care that is available for Pacific learners. Educational institutions have a responsibility to care for their students. In the past twenty years there has been some growth of Pacific/Pasifika support services. The key point is to make services accessible for students – even if these are mainstream in nature.

Foster connectedness and belonging on campus as a cornerstone of your course. Community linkages can also extend to the local Pacific community, where you could engage in visits with your class to relevant areas specific to your subject area. Perhaps it could involve meeting local leaders of a church, if your class is about religious studies. Students usually have great connections within their own communities and can help you to facilitate these connections

Alumni can also play an important role in being part of the community. You could invite former students to speak to your class about careers or internships for your students. Alumni can often be inspirational role models for current students. You could also include senior Pacific students or postgraduates in your courses, as mentors, tutors or as learning buddies.

For many Pacific students, their family or community are a priority in their lives. Families can extend beyond the nuclear family and sometimes students may see their own peers as family members. Make opportunities to connect students' families to your course. If this is something you choose to do, talk to your students and make a plan together. Perhaps families are invited to an evening where they get to see assignments on display, or you could host a family evening

to celebrate the end of a course. Some students may invite their parents and/or siblings to sit in on a presentation they are making.

Habit 9 Arofa: Enable Mentoring to be a Natural Part of your Teaching and Manage the 'Wobbles' that arise

Arofa is the Tahitian term for love in the broadest sense of the meaning.

What is mentoring? First, it is an intentional process of interaction between at least two individuals. Second, mentoring is a nurturing process that fosters the growth and development of the mentee. Third, mentoring is an insightful process in which the wisdom of the mentor is acquired and applied by the mentee. Fourth, mentoring is a supportive, often protective process. The mentor can serve as an important guide or reality checker, introducing the mentee to the environment he or she is preparing for. Finally, an essential component of mentoring is being a role model for the mentee.

Consider mentoring as a natural part of your teaching practice. Phenomenal educators are serious about mentoring as part of their teaching role. Mentoring fosters adult learning through transformative relationships.

The acronym **MENTOR** can be viewed as:

M – for model, as in a mentor's responsibility to be a role model, as well as identifying other good role models for the mentee.

E – for encouragement. The mentor has an important role in providing encouragement to the mentee.

N – for nurture. Being able to identify the student's skills and capabilities and working with them to make the most of these talents is a key mentoring role.

T – for teacher. The mentor is responsible for teaching and coaching the mentee, and for providing constructive feedback to help the mentee improve and develop.

O – for organisation. A mentor is there to assist their mentee through the requirements of their tertiary institution/organisation.

R – for reality. The mentor helps the mentee to understand how their subject area works. Mentors can enable a student's reality by helping them to create a plan.

Mentoring can create deep connections between the mentor and mentee.

Relationships that are built on solid foundations of shared values are important in Pacific student development. Important relationship values include respect,

compassion, humility, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, and reciprocity. Pacific values can be integrated into mentoring programmes for Pacific students in educational settings. Values build relationships. Mentors should engage students so that their needs and values are reflected in the mentoring processes.

Develop mentoring strategies for your class. For example, a group of students could be encouraged to meet regularly to provide support to one another through mentoring and coaching on specific tasks or assignments.

Phenomenal educators face challenges during their teaching journey. Be aware of the challenges ahead, and find ways to reduce them. Large classes can be challenging and it's harder to engage with students, even if you have an interactive environment.

Some students may not be able to adapt to the culture of the institution. If there are specific literacy and numeracy challenges, call on the services at your institution or recommend an outside literacy and numeracy tutor. The various demands on students' time can be problem and there will be 'wobbly' moments for learners. Think outside the box, and try to find out what the issues are for the students. This makes one-to-one conversations with your students an important part of your role as an educator and mentor. For example, if a learner does not have access to a computer to type up their assignment – what can be done to support them?

Make students' challenges into learning opportunities. Let them know it's OK to experience tough times and, together, think about ways to get through these challenges.

Your adaptability and flexibility as an educator are valuable tools in working through issues with learners. Exercise cultural sensitivity at all times.

Challenges are usually multifaceted and have deep roots. The strategies used to overcome a challenge should take account of the factors that have contributed to the problem. This is difficult when problems are complex and have been in place for a long time.

If you have good relationships and connections with other staff who have expertise in specific areas (cultural, social, mental, spiritual, etc), you should ask for advice about ways of supporting your learner.

If there are significant and recurring challenges, they need to be brought to the attention of managers, leaders and the institution. There may be a major fault in the institutional policies or solutions may need to be adequately resourced and supported.

Your role is not to say, "Everything will be alright", or, "Let's move on", but to appreciatively encourage your learner to find the solution with you. This involves nurturing conversation that engages the student to think carefully and strategically about their situation. It is important to provide encouragement

when the learner is lacking self-confidence or has become disoriented in their educational journey. The learner's perspective may become clouded by over-analysing the context and they may not have clear judgment.

Encouragement needs to include verbal reinforcement of the learner's strengths by showing them that you believe in them and their abilities. Encouragement is most effective when it is provided face-to-face.

Habit 10   Ti'ama: Deconstruct and Emancipate your Learners' Experiences

In Tahitian, Ti'ama means to be free. We take the concept of Ti'ama to mean giving freedom for Pacific learners to be themselves.

Focus on the Strengths of Pacific Learners

Pacific students have their own cultures and identities. Focus on what works for learners, rather than on what they do not have. Students can be encouraged to bring their cultures with them to their learning. Pacific learners will flourish when they are enabled to be themselves. A phenomenal educator will have a high level of self-awareness and reflection and meet the needs of their Pacific learners.

As an educator, your role is to draw out the strengths of an individual. Using an appreciative lens makes this possible. The phenomenal educator will draw out their students' strengths and work with them to discover their potential, and provide the encouragement and experience for self-development. Many Pacific students have indicated that the teachers they had in secondary school had low expectations of their potential. Phenomenal educators are concerned with bringing out their student's strengths and potential within a nurturing teaching and learning relationship. Being a positive influence in a Pacific learner's life is important. By focusing on the learner's strengths, you can help them to fully believe in what they have rather than what they do not.

A phenomenal educator provides equitable opportunities for their students to learn and supports students' positive learning outcomes.

Phenomenal educators recognise and respond to individual differences and the socio-political context of teaching and learning. Students must be able to access, engage, and attain outcomes such as:

- Positive cultural identities
- Positive academic identities
- Positive social identities
- Respectful relationships with diverse people

Examples of equity and inequity are shown below:

Societal (in)equity: How do societal values, policies and public attitudes impact Pacific students' cultural framing in tertiary education?

Socio-economic (in)equity: What advantages do non-Pacific students have over Pacific students with limited financial resources?

Cultural (in)equity: How do non-Pacific cultures marginalise and distance students who are from Pacific backgrounds?

Educational (in)equity: How do standardised educational institutional policies disadvantage Pacific students?

Instructional (in)equity: To what extent do teachers (who are predominantly Pakeha and middle class) favour students who share similar cultural backgrounds?

Assessment (in)equity: How can assessments that privilege the mainstream student population fail to engage Pacific students from under resourced communities, as well as low-income families?

The phenomenal educator will raise questions about policy, practice, and programmes, such as:

- Who of my Pacific students can relate to my existing curriculum and who may not relate?
- How can I create a collaborative learning environment for my Pacific students?
- How can my course content be adapted for Pacific learners? How should I supplement required texts?
- How can I ensure my teaching is equitable, so that Pacific students can thrive in my classes?
- How do I differentiate strategies beyond what is required to better meet the needs of all of my students?
- How do I communicate high expectations to my Pacific students?
- How can I challenge my Pacific students to reach high standards?
- To what extent does my implicit bias impact how I support my Pacific students' academic identities?
- What types of assessments should I use to ensure my Pacific students are not disadvantaged?

Summary: So...who are phenomenal educators?

As we draw a close to the research, it is apparent that Phenomenal Educators can be studied with a Pacific research methodology. But the lens of exploring these educators starts with a strengths-based philosophy. The phenomenal educators in this study were extremely humbled to be called 'Phenomenal'. When they were asked about what made them great, they all described their love for educating or teaching, and they all talked about working outside normal hours. Some might call this invisible labour. Some might call it passion. Whether phenomenal educators are born or are developed through hard work – we are not sure.

What we do know is that phenomenal educators believe their work is a lifestyle and that every part of their life is filled with being an educator and with a love of learning. They also love to be in the company of students and these are the best moments of their working lives. There are a lot of sleepless nights as they worry about their students' welfare, but they enjoy watching their students achieve. Teaching is a challenge but it is a challenge they love.

Many of these phenomenal educators had great role models when they were growing up –f amily members, teachers and colleagues. Many took on the role of teaching through inspiration and a passion to create a better world.

Phenomenal educators love what they do, they are passionate about their job, and they enjoy getting up each morning and going to their classroom. They are excited about the opportunities they have and they like the challenges that each day presents. Great teachers always have a smile on their face. They rarely let their students know when something is bothering them because they worry it will affect their students negatively.

Phenomenal educators not only teach students the required curriculum, but they also teach them fundamental life skills. They are always in teaching mode, taking advantage of impromptu opportunities that may captivate and inspire a particular student. They do not rely on a mainstream or boxed in approach to education. They are able to take a variety of styles and mould them into their own unique style to meet the needs of the students that they have at any given time.

Phenomenal educators always want to improve themselves and critique their own performance as educators. They often observe other educators to keep learning more. They read widely the literature on teaching and learning. Their conscientious 'heart' is central to their teaching. As educators they are eager to exceed their students' expectations and take criticism to heart. Essentially, at the end of the day, phenomenal educators think that great teaching is a transformative process for both the educator and student.

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In the words of one student, "Phenomenal educators are truly the next level…"

Appendix one

Vark questionnaire

This questionnaire is available online at: www.vark-learn.com

Choose the answer that best explains your preference and circle the letter(s) next to it. Please circle more than one if a single answer does not match your perceptions. Leave blank any question that does not apply.

Question one

I need to find the way to a shop that a friend has recommended. I would:

V) use a map.
A) ask my friend to tell me the directions.
R) write down the street directions I need to remember.
K) find out where the shop is in relation to somewhere I know.

Question two

A website has a video showing how to make a special graph or chart. There is a person speaking, some lists and words describing what to do and some diagrams. I would learn most from:

V) seeing the diagrams.
A) listening.
R) reading the words.
K) watching the actions.

Question three

I want to find out more about a tour that I am going on. I would:

V) use a map and see where the places are.
A) talk with the person who planned the tour or others who are going on the tour.

R) read about the tour on the itinerary.
K) look at details about the highlights and activities on the tour.

Question four

When choosing a career or area of study, these are important for me:

V) working with designs, maps or charts.
A) communicating with others through discussion.
R) using words well in written communications.
K) applying my knowledge in real situations.

Question five

When I am learning I:

V) see patterns in things.
A) like to talk things through.
R) read books, articles and handouts.

K) use examples and applications.

Question six

You want to save more money and to decide between a range of options. I would:

V) use graphs showing different options for different time periods.
A) talk with an expert about the options.
R) read a print brochure that describes the options in detail.

K) consider examples of each option using my financial information.

Question seven

I want to learn how to play a new board game or card game. I would:

V) use the diagrams that explain the various stages, moves and strategies in the game.
A) listen to somebody explaining it and ask questions.
R) read the instructions.
K) watch others play the game before joining in.

Question eight

I have a problem with my heart. I would prefer that the doctor:

V) showed me a diagram of what was wrong.
A) described what was wrong.
R) gave me something to read to explain what was wrong.

K) used a plastic model to show me what was wrong.

Question nine

I want to learn to do something new on a computer. I would:

V) follow the diagrams in a book.
A) talk with people who know about the program.
R) read the written instructions that came with the program.

K) start using it and learn by trial and error.

Question ten

When using the internet I like:

V) interesting design and visual features.
A) audio channels where I can listen to podcasts or interviews.

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R) interesting written descriptions, lists and explanations.
K) videos showing how to do or make things.

Question eleven

I want to learn about a new project. I would ask for:

V) diagrams to show the project stages with charts of benefits and costs.
A) an opportunity to discuss the project.
R) a written report describing the main features of the project.
K) examples where the project has been used successfully.

Question twelve

I want to learn how to take better photos. I would:

V) use diagrams showing the camera and what each part does.
A) ask questions and talk about the camera and its features.
R) use the written instructions about what to do.
K) use examples of good and poor photos showing how to improve them.

Question thirteen

I prefer a presenter or a teacher who uses:

V) diagrams, charts, maps or graphs.
A) question and answer, talk, group discussion, or guest speakers.
R) handouts, books, or readings.
K) demonstrations, models or practical sessions.

Question fourteen

I have finished a competition or test and I would like some feedback. I would like to have feedback:

V) using graphs showing what I achieved.
A) from somebody who talks it through with me.
R) using a written description of my results.
K) using examples from what I have done.

Question fifteen

I want to find out about a house or an apartment. Before visiting it I would want:

V) a plan showing the rooms and a map of the area.
A) a discussion with the owner.
R) a printed description of the rooms and features.
K) to view a video of the property.

Question sixteen

I want to assemble a wooden table that came in parts (kitset). I would learn best from:

V) diagrams showing each stage of the assembly.
A) advice from someone who has done it before.
R) written instructions that came with the parts for the table.

K) follow a video clip.

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