Hīnātore

Empowering Māori and Pacific People through Workplace Learning

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December 2019

Ako Aotearoa · Capital Training · Education Unlimited Adult Education & Training Specialists · upskills · edvance Workplace Education · Languages International · the learningwave · Industry Training Federation

He Kōrero Whakataki

Hīnātore (pronounced he-**nah**-tor-re) means phosphorescent light.[1] In Māori mythology, when Ranginui (sky father) and Papatuanuku (earth mother) were separated by their children, the first glimmer of light was Hīnātore. While the light was feeble and distant, it drove Tāne's ambition to bring more light to heaven and earth. He procured and distributed Te Whānau Mārama - stars, moon, sun - to fill the world with light. Thus, Te Ao Mārama, the realm of light, this light-possessing world, came into being.

The story of Hīnātore relates to this mahi (work) in that literacy can be an empowerment tool, opening up new potential and new light. It is a glimpse at 'possibility' that can inspire new learning and new growth. The light is dynamic - changing colours and shapes as different forces collide. This is an apt description of the nature of learning and growth witnessed in the participants of the eight workplace literacy and numeracy programmes in this study.

Acknowledgements

The research team would like to acknowledge the employers and workplaces, employees and whānau/aiga who contributed so willingly to this research. We particularly acknowledge the literacy and numeracy providers who participated – they have given unstintingly of their time, knowledge and expertise.

AOTEAROA

An Ako Aotearoa publication. This project output has been funded by Ako Aotearoa through the Regional Project Fund.

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[1] The cover artwork was commissioned for the project. It is painted by Evon Wilson aka E.V.E ARTZ, a Māori Artist and Illustrator from Gisborne, New Zealand with Iwi affiliations to Ngāti Porou.

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Executive summary

The *Hīnātore: Empowering Māori and Pacific People through Workplace Learning* research project investigated the development of employees who undertook literacy and numeracy programmes in their workplaces, during work time. This report describes the findings from the project in relation to the processes used in the programmes and outcomes for these employees in eight workplaces. It illustrates ako (teaching and learning processes); mahi (work), how workplaces support learning and employees' changed ways of working during and after a programme; and how learning is taken into and contributes to whānau/aiga (family) lives.

Ako Aotearoa and the Industry Training Federation co-funded the research which was conducted in 2018/2019 through a combination of semi-structured and narrative, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, and observations. Data were collected from around 100 participants (employees, employers, programme facilitators, and family members).

The programmes are funded through the Tertiary Education Commission's (TEC) Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WLN) Fund. Employees are eligible for funding if they have low or no qualifications, or low literacy and numeracy skills as measured against the Adult Learning Progressions.[2] They have access to 25-80 hours of learning usually undertaken in the workplace and in work time.

While the funding is targeted to reach those with low literacy and numeracy skills in workplaces, the ethos of the fund is around development rather than 'fixing' employees. The approach is intended to lead to the transformation of both employees and their workplaces through taking an expansive view of approaches to learning that is contextualised to the workplace and to the wider needs and interests of the employees.

Programmes funded through the WLN fund reach around 7000 employees a year with just under 40 percent of them identifying as Māori and Pacific people. Learning in work time affords employees a chance they wouldn't otherwise have, given the access, time and cost implications of attending programmes outside of work. In addition, attending outside of work is unlikely given the lack of confidence and the possible whakamā they feel in relation to attending programmes with people they don't know.

Workplaces provide comfortable learning contexts for Māori and Pacific people as they build on existing relationships. Here there is a work whānau which provides the opportunity

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[2] These progressions provide a six-step framework of progress showing what adults "know and can do". Steps on the framework are measured by the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT). Further information on the progressions can be found at https://ako.ac.nz/knowledge-centre/learning-progressions-for-adult-literacy/ ; on LNAAT at http://assessforadults.nzcer.org.nz/support/solutions/articles/4000121824-what-is-the-assessment-tool-lnaat-what-was-it-designed-to-do- ; on LNAAT comparisons to PIAAC on https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/80898/comparing-literacy-and-numeracy-scales-in-the-assessment-tool-and-survey-of-adult-skills

and conditions for joint endeavours, where there is a sense of collective rather than individual strength. Learning together in small groups for work and developing skills that can be transferred to their wider lives transforms these people personally along with bringing changes to workplaces.

Taking a strengths-based approach this research identified three factors that contribute to successful outcomes for Māori and Pacific people: **ako**, **mahi**, and **whānau/aiga**.

Ako - teaching and learning

From an ako perspective WLN programmes require a skilled educator workforce with the teaching/facilitation skills to deliver learning programmes in a culturally competent way. This means moving away from eurocentric and/or technocratic models of teaching and using culturally appropriate pedagogies that incorporate the context in which the employees live and work.

Here facilitators are not merely 'deliverers of content', rather they work in a co-constructed way that empowers employees to be active participants in the learning and acknowledges the expertise employees have in relation to their workplace content. Literacy and numeracy are woven through content that is explored through a range of teaching strategies and incorporates project-based learning.

However, it is not just content that is important, it is the people. Here skilled facilitators operate in a holistic way that acknowledges employees' culture, their way of thinking, and their values. Space is provided for employees to bring their culture into the training room and allows for recognition that learning is about the cognitive, affective, and emotional domains - ako, manaakitanga, and wairuatanga.

Facilitators' cultural competence grows over time as they start by acknowledging they may not be cultural experts but are prepared to learn along with and from the employees in the spirit of ako. Showing their vulnerability opens the space for employees to step in as the experts and the concept of tuakana-teina is seen in a new light. Building collaborative relationships, setting high expectations, and delivering relevant content with empathy leads employees to develop a sense of self efficacy and confidence. They know they can learn and are valued in their workplaces. These learning opportunities can be seen as restorative, transformational, and empowering.

Mahi - the workplace and connections to work

Learning in a workplace context is empowering in its own right. Here the authentic and concrete context for learning builds on employees' existing knowledge and expertise and they develop as individual workers and collectively as a workforce. Employees spoke of their work whānau/aiga and how the workplace was a whānau-like environment which fostered learning that was collaborative, reciprocal and authentic. They spoke of being motivated to support and help inspire their teammates, as well as the depth of learning facilitated through peer to peer (tuakana-teina, whānau to whānau) interactions.

The sense of empowerment that grows during the course of programmes starts with employees feeling valued by employers who either select them or provide time for them to attend. It grows as they realise the contribution they have to make at work and as they begin to recognise their own knowledge and skills.

While employers are open about the challenges associated with the logistics of programmes run in work time, for them this balances out when they see the results. Here they see the longer-term benefits of having employees who are more communicative and who participate more at work. This results in, for example, improved health and safety practices, improved teamwork, improved retention, improved workplace culture, along with quality improvement and innovation.

In addition to the collective outcomes for workplaces, economic outcomes also accrue to some of the individuals. In addition to being more engaged with work and the workforce generally there were examples of employees moving on to industry training qualifications or more workplace training, taking on more responsibility at work and getting promotions.

Employers expect employees' knowledge and skills to grow for work, they are also open to the idea that learning should not be limited to the functional and narrow requirements of workplace content. They are keen for programmes that develop transferable skills so that benefits accrue to communities and whānau and agia. Employers also recognise they themselves are part of a wider community to which they have a responsibility.

Whānau/Aiga empowerment

When knowledge and skills are transferred to employees' lives outside of work the flow-on effects for whānau and aiga of having family members who are more confident and feel better about themselves are transformational. Increased confidence and positive attitudes lead to stronger engagement with family, positive role-modelling to other whānau/aiga members and a renewed commitment to ongoing learning and upskilling.

This research found employees have the courage and confidence to meaningfully engage with, for example, children about their schoolwork and partners about aspects such as the family finances. What also comes through from whānau and aiga is the sense of pride they have in their family member's learning. The idea that whānau and aiga members still want to learn, and / or have the courage to learn is inspiring for them.

The transfer of learning to home and family lives comes about as a result of the conversations facilitators have with employees about the relevance of skills generally, because of the sense of pride employees develop around their achievement, and the tools they now have to, for example, communicate better, use computers, and talk with their children about learning.

Summary

Programmes funded through the WLN fund attract and retain high numbers of Māori and Pacific employees. The research described in this report shows why these employees stay

in workplace literacy and numeracy programmes and engage with learning and the impact of this for them as individuals, for their workplaces and their whānau/aiga.

Learning in workplace settings provides the context for the weaving together of ako, mahi, and whānau/aiga. It provides the opportunity for expansive learning that empowers individual Māori and Pacific employees and transforms the way they work and the way they operate in their personal lives. This happens as a result of their employer's offer of the learning opportunity and the individual employees who have the courage to take this up. It is enabled by facilitators who deliver relevant content in a culturally competent and co-constructed way and workplaces that, in turn, provide the opportunity for new learning to be used. Finally, it is supported by whānau and aiga who are proud of the employees' achievements and supportive of their current and future learning endeavours.

Overall, the findings highlight that the workplace is a context that suits Māori and Pacific employees. The opportunity to train in work time removes access barriers, provides a safe, whanau-like learning environment, and builds on the knowledge and skills they already have as workers. This is enabled by workplaces where there is strong leadership and commitment from senior managers to the learning and development of their people; managers and supervisors supporting and taking an active role in the workplace learning programmes (e.g., attending some of the sessions); and both employers and employees recognising each other's respective investment and contribution to the workplace learning.

Considerations for the future

The findings of this research can be used:

- by educators to inform programme design and the capability building of their teaching workforces;
- by employers to gain an understanding of the difference these programmes make to workplaces and workforces;
- by educators and policy makers to take note of the role whānau/aiga and intentionally address this within programmes and funding rules and conditions; and
- by policy makers as evidence of the impact of workplace-based programmes and to think about ways to build this into social procurement processes.

Introduction

Policy environment

In late 2019 New Zealand is in a time of relatively high employment, with the overall unemployment rate at under four percent as measured by the June 2019 Household Labour Force Survey (Statistics NZ, 2019). However, data by ethnicity shows higher unemployment rates for Māori (7.7 percent) and Pacific people (8.4 percent). In addition to having poorer labour market outcomes, the results of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Survey of Adult Skills, part of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) indicate that the Māori and Pacific respondents demonstrated lower levels of literacy and numeracy skills compared to respondents from European and Asian backgrounds (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE), 2016).

Research shows low literacy and numeracy skills impact on peoples' work and life opportunities. Those with lower skills: are less likely to be in employment and when employed to have lower wages; are less likely to own their own home; have poorer mental and physical health; and are less likely than their higher-skilled counterparts to participate in their communities and wider society (Bynner & Parsons, 2006; Schagen & Lawes, 2009; Murray & Shillington, 2012). In addition to poor outcomes for individuals, the Bynner and Parsons' (2006) study also found intergenerational impacts, whereby children whose parents were at the equivalent of Level 1 in OECD's international surveys were, "quite seriously disadvantaged and likely to fall behind their peers" (p.31).

Those with low skills, as measured by PIAAC, read and understand short texts and make some inferences; conduct basic mathematical processes and interpret simple graphs; and are either not able to use computers or where they can, they can cope with simple tasks and use minimal functions in generic computer programmes (MBIE, 2016) This is problematic for employment given that analysis of skills profiles conducted in Canada shows most jobs require Level 3 or higher skills, with virtually no jobs requiring Level 1 skills. This is coupled with the fact that most of the new jobs created in the last 20 years require Level 3 skills (Lane & Murray, 2018).

Demographic trends in Aotearoa New Zealand are changing. Kiernan (2018, p.25) notes that along with an aging workforce, there is an "increasingly multicultural workforce, including significant growth in the Asian, Māori, and Pasifika populations". He goes on to point out that given these trends more needs to be done by government and tertiary education providers to improve the skills and occupation outcomes for Māori Pacific people.

Despite current levels of high employment, at times of higher unemployment those in low-skilled jobs are vulnerable to the expansion and contraction of the labour market. Many of these workers are unqualified, work long hours and shift work for low pay (Cochrane, B., Fletcher, M., Pacheco G., & Plum, A., 2018) and have work and family circumstances that do not allow them to attend provider-based education. Many do not

have the digital literacy skills to undertake online learning. Therefore work-place/work-based learning provides an opportunity for those in work to access training.

Policy intervention

Policy interventions that reach lower-skilled employees in workplaces are important for reasons that include the need to:

- upskill workers throughout their working lives, particularly as the age of the working population increases;
- bring equity to training delivery so that lower-skilled workers have access to training in the way their counterparts with higher skills do; and
- mitigate against the barriers (financial, time, opportunity cost) that lower-skilled workers face in accessing education outside of work (Martin, 2018).

The Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (WLN) Fund is one such intervention. Provided and administered by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) the purposes are to increase the literacy and numeracy skills of lower-skilled employees and contribute to productivity through the provision of programmes in a workplace context. The Fund is divided into two strands. One strand (provider-led) directly funds tertiary education providers to market and deliver programmes in workplaces. The other strand (employer-led) is contestable funding that is applied for by employers who then generally contract an education provider to run programmes for their employees.

Employees are eligible for funding if they have low or no qualifications, or low literacy and numeracy skills as measured against the Adult Learning Progressions. They have access to 25-80 hours of learning usually in the workplace and in work time. More detailed information about WLN programmes is provided in Appendix One.

However, the intent of the fund is not to "fix" employees nor is about taking an approach that simply brings them to functional literacy and numeracy for the workplace. Rather it has the wider remit of workplace development. Here the thinking aligns with Jurmo's categorisation of "collaborative, problem-solving" (cited in Derrick, 2012, p.13) in that programmes are about workforce and workplace development. The approach is intended to lead to the transformation of both, through taking a holistic view of approaches to learning that is contextualised to the workplace and to the wider needs and interests of the employees.

Rationale for the Hīnātore Project

Evidence of the reach and impact of the WLN Fund has been gathered since 2014 (Alkema, 2015; Alkema, 2016; Alkema, 2017; Skills Highway, 2018; Alkema & Murray, 2019). The findings show employees:

- have gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills as shown by the results of the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT) which is tagged to the Adult Learning Progressions and a significant number of them have no formal qualifications;

- have previously been offered few training opportunities that are not for regulatory or compliance purposes; and
- come from across the age ranges from 20-60+, with higher numbers of males than females.

Just under 40 percent of the employees who access WLN funded programmes are Māori and Pacific people. The evidence shows these people succeed in these programmes, are engaged and retained in them, and use their newly developed knowledge and skills in their work, whānau/aiga (family) and community lives. It also shows that economic, social, and wellbeing outcomes accrue to these employees during the time and shortly after programmes.

However, not enough is known about the teaching and learning of the programmes, the cultural values that underpin workplace teaching and learning, and the extent to which approaches that lead to success are practised, as articulated in the literature (Kerehoma, Connor, Garrow, & Young, 2013; Luafutu-Simpson, Noa, Uta'I, & Petelo, 2018; Ryan, Kitone, & Fleming, 2017; and Sciascia, 2017). Nor is enough known about the workplace as a learning environment that supports the ongoing knowledge and skill development of Māori and Pacific employees.

Hīnātore research approach

In 2018/2019 the Industry Training Federation, co-funded by Ako Aotearoa, conducted the Hīnātore Research Project to explore:

1. What factors and approaches lead to successful economic, social, and wellbeing outcomes for Māori and Pacific employees in workplace literacy and numeracy programmes?
2. To what extent do these approaches incorporate culturally responsive pedagogies and the concept of 'ako' and how are these practised and articulated?
3. How do Māori and Pacific employees continue to develop their skills and transfer them to their working, whānau/aiga and community lives?

Kaupapa Māori and Pacific research

A key distinguishing feature of this project is the integration of Kaupapa Māori research and Pacific research methodologies and analytical frameworks. This pertains to both the overall philosophy underpinning the research and to the ways in which the researchers interacted with employees, employers, programme facilitators, and whānau.

Our position as researchers was that of witnesses to the events and stories of the Hīnātore project. Based on the First Nations protocol of witnessing, witnesses are called to be the keepers of history when important work or an event of historic significance occurs. At the end of the work, witnesses are called forward to reflect back and help to tell the story of the importance of the work that has been done. Witnesses are also asked to store and care for the history they witness and most importantly, to share it with others when they return home. As witnesses our role was to describe, interpret and draw conclusions based on the

data in a way that excluded judgment about the programmes and the outcomes for the employees.

Kaupapa Māori research is now a well-established academic discipline and research methodology (Pihama, 2001; 2015; Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002; Smith, 1999). Kaupapa Māori research locates Māori at the centre of enquiry and locates Māori understandings as central to the research design, process, analysis and intended outcomes (Pihama, 2001). It has of necessity an understanding of the social, economic, political and systemic influences on expanding or limiting Māori outcomes and is able to use a wide variety of research methods as tools (Curtis, 2007). In simple terms Kaupapa Māori is literally 'a Māori way'. It is a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know and it affirms the right of Māori to be Māori (Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002).

As with Kaupapa Māori approaches, building relationships with people and using culturally sensitive data collection methods was the focus when working with Pacific people. Here the research is informed by the work of Chu, Samala, and Paurini, (2013); Rose, (2014); and Ryan et al., (2017). Of particular note is the work of Chu et al., (2013) who follow the appreciative inquiry approach. While this research does not strictly adhere to this, it does take a strengths-based approach in order to understand success factors related to programmes.

Data collection

A purposive sampling approach was used to select workplaces for this project. This ensured, given the size of the study and the time allowed for it, that the workplaces would be information-rich, have sufficient Māori and Pacific employees, and employers, along with facilitators who were willing to participate in the research.

Eight workplaces were visited early and towards the end of their literacy and numeracy programmes. (See Appendix Two for a brief description of the nature of the workplaces.) An iterative data collection process used a combination of semi-structured and narrative, face-to-face interviews, focus groups, and observations to collect data from around 100 participants (employees, employers, programme facilitators, and family members). Here participants had the opportunity to tell their own stories about their experiences of the programmes and the outcomes for them.

The face-to-face interviews with employees were conducted in workplaces usually during the teaching programmes. These varied in length between 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the time available and the extent to which employees wanted to engage with the researchers. Employees also talked more informally with researchers during observations when the researchers were invited by the facilitators to be participants in lessons. Interviews with employers and facilitators also took place at these times.

Interviews with family members took place at a whānau evening when, over a shared meal, researchers talked about the project findings with employees and their whānau/aiga (around 60 people). Family members who volunteered to be interviewed were eager to share the stories of change for families that had occurred during the time of the programme.

An observation framework was developed for the project.[3] As a data collection tool it helped to ensure similar data were collected by each of the researchers. The framework is built around five elements: akoranga (teaching and learning strategies), manaakitanga (relationships), rangatiratanga (learner engagement), wairua/mauri (spiritual/emotional connection), and whānau/aiga (family empowerment), and the practices that exhibit these. While there were practice indicators, they were not used in a check-list way, rather the framework was used holistically to describe what happened in programme sessions. It also served as a touchstone in interviews with employees and facilitators.

Data analysis

A grounded theory, inductive approach was used to first analyse and code the data according to emerging themes at the site level. This was followed by analysis at a cross-site level using Charmaz's (2006) constant comparative approach to grounded theory. Here researchers looked across the sites at data from employees, employers, and facilitators to identify commonalities and differences. The key point to be made about this data analysis approach is that the findings emerged from the perceptions and experiences of those who told their stories. As such it allowed for the exploration of cultural values and perspectives from all of those involved.

Of interest in the data analysis approach was the iterative and sense making approach undertaken by the research team, a process of re-searching as described by Davidoff (2014):

> Research – literally – suggests that we search – again and again – and in this way discover what we did not know before. And the notion of searching (the quality of this word as opposed to – for example – looking) suggests that what we are searching for is of real interest to us; really matters to us; that it is a way of stretching ourselves, of taking our knowledge and understanding further, and into realms beyond where we are at any particular point. It is not merely a way of confirming what we already know (p. 1).

The re-search took place during the data collection process and after it. Here each of the researchers brought a different cultural lens along with different perspectives about adult teaching and learning and this allowed for analysis, discussion, and reflection about what was observed and heard.

The research team also held a sense-making workshop with programme facilitators as a way of testing the early findings and gauging their views on the emerging themes. In addition,

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[3] It built from: The *Te Kotahitanga* Observation Tool (Berryman & Bishop, 2011); The kaupapa Māori wellbeing assessment model *Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga* (Hutchings, Yates, Isaacs, Whatman, & Bright, 2013); Professor Sir Mason Durie's *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model (cited in Rochford, 2004); and Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann's *Fonofale* model (cited in Ministry of Health, 2008).

and as mentioned above, the findings were described to, and discussed with around 60 whānau/aiga members at an end of project dinner. This constant and iterative process drew the team to the ako, mahi, whānau framework

Validity

In terms of validity Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) talk about the importance, in qualitative research, of having honest and rich data, the appropriate participants, and being able to triangulate the data by gathering them from different sources and places. For this study, the focus is on descriptive and interpretive validity. In terms of the former, this relates to the factual accuracy of the account that is given of what the interviewees say. For the latter, it is about interpreting the data and giving it the meaning that the participants themselves have. This aligns with the researchers' positions as witnesses to the participants' stories about the programmes.

Strengths and limitations of the approach

The limitations of the approach include:

- the small numbers of employees and programmes involved in the project mean the findings are indicative of what happens in workplace literacy and numeracy programmes; and
- the research took place during and shortly after the programmes finished so it is not possible to ascertain the extent to which the outcomes can be maintained or how the people continue to develop over time.

The strengths of the approach include:

- the purposive sampling of workplaces where good practice was occurring enabled the researchers to explore, in-depth, why programmes engage and retain employees;
- the multi-method data collection, including discussions with whānau/aiga members allowed for data triangulation;
- the use of multi-faceted data analysis that included the research participants as sense-makers in the process helped ensure the validity of the findings;
- the cross-cultural analysis by the research team ensured that Māori and Pacific thinking informed the findings; and
- the two-year timeframe and the iterative data collection approach allowed time for the researchers to build authentic relationships with the research participants.

Ethics

This research was guided by Evaluation Standards for Aotearoa New Zealand (ANZEA & Superu, 2015). Standard protocols were used to inform participants about the research and how the researchers would interact with them. Participation was voluntary and on the basis of informed consent. Participants were provided with a written and oral explanation of the purpose of the work, what it would be used for, what would happen with the interview notes/data and who would have access to them. They were also assured of confidentiality

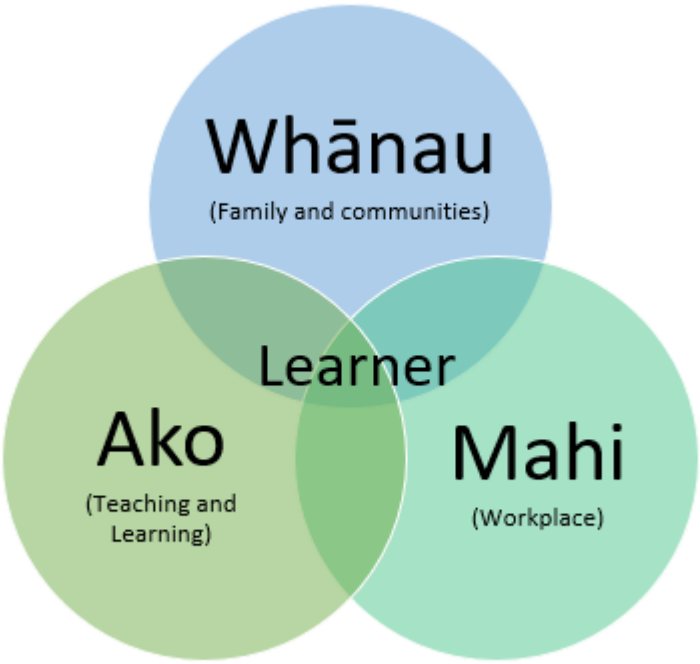
and that they would not be identifiable in any reports that are written. Additional consent forms were signed by those who participated in video sessions.

The research was grounded within established principles of Kaupapa Māori practice using an approach similar to Pipi, Cram, Hawke, Hawke, Huriwai, Mataki, Milne, Morgan, Tuhaka and Tuuta (2004, p 143) which embodies:

- Aroha ki te tangata - A respect for all participants involved in the research;
- He kanohi kitea - The seen face; face to face presentation;
- Titiro, Whakarongo ... kōrero - Look, listen...speak
- Manaaki ki te tangata - Share and host people; be generous
- Kia Tūpato - Be cautious culturally and professionally
- Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata - Do not trample over the mana of people
- Kaua e māhaki - Don't flaunt your knowledge.

Findings and discussion

Taking a strengths-based approach, this research identified three factors that contribute to successful outcomes for Māori and Pacific people: **ako**, **mahi**, and **whānau**. This tripod framework represents three interconnected dimensions that wrap around the learner, each interwoven through a series of reciprocal and contextualised relationships that build from learning for a purpose.



Ako - teaching and learning

The term 'ako' is a very old word across Polynesian cultures. In the Samoan and Hawaiian languages, the term a'o means to learn. In the Tongan and Cook Island languages, ako can mean teaching and/or learning. Finally, in the Niuean language ako means learn, fakaako means to teach and akoaga or fakaakoanga means education (Marat, Papoutsaki, Latu, Aumua, Talakai, & Sun, 2011).

In te ao Māori, the concept of ako means both to teach and to learn. Underpinned by reciprocal relationships it recognises the knowledge that both teachers and learners bring to learning interactions, and it acknowledges the way new knowledge and understandings can grow out of shared learning experiences (Alton-Lee, 2003). These findings echo those of Bishop (2012) in the school sector where he talks about, "a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy of Relations" (p. 40). Central to this way of thinking is the value of self-determination that sees learning as "reciprocal and interactive ... learners are to be connected to each other and to learn with and from each other" (p.41). Bishop goes on to say that when teachers create appropriate socio-cultural spaces, learners feel

comfortable, safe, and actively learn rather than being passive recipients of the teachers' knowledge.

Adding to this thinking, in her review of 45 research projects on teaching adult Māori learners, Sciascia (2017) concluded that teaching and learning is about a holistic approach.

> This is what *Māori* refer to as 'ako'. Ako is a holistic concept that incorporates ways of knowing, knowledge systems, beliefs, values and practices that are strongly connected and related to concepts such as whanaungatanga, wairuatanga, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga (Sciascia, 2017, p. 11).

The importance of relationships and connections to culture are also highlighted in the Pacific literature. Here, Luafutu-Simpson, Noa, Uta'I, and Petelo (2018) developed five success indicators for Pacific learners. These include: meaningful connections to families and communities; culturally responsive pedagogy; opportunities to learn and value Pacific languages and cultures; acknowledge Pacific values; and having environments that increase Pacific visibility.

With this focus on learning and relationships, the current research found the workplace can be a significant location for learning and upskilling of Māori and Pacific People. Workplaces offer 'rich' teaching and learning environments because:

- the learning is highly relevant and meaningful to the employees;
- there are pre-existing collegial relationships between employees which provide a high trust environment for collective learning; and
- the learning is done on-site and during work time, thus removing otherwise significant barriers.

Relevance of the learning

A key feature of WLN programmes is the tailoring of the learning content to each workplace. There is an expectation that programmes be bespoke and contextualised to individual workplaces, for example, by using workplace documentation and processes as the basis for programme activities. In the programmes this made the learning easy for the employees to relate to and helped to deepen understanding in critical areas such as health and safety and quality improvement. It was learning with a clear purpose.

> I enjoyed how the teachers taught us to do things and most of all, what they taught us, we're using in the workplace now, communicating, using words, how to do the emailing...(Employee)

Having the flexibility and discretion to adapt the programme based on the individual and collective needs of the learning cohort was central to making the learning relevant and ultimately producing good learning outcomes.

> We really tailored the programme ... using their forms, but scaffolding the literacy involved, the words [vocabulary] and also some of the other communication areas like speaking up, what's the importance of meetings ...We're lucky enough that we could really tailor the programme to each cohort ... (Facilitator)

Programmes focus directly on what is relevant to employees in their workplaces and family and community lives. Here literacy and numeracy are brought alive through applied and relevant contexts and are geared towards workforce development rather than 'fixing' employees.

> What I learn about the course is that it helps me to improve my communication at work. Because the words that we learn and the new words that we learn are very appropriate to everyday use at work. (Employee)

> But then on further research and looking into the programme, we found that it was just so much more than the likes of reading and writing - that it was more about gaining confidence to speak up, why meetings happen, why we fill out forms, and what the back end of these forms being filled out, what happens to them. (Employer)

Programmes generally ran for 20-40 hours in duration over successive weeks, with individual sessions spanning anywhere between one and eight hours in total. Employees preferred the half-day format of three to four hours, however this was largely driven by workplace logistical demands and operational requirements. A number of employees felt that 40 hours was too short, or at least there needed to be a continuous learning pathway for those that were keen to carry on developing their skills.

> We wanted to learn some more. There's other topics that we hadn't finished because we got into really great discussions. Those discussions obviously benefitted all of us and strengthened our bond as a team - as a great team, actually. (Employee)

The learning content was co-designed by the provider and the company, based on the parameters set by the WLN framework. Examples of workplace content observed during the project included:

- traditional literacy and numeracy activities e.g., comprehension, form-filling, stock taking;
- project-based learning, often utilising a continuous improvement project that employees present to management at the conclusion of the programme;
- communication and employability skills, e.g., active listening, above and below the line behaviour, asking open questions;
- ESOL in the workplace context;
- compliance, with a workplace focus e.g., Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), health and safety processes;
- digital skill development;
- personal or social outcomes, e.g., some programmes had a strong financial literacy component;
- qualification achievement - some programmes were tied to an industry qualification and taught in the context of that qualification.

The WLN facilitators spoke of the importance of tailoring the learning to both the needs of the employees as well as those of the company.

> Making it relatable is so important. Most of the programmes we deliver are tailored to the needs of the company. So using their resources, like the Take Five or their health and safety reports or the forms they use, the health and safety vocab that's used on site. I think that's the difference, is that it's really tailored to what they do. It's relevant. (Facilitator)

A dynamic interplay of various features combined to create a deep sense of easiness around the learning process and helped facilitate positive engagement and achievement outcomes from employees. As one employer noted:

> We found the smaller groups of five or six guys, they really bought into it together. It was onsite. It was workplace relevant. It wasn't just talking about altogether different subjects. It was in the construction industry, specific to what their role is, why they might be in meetings or whatever it is. It was a whole lot of things. (Employer)

Established relationships

Employees spoke of the importance of the established relationships that existed within the workplace playing a large influencing role in the decision to take part in the WLN programme. Learning was a vulnerable space for many and therefore engaging in this space with a group of known colleagues helped to increase comfort and facilitate greater engagement.

> It's just working with our own peers and being here in your own environment. That also helps – makes it a lot easier. Where we were set up, it was a great atmosphere and we got a lot more feedback from everybody. (Employee)

> No, I knew them all. Some of them are very close friends of mine and other people I just work with, but everyone's made to feel good with it. For the two hours that the company gives us, it's all learning and laughing and fun. (Employee)

Participating in small groups was also seen as a positive in facilitating greater engagement among workplace employees. The majority of groups ranged from five to ten employees in each cohort. Many employees spoke of appreciating the smaller cohort size in terms of enabling more time with the facilitator, increasing the easiness of the learning environment, and ensuring participation by all employees.

> We had a small group. There were four of us at the start. It only ended up three because one employee moved on to another site, so he went to another class. That number I found was really good. The tutor had time to speak to all of us and we didn't have a problem with any of the guys who were there, the other two guys. We all worked very closely together, and no, it was great. (Employee)

The smaller cohort sizes also facilitated greater learning collaboration among the cohort and enabled sufficient space for relationships to develop as part of the learning process.

> We've only got a small group, but we all mingle well, get on well. The facilitator's really good. He includes us in. We all have our strong points. We've got probably one in our class – English ain't his first language and he doesn't understand. So we all combine and help him up and try and show him. (Employee)

Some employees spoke of being initially hesitant to participate in the WLN programme, as it was often the first time since schooling of engaging in a formal learning. In a number of these cases, the encouragement of a trusted person – manager, colleague or family member – was a key critical influencer in the decision to participate.

> I didn't apply for it. My PM spoke to me, my project manager, and suggested it be quite a good idea. I was very apprehensive, I suppose. I hadn't been back to school since, well I'm 51, and yeah, I didn't really fancy going back to school. Then [Manager] called me and thought it'd be quite a good idea. So I did it. (Employee)

Range of teaching strategies

Facilitators employed a number of effective teaching strategies to engage the employees in culturally inclusive ways. Employees across the programmes talked about the factors that made the ako approach work for them. This included the upfront relationship-building work. One facilitator noted that she always started with "kō wai tatou" (who are we) and "tātou tātou" (principle of inclusion and sharing). Other facilitators used karakia (prayer), pepeha (genealogy of family and place), whakatauki (proverbs), introductions of names and backgrounds, and used flash cards to enable employees to introduce themselves and speak to something of interest.

Fun and humour was identified as another key strategy that helped to facilitate greater learning. It helped to create an easiness to the learning process and enable playful cheeky personalities to come through.

> [He] has a really good sense of humour which makes quite a big difference. Think this is especially important for workplaces and groups with lots of Māori and Pacific who like to have a good laugh and give each other a bit of stick. (Employee)

Another learner highlighted the importance that humour provided in creating an easiness to the learning and strong sense of comradeship.

> The learning environment's pretty good. It's quite enjoyable. It's laid back. Everybody feels at ease to be able to talk in front of people. When we first came, everybody didn't really talk much, but now we're all jovial and just telling jokes and stuff like that. That's probably the main thing for the class. I heard it's the same for the other two classes as well, because we all get together and talk about it. We joke about things, but it's good, because you're learning something. You're just continuously learning something. I think that's one of the things that people tend to do when they're a bit older is stop learning. Yeah. I just think there's a good pathway for them to learn even more things. (Employee)

The use of peer-to-peer teaching strategies built upon established relationships within the workplace. Tuakana-teina (older-younger sibling like relationships) relationship hierarchies also existed which were able to be utilised within the workplace learning context. More senior employees were often looked to for guidance and provided direction to the wider cohort. Facilitators used the high trust relationships that exist within the workplace learning context to their advantage which was instrumental in facilitating positive learning experiences and outcomes.

> Some of the best learning came from peers through some of the peer-to-peer exercises, role playing exercises, peer feedback exercises etcetera. That sort of stuff comes from a really genuine/sincere place which really makes you take notice and listen – some of the key highlights have been those moments with my peers. (Employee).

Some whānau members also commented on the unique family like environment that existed within the workplace, and how workplace learning was able to leverage off the natural leadership roles that employees hold within the workplace.

> He [dad] seems to be more an encourager at work. A lot of the colleagues at work – whether they're young or old – they look up to him as a leader. Yeah, he's very good. He's a family man and he takes those values with him at work. It helps him. (Whānau)

Teaching with passion and empathy was also identified as a key factor in engaging employees. For many Māori and Pacific employees, the presence of aroha was a fundamental component of the learning process. Facilitators used a range of strategies to express aroha including sharing personal stories and experiences, taking an active interest in the personal lives and interests of employees and their whānau, and being open to being a confidante.

The ako process results in facilitators and employees building collaborative relationships with both parties taking responsibility for teaching and learning. This collective and reciprocal approach transforms employees, builds their confidence and self-efficacy so they can continue on a learning pathway or progress to roles with more responsibility.

Skilled facilitators

The skill and professionalism of the facilitators is a significant contributor to the outcomes of the WLN programmes. Effective facilitators are able to hold space for deep relationships and reciprocal learning to emerge, hold high expectations of themselves and the employees, and utilise a number of teaching strategies that are culturally inclusive.

Employees appreciated the way facilitators offered encouragement and support, whilst also challenging employees about their workplace practices and behaviours and having high expectations for them.

> He [facilitator] wasn't "judgey" or "pushy" but he did push everyone outside of their comfort zone and did challenge people's thinking by asking questions like, "Why do you think he responded in that way?" (Employee)

Employees spoke of the need for facilitators to "push" them and set the expectations really high. Developing employees' self-reflection techniques was seen as a great way of doing this and which in turn led to improved confidence and a deeper understanding of the workplace context.

> It's the way he [facilitator], I suppose, facilitated the whole thing. That was a biggy. No answer was wrong. He'd always say, 'Yes. There's something else though.' He'd always say,

> ‘Yes.’ He would never say, ‘No, that’s the wrong answer, move on.’ He will just say, ‘Yes, but there’s something else. Yes.’ (Employee)

Facilitators drew on their wealth of experience within the adult education and workplace learning spaces to create a strong learning dynamic across the cohort. They used a range of techniques to ensure that all employees were engaging in the learning process. Māori and Pacific employees could often be quiet and reserved, particularly in the initial stages, so strong facilitation and relationship development strategies were required in order to encourage all employees to take part.

> So he actually made you start to think where are these tools or what have we been taught so far? How do we get these out? That’s one of his greatest strengths, I suppose, is just making sure everyone communicates and gives that feedback and gives their five cents’ worth. Because if you’re sitting there doing nothing, you’re not gonna learn anything, so you just get involved every time. (Employee)

Effective facilitators were also able to deliver according to the relatively structured learning framework but at the same time had some degree of autonomy to be flexible in their teaching approach and schedules.

> We did it in groups of five and a dedicated trainer who was really a great coach and mentor to these guys. So we were really grateful for the contribution from the provider. They weren't just following a check sheet of what to do with the staff - they were really engaging and they were very adaptable to our needs. (Employer)

Some of the most effective facilitators were those who were active in their own learning and development and were able to demonstrate and role model “lifelong learning” to the workplace employees. These facilitators displayed both mana and humility which was significant in setting the tone for reciprocal learning relationships to emerge.

Facilitators noted that there was a lot of sensitivity required in terms of engaging in dynamic socio-cultural spaces, but that facilitators needed to be strong in their own cultural mana and identity in order to create space for employees to do the same.

> I work hard at acknowledging culture – [to start with] getting the pronunciation of their names right. Also, let them tell their stories. It’s very much a learner-centred approach. (Facilitator)

An important finding in this work was the vulnerability of the facilitators that was noticed by employees in relation to their openness with employees about themselves and their own cultural competence.

> He made everyone feel at ease ... He was no different to us. He had his own struggles and he told us about those, and we shared ours ... So it was great. (Employee)

Some of the programme facilitators admitted they were not experts and were prepared and able to learn alongside, with and from, the employees in the spirit of ako. One facilitator incorporated the Talanoa Framework into his teaching and described being somewhat nervous due to being a Palagi man. This sense of vulnerability was endearing to the

employees and helped open up space for some of the Pacific employees to help explain and teach components of the framework to the other employees.

Culturally affirming approaches

Upskilling Māori and Pacific workplace employees requires a skilled educator workforce with the teaching/facilitation skills to deliver learning programmes in a culturally competent way. This means moving away from eurocentric and/or technocratic models of teaching towards using approaches that suit employees and the contexts in which they live and work (Luafutu-Simpson, Noa, Uta'I, & Petelo, 2018; Prebble, n.d.; Sciascia, 2017).

In 2018 Ako Aotearoa reviewed a substantial body of research and developed a model of pedagogical practice that underpins educator capability in the tertiary foundation teaching sector (Whitten, 2018). This thinking encapsulates and brings together the cognitive, affective and cultural domains that have been talked about in the literature referenced above.

Relationships and connections are at the heart of culturally inclusive practice. While Māori and Pacific employees did not want to be singled out or treated any differently, there was an expectation that the learning environment was open to all cultures, and that knowledge from all cultures would be valued and integrated into the workplace learning.

> Yeah, I did see, coming from a Māori perspective, the whakawhanaungatanga side of things. I did see that, because a lot of us have been involved in the programme and you become closer. You start analysing things – talk amongst yourselves. We're learning of each other at the same time. We know where each other is at a certain level, and so you try and bring that other person in. It was a bonding and that's what we call whakawhanaungatanga – that bond and that connecting. (Employee)

Other cultural practices and learning such as pronunciation of different languages and names, exploration of cultural values and concepts, the sharing of kai (food), and shared expressions of gratefulness and acknowledgement were all practices observed during the project. The incorporation of these elements provides a culturally rich and inclusive space for employees to feel acknowledged and affirmed, and sets the foundations for quality teaching and learning.

> I work hard at acknowledging culture – [to start with] getting the pronunciation of their name right. I let them tell their stories. It's very much a learner centred approach... I acknowledge other languages in greetings and farewells that they taught me and also allow people time to think through things in their own language. (Facilitator)

Vignette One: Culturally Affirming Approach

> *Daniel has Māori heritage and facilitated a literacy and numeracy programme in a workplace in a community that is predominantly Māori and Pacific people. He recognises this and notes,*
>
> > *What I do is about building a community of learning ... I'm conscious that I'm a guest in their community, that I'm in their space – their workplace and community. And I'm always respectful and acknowledge their space. (Facilitator)*

The outward practices that show this include greetings in different languages, correct pronunciation of names, and connections to people's different cultures and beliefs through what is taught. The approach also includes encompassing employees' stories into what is taught and teaching in contexts that appeal to them, such as work, religious or sporting events.

As Ako is a reciprocal concept Daniel also becomes a learner and has the employees teach him about their work. He also gets them involved in peer learning in a tuakana-teina (expert-novice way).

> *The biggest thing is getting them to help each other out. They are confident in their own skills to be able to do this. And they are much blunter with each other than I would be...(Facilitator)*

Vignette Two: Ako

Like Daniel, Simon was facilitating a programme in a predominantly Māori community. He has Māori ancestry and introduces himself and his whakapapa (genealogy), whānau and interests at the start of his programme. He also invites employees to talk about themselves and their interests. Honouring and celebrating the employees as Māori is key. "It's as if they need to be given permission to be Māori." He also recognises the need to acknowledge the biculturalism that is intended by the Treaty of Waitangi.

For Simon, the concept of ako is also important. He said he has as much to learn from the employees as they do from him. He consistently affirms the employees, endorsing their thinking and feelings about personal and work situations.

He takes a holistic approach whereby new learning and concepts are related back to the employees where there is space for their personal lives to be brought into the conversations and exercises. For example, they were able to talk about personal challenges and aspirations such as struggles with raising children, trying to be good role models and wanting to parent differently. This deliberate approach to manaakitanga allows employees to settle in, talk about themselves, get to know each other, and at the same time allows them to bring their own cultural experiences to the learning space.

Manaakitanga is integral to Simon's way of working. Along with acknowledging the individuals and the positive affirmation he gives them, he also ensures there is sufficient challenge to push the employees to think more deeply about communication and problem-solving at work and at home.

As mentioned above, having fun and relaxing into learning was also important for Māori and Pacific employees, "We like to have a good laugh and give each other a bit of stick" and the way this has helped their learning. They also appreciated that the learning was relevant to what they were doing at work.

> I enjoyed how the teachers taught us to do things and most of all, what they taught us, we're using in the workplace now, communicating, using words, how to do the emailing... (Employee)

Along with fun and relevance goes the sense of belonging and inclusivity that the employees felt as a result of learning at work and with their peers. This in turn generated a sense of comfort and a willingness to engage and participate fully in lessons. This atmosphere was generated both by the facilitators and the employees themselves.

> ... the whakawhanaungatanga [establishing connections] side of things. I did see that, because a lot of us have been involved in the programme and you become closer. You start to analyse things ... We're learning off each other at the same time. (Employee)

Restorative nature of the programmes

A number of Māori and Pacific employees in the project spoke of having had negative schooling experiences resulting in "learning trauma" such as feeling dumb or being anxious around "learning" environments.

> I found it [workplace learning] quite rewarding cos [sic] of, at a younger age, I've had education, but not really followed it up ... Whereas the Step Up Programme came up, I got told about it. I started learning how to solve certain things that happen on site, learning how to do arithmetic, which I knew nothing about, unfortunately. But I was one of those ones that slipped through the gap on the education side of things at a young age. (Employee)

Some facilitators would spend time exploring the different learning experiences of the employees as a way of opening up discussions around lifelong learning, and learning as a tool for growth and change. These conversations were often difficult but proved to be immensely powerful in enabling employees to reflect on past learning experiences as well as their own learning capabilities and aspirations.

> It's really changed my thinking around learning and work. I wasn't really into the whole learning thing before starting this but now I'm more open and motivated to learn more and build new skills. (Employee)

There was a deliberate focus on reframing the learning experience for workplace employees. Language was key to this with terms such as school, teacher and classroom being largely avoided in place of terms such as workplace, facilitators and training. Even terms such as literacy and numeracy were rarely used, instead there was much more of a focus on key workplace processes such as health and safety and communication. These are subtle and yet significant distinctions of the workplace learning environment.

> Workplace training has advantages. [Company] is unique –there is huge support wrapped around the programme. The learning content is already there ... time sheets, workbook, survey forms. It's hugely satisfying for them [employees] as they know that what they are doing is beneficial for their work. (Facilitator)

Many acknowledged the restorative nature of workplace learning in that they now identify themselves as being able to learn and have a growing sense of self-efficacy in relation to this.

> I was always one of those kids that was at the back of the classroom because I was always too hard to teach. I learned how I learn [on the programme], which to me was great, and I found out that I don't learn by reading books or people telling me to do things – I learn solely by doing it. That was good for me. (Employee)

A number of the research participants commented on the catalysing effect of the WLN programmes for encouraging further engagement in learning and development opportunities.

> I just wanted to say thank you. Because I know we can't even afford for him to go and do a course that is paid for by us. But this [course] was a golden opportunity that was given to him, and I'm so happy and glad that he picked it up and he ran with it. Because this was just the start of it. It proved to me, it proved to his family, it proved to his children that he is not just this person that stopped going to school years ago and that labour was only what he was good for. He started off as a labourer. Ten years, labour. No course. One year, leading hand, this course, and now he's becoming a foreman. That's something that really, really made me proud... People thought that that was it. But he actually proved to a lot of people that he can do it and this course did that to him. This course, I reckon, was the door that opened things up and all these opportunities are lining up for him and our family. I know he can do it. [Whānau]

Employers too noted the significant benefits from workplace-based learning provides to people who have often had negative schooling experiences.

> We found it very, very good to work with him because he made it easy for the guys that are doing the training to adapt to the classroom environment. He didn't make it like a classroom environment. He opened it up and made it comfortable for those that are actually doing the training. Because most of these guys haven't actually done training for a while. So he made it very comfortable for them to come in, which in turn they ended up producing very good product or information. (Employer)

In summary, the ako process results in facilitators and employees building collaborative relationships with both parties taking responsibility for teaching and learning. This collective and reciprocal approach transforms employees, builds their confidence and self-efficacy so they can continue on a learning pathway or progress to roles with more responsibility.

Appendices Three, Four and Five provide stories of ako and its impact on employees.

Mahi – the workplace and connections to work

Workplace learning contexts in this project displayed a number of consistent features including: strong leadership and commitment from senior managers to the learning and development of their people; managers and supervisors supporting and taking an active role in the workplace learning programmes (e.g., attending some of the sessions); and both employers and employees recognising each other's respective investment and contribution to the workplace learning.

Employees spoke of their work whānau/aiga and how the workplace was a whānau-like environment which fostered learning that was collaborative, reciprocal and authentic. They

spoke of being motivated to support and help inspire their teammates, as well as the depth of learning facilitated through peer to peer (tuakana-teina, whānau to whānau) interactions.

A number of employees expressed feeling valued and supported when they were asked to participate in the training. This was often seen as management taking an active interest in their professional and personal development. In some cases, it was seen as scaffolding people into positions where they were able to seek promotion within the company and/or taking on additional responsibilities.

Considerable work was done upfront between the education providers and company management to identify the workplace needs, to co-design the programmes, and to ensure that there were clear understandings and expectations of the purpose and processes of the workplace learning. Employers said that this upfront work was critical to establishing shared understanding and buy-in across the organisation.

> So to have buy in from senior management meant that it filtered down to our site management team and basically said, "We are going to do this. It's going to be good for the company. It's going to be good for your staff. It's going to be good for your sites." (Employer)

However, getting programmes up and running in workplaces is logistically challenging as sessions are delivered, for the most part, during work time. While programme delivery is funded by the TEC, employers pay their staff to attend, provide a training room and resources, and often provide food. The pay-off for them comes when employees become more engaged and participate more at work.

> At first we were a little bit sceptical because we thought a lot of our staff already know their ABCs and their one, two, threes and that wasn't going to be something that they needed to focus on – that we could continue on with their technical training … suddenly they're speaking up at meetings or putting their hand up and providing suggestions, because these guys are finally understanding that their contribution to how we do things is really valuable. (Employer)

Increased confidence was identified by both employees and employers as one of the key benefits of the WLN programmes. Employees were more confident and felt more empowered to engage with colleagues within the workplace using the skills that they had learnt.

> One thing that I can see the difference in me and my other colleagues is that the level of confidence has grown and we tend to be more talkative and we tend to be more interactive, because some of the words that we are also using and learning from this training gives us a lot more confidence in using them. (Employee)

> …it's not teaching people how to read and write - it's teaching people a lot more of the basic skills that we take for granted… your eyes will be opened as to what you can do for people, not just in their work life to make them more productive, but in their personal life, to make them, I wouldn't say better people, but just more confident people … (Employer)

Learning within the workplace was identified as a critical enabler for engaging employees in the WLN programmes. But for it taking place within the workplace environment, many

employees said that they would not have engaged in this type learning opportunity elsewhere. This was often due to many practical considerations such as transport, childcare, cost, car parking and time away from work or family It was also about not feeling comfortable to engage in formal learning environments outside of the workplace.

> If you were going to an outside class, you don't really wanna say things just in case you feel like you've said something wrong or you look like an idiot, possibly. But within your own house, people know you already. That's the first comfortable spot for you. You just speak your mind. (Employee)

> Because I know we can't even afford for him to go and do a course that is paid for by us. But this was a golden opportunity that was given to him and I'm so glad that he picked it up and ran with it. (Whānau)

Whānau participants also acknowledged the significant influence of the learning taking place within the workplace on the decision to engage in the workplace learning programme. In particular, they identified the positive role that workplaces can play – as a safe and trusted entity – in helping to catalyse more Māori and Pacific employees to engage in learning and development opportunities.

> It started from work. This is where he was confident to go to. Because work asked him and told him about this course, he trusted his employers that this was something that was good for him...He would never go to a class outside of work. He doesn't know the people, he doesn't know who was telling him to do the courses. ... he started with some of the boys that he knew from work. So he had someone that he could lean on if he needed help. Outside would be no. (Whānau)

Self-efficacy grows as employees recognise they can contribute more at work. This is not just a case of doing their own job better, but also results in thinking about innovation, how they as employees contribute to or increase productivity, and improve workplace culture. This comes from thinking about improvements to the way work is structured or completed and also through the ways in which they communicate their thinking.

> The last few months I became a foreman in charge of the whole project ... So yeah, that's where I'm at now. I'm controlling everything, like calling, ordering, planning. Like I said, the course is really helpful. (Employee)

Another outcome from programmes is improved communication skills and together with increased self-efficacy and confidence means people are more able and willing to speak at work, not only to colleagues, but also to management.

> Before I always sit back and as much as I want to ask when we have meeting and discussions, I was just, I'm not sure what I was gonna say – if it's in the right place. But now I'm not quite there, but I think that I got my confidence to ask and I'm very happy about it. (Employee)

The WLN programmes were often rare opportunities for employees to talk about issues or challenges within the workplace. The "safe space" afforded the opportunity to engage in some courageous conversations about challenges or issues within the workplace. These included conversations around staff feeling undervalued by company management; a lack of

team unity or collaboration; and challenges with communication and decision-making processes. Facilitators often used these discussions as learning opportunities around concepts such as speaking up and taking action, face-to-face interaction, clear communication, body language, and active listening. In some cases, facilitators played an active role in facilitating direct dialogue between employees and management to help elevate and manage issues that had been raised in the training sessions.

> I really enjoyed the speaking up sessions. I've always been a shy person who struggles with speaking in front of people, or speaking in public. Still struggling with speaking up in front of big crowds but feeling way more confident in smaller groups. At one of the sessions I talked about an issue in the workplace. [Facilitator] brought the boss in, and I talked about what was going on. The boss was really receptive and listened, followed up with me and the issue got resolved. This felt really good. (Employee)

Employers highlighted the tremendous value that more engaged and confident staff brought to the company in terms of increased productivity, health and safety improvements and overall team culture.

> The outcomes have shown fantastic results in our Health and Safety Department, because now we have employees that are actually standing there and they're talking and they're responding back to us. We're not talking directly to them anymore. We're having a two-way dialogue, which is going on. For health and safety this is fantastic, because they're feeding us back information that we weren't getting before. It's improved in that area. (Employer)

Improvements in organisational communication and team culture was one of the primary outcomes noted as a result of programmes. Employees commented that the collegiality within the workplace had improved, that there was stronger collaboration, and a culture of supporting and sharing with one another.

> This course has made me work a lot better with people. Even though I know some of the people through every day, we were always encouraged to help each other with the questions and go through and have confidence to speak up and get it wrong or right. (Employee)

> As a group. And we meet every day. The same group meets every day. We all still talk in the same language. It wasn't just the 10 weeks and then we're done. No. When we're in there, we could see, first thing, we were going in there and everyone's mindset is above the line straight away. Yeah, and why are we in here? It's to help each other and move forward. Get better and bigger as a group. (Employee)

Programmes which included workplace improvement projects highlight the ways in which employees take ownership for their work and contribute in ways they have not done previously. At a manufacturing plant, an employee talked about wanting to do more around quality assurance processes in his work area. He promoted this within his team through the use of quality forms. He said when these are completed, issues get dealt with, and that, by reporting every day there have been fewer complaints at the other end of the process. The employee's motivation for doing this was because of the pride he has in his work and the impact it has on others, "All making a good product together."

As stated above programmes are about workforce development for the company as a whole and for individual employees. Many employees want to stay with their companies and continue with their learning. Numerous work-related outcomes were noted including job promotions, improved communication and literacy, health and safety, teamwork and workplace culture as well as quality improvement and innovation.

> ... for us as a company, it's made a difference. Our staff retention has increased, because people want to stay with us now. They see a career direction for them. They see they have a career path, because we are investing our time and efforts into them. (Employer)

> Very beneficial. Engaging with the staff that are in the actual programme themselves, they have found it very positive. Their confidence has grown. They are starting to suggest and bring up new ideas in regards to production, in regards to safety, in regards to quality, which is very encouraging. They're starting to speak up as well, so it's very good. (Employer)

Some workplaces noted increased success with the training when it was implemented across all levels of the company. One company initially introduced the WLN programme for frontline staff only, but soon realised the need for a concurrent training for management staff and team leaders. This helped to ensure consistency and familiarity with the newly acquired language and skills being taught within the programme.

Celebrating employees' achievement was an important part of the WLN programmes. This public recognition of employees is significant for a range of reasons. While there was often some reservation and cultural humility amongst Māori and Pacific employees around celebrating individual achievement, there was also recognition of the importance of honouring the hard work and dedication of those who had participated in the programme. These celebrations or graduations provide opportunities for employees to either talk about what programmes have meant for them and or to present their project-based learning around improvements for their workplaces.

For example, at one celebration J told his story of perseverance driven by his motivation to earn more money. He said he'd underestimated the skills of the people around him.

> Before training I didn't know how to complete a health and safety form - I thought "someone else will do it". Now I see the importance of it. Another thing I learnt was about comms and different ways of working. I now follow a realistic budget - which was one of my smart goals. (Employee)

Recognising success within the workplace was also seen as helping to encourage other work colleagues, as well as showcasing positive role modelling to other whānau members.

> At the graduation family talked about improved communication in English at home, when previously it has all been in Samoan. We encouraged family to the graduation – as they [employees] are able to show what they have done. (Facilitator)

In summary learning in the workplace removes barriers to participation that can exist for some employees. Learning at work is a safe, whānau-like space where the starting point for them is more comfortable than learning with others whom they do not know. Employees come with existing knowledge about work and this serves as a purposeful and

relevant content for them. While it can be logistically challenging in terms of scheduling, employers see the benefits that accrue to the workforce and the workplace.

Whānau/Aiga - the family and community

The impact of workplace learning programmes extends beyond the workplace and into the personal lives of employees. Here, increased confidence and positive attitudes lead to stronger engagement with family, positive role-modelling to other whānau/aiga members and a renewed commitment to ongoing learning and upskilling.

Some whānau members described the training as life changing as it ignited a desire for continuous learning and development that had not been there prior to the WLN programmes. The positive flow-on benefits for the wider whānau were wide ranging including, greater personal and collective confidence, a stronger sense of overall positivity and happiness, and increased whānau engagement.

> It's a blessing, that's what I wanted to say coming here tonight, is to say thank you. That this programme is a blessing because it's changed his life. From a person that stopped going to school at 13 years old to now – now he's trained as a foreman. How do you get to that? This is what boosted his energy and his confidence to keep going. Now he's going up to study Level 2, being in the position that he's at. (Whānau)

> Every time I come home and I see her [mum], she's always got a bright glow on her face. That always tells me that she's had a nice, productive day at work. Recently, it's been a more happier glow because she's been at this course and she's learnt many skills that help improve not only her vocabulary but her passion and her personality towards others. To me, I find that very amazing, cos my mother still wants to learn, and she's still teaching me a lot of things. But to find that she can also learn new things to make her better just makes me wanna do better as well. (Whānau)

Whānau/aiga described the deep sense of pride that comes with seeing their whānau member engage in a difficult and vulnerable space, show resilience and determination to push through their own fears and doubts, and come out the other side more positive and having a growth mindset.

> I've seen the growth that it's done with my son...he's grown a lot. I think a bit of determination too and gained a lot of confidence. He's keen and willing to learn. He actually amazes me in some of his things he does... It's given him that confidence and he's coming out on top. He's come and said how he's enjoyed the learning. When I heard him say about how it's taught him how to use the computer and all that, I was amazed. (Whānau)

Whānau/aiga spoke of being inspired in regards to their own learning journey as a result of observing the positive impact that the WLN programmes had created for their whānau member.

> As his only daughter – and I come from a huge family with all boys – he's inspired us since he's gone back [to education], cos we're all educated, we grew up here. He came from the islands for a better life and we're all educated with degrees and well-paid jobs. Just seeing him take that step into education is very inspiring for us... At home, on our wall, we have all

> our degrees and everything there on display for family to come over. It's my parents' pride and joy to see us succeed in our life and in our journey. When he came home with that certificate that day, we were so proud. Very emotional. That's the most important certificate that we have on the wall, because it's from Dad. (Whānau)

Whānau members identified the need for more workplace-based learning initiatives to support Māori and Pacific employees as they had witnessed significant positive changes as a result of the engagement in the programmes.

> Changes? So much more confidence in himself. Decision-making. The way he speaks; how he expresses himself to not only me and to other people. It's made a lot of change. He's more understanding. And my side, I understand him more. My children understand him more. He's learnt to sit down, listen, go through all his work before he starts making decisions... That's a massive change. (Whānau)

> What I would do right now is share it with the other members that I know need it. People that was in the same boat as [husband] when he started this - this is the kind of programme that needs to be known within our community, because a lot of people are not getting any jobs. They're unemployed. Why? They don't have the confidence to go out looking for a job, and this is where it starts. I believe that it should be going out to a lot of people... I think it should be more. (Whānau)

It was also evident from both employees and whānau participants that the acquisition of new learning and knowledge inspired a sense of obligation and responsibility to share these new 'gifts' more broadly with others. One whānau member explained the responsibility that comes when given the gift of new knowledge to help and share with others.

> Now he talks - doing their [children's] homework and stuff. That's what changed. Since this, he is now sitting down with them and interacting with them. Because before [he] would always just get home very tired, stay on his phone, and then go rest. But now he gets home and I tell him, 'The more your children's brain learns, that's how they're gonna be growing up. If they're just gonna see you sit on your phone, they're not learning anything. But you need to put what you've just learnt into practice.' And that's what he's been doing. (Whānau)

The transfer of learning to home and family lives comes about as a result of the relevance of the learning to the employees' personal lives, because of the sense of pride employees develop around their achievement, and the tools they now have to, for example, communicate better, use computers, and talk with their children about learning.

> Taking the learning home to have different conversations at home ... I talk about some of the stuff we learn with my wife and have conversations which have been really good – so the benefits are wide ranging, not just in the workplace. (Employee)

> It's made a big difference across many levels ... these learnings have been taken home. I've had quite a few guys come back to me and say, "I know what my son or daughter is talking about now on their phone... I can actually see that they're doing on their phone and understand it now." (Employer)

A number of stories emerged through the programme of employees using the skills they had developed through the WLN programme to support their children. There were a number of stories of employees engaging more with their children who were a significant source of ongoing motivation and purpose. It was also identified that engaging with their children supported them to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills, such as doing school maths homework or reading bed time stories.

> I learnt about how to use the questions, 'why'. So I decided to use that and started asking her [daughter] why she's having trouble [with maths]. What came out of it was she was ashamed and too embarrassed to put her hand up and ask for help. So I told her I want her to put her hand up and ask for help. I said, I'm doing this programme. That's me putting my hand up and asking for help ... I want you to do the same. (Employee)

> There's actually quite a few takeaways from [the course]. There's the takeaway that we continue to improve in our jobs. That's working with all our staff. The personal ones to take away to home is I'm more involved with my kids, giving them ideas, throwing them different ways of looking at different issues that they have in their work. (Employee)

Whānau/aiga thought participation in the WLN programmes contributed to more communication within their respective whānau units. This was described as being immensely significant in supporting healthy whānau relationships, facilitating stronger whānau bonding, and contributing positively to the overall wairua (spirituality) of the whānau.

> Before? He wasn't usually talking to them [children] very much. Just come home and say hello - that's all. But now he's more talking to them and just giving them advice about the future. Example, one's getting married next year, so he talked to him. One's already got a child, so he talked to him and his partner. Just giving them advice. Fatherly talk, just to see where they're going with their family and preparation for getting married for my other one. (Whānau)

Employers also appreciate this 'snowball' effect as they see and hear about how their employees are engaging more with partners and children.

> The minimum I was hoping that they'd be able to fill out forms, plant check sheets ... to make sure that the place is safe to work in and they understand their tasks... We were hoping that would be achieved, but it was all that, a lot more and then even more going home to the whānau, which is the stories I mentioned earlier [employee reading and doing maths with child]. That was just one of the many that we heard that was really just providing a newfound confidence that these typically middle-aged or older men and women were actually having for the first time. It was really great. (Employer)

Changes take time and employees need to be afforded the opportunity to develop confidence and practise new skills. One employee who explained that he was more confident about public speaking said he still gets very anxious when speaking to large groups but feels more confident amongst smaller groups. He had not had the confidence to speak at his mother's tangi (funeral) or at family birthdays, even though he wanted to. "I'm still not there yet but feeling like I can get there as a result of what I have learned on the course."

In summary, from a whānau/aiga perspective this research shows the ripple effect of employees taking learning home and the subsequent impact it has on partners and children. However, the reverse is also true, and there is a need to explore this further, as whānau/aiga support the workplace learning as they observe changes that occur for family members.

> Yeah, like I said, I came here, struggle with everything: school, language, talking, speaking. As soon as I met [my wife] and she start teaching me stuff like that. So now I'm starting helping her with stuff. (Employee)

Conclusion

The policy issue highlighted by the PIAAC results shows Māori and Pacific respondents have lower literacy and numeracy levels than those from European and Asian backgrounds. Given the impact that low literacy and numeracy skills have on people's lives it is important to have interventions that develop people's skills so there are a wider range of opportunities available to them.

Programmes funded through the WLN fund provide such an opportunity as data from the last five years shows these programmes attract and retain high numbers of Māori and Pacific employees. It is clear from this research that learning in work time, and in the work context, provides a chance for these employees that they wouldn't otherwise have, given the time and cost implications of attending programmes outside of work. In addition, attending outside of work is unlikely given the lack of confidence and the possible whakamā they feel in relation to attending programmes with people they don't know.

Workplaces provide comfortable learning contexts for Māori and Pacific people as they build on existing relationships. Here there is a work whānau that provides the opportunity and conditions for joint endeavours, where there is a sense of collective rather than individual strength. Learning together in small groups for work and developing skills that can be transferred to their wider lives transforms these people personally along with bringing changes to workplaces.

This transformation is enabled through deliberate acts of facilitation that operate in an holistic way by paying attention to not only the content, but to the people. Here skilled facilitators are key. They know the employees and their culture. Where they are not familiar with the culture they are open about this and are prepared to develop their own cultural competence. They are passionate and empathetic and through manaakitanga show they have high expectations of the employees by acknowledging the expertise they bring to workplace training rooms. Facilitators also provide the space for employees to bring their own cultural experience to the learning.

From an ako perspective they facilitate learning that incorporates a range of teaching and learning strategies in a culturally competent way. They are not 'deliverers of content', rather they work in a co-constructed way that empowers employees to be active participants in the learning and acknowledges the expertise employees have in relation to the workplace content. Literacy and numeracy are woven through content that is explored

through, for example, individual and group work, role plays, workplace scenarios and project based-learning. It is also woven into learning that can be applied to their personal lives such as developing digital skills and financial literacy.

The workplace itself is an authentic and concrete context for learning. Here employees build on existing knowledge and expertise and develop as individual workers and as a workforce. As individuals' self-efficacy grows, so too does their confidence. The collective mahi contributes to more collegial workplaces where employees are enabled to work together to actively solve workplace challenges that are within their remit.

The role of employers is key. By allowing programmes to take place in work time they are showing employees they are valued. While employers acknowledge the challenges associated with this, they see the longer-term benefits of having employees who are more communicative and who participate more at work. This results in, for example, improved health and safety practices, improved teamwork, improved retention, improved workplace culture, along with quality improvement and innovation.

The learning at work extends beyond the boundaries of the workplaces. The expansive nature of the programmes goes beyond the functional learning required for work. This results in knowledge and skills being able to be transferred to employees' lives outside of work. The flow-on effects for whānau and aiga of having family members who are more confident and feel better about themselves are transformational.

In relation to whānau and aiga this research shows that employees take their improved communication skills into their home lives and become more active family members who engage more with partners, siblings, and children. They have the courage and confidence to meaningfully engage with, for example, children about their schoolwork and partners about aspects such as the family finances. What also comes through from whānau and aiga is the sense of pride they have in their family member's learning. The idea that that whānau and aiga members still want to learn, and/or have the courage to learn is inspiring for them.

Learning in workplace settings provides the context for the weaving together of ako, mahi, and whānau/aiga. It provides the opportunity for expansive learning that empowers individual Māori and Pacific employees and transforms the way they work and the way they operate in their personal lives. For some, it engenders a path towards a longer life of learning.

This happens as a result of their employers' offer of the learning opportunity and the individual employees who have the courage to take this up. It is enabled by facilitators who deliver relevant content in a culturally competent and co-constructed way and workplaces that in turn provide the opportunity for new learning to be used. Finally, it is supported by whānau and aiga who are proud of the employees' achievements and supportive of their current and future learning endeavours.

Considerations for the future

The findings of this research can be used:

- by educators to inform programme design and the capability building of their teaching workforces;
- by employers to gain an understanding of the difference these programmes make to workplaces and workforces;
- by educators and policy makers to take note of the role whānau/aiga and intentionally address this within programmes and funding rules and conditions; and
- by policy makers as evidence of the impact of workplace-based programmes and to think about ways to build this into social procurement processes.

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Appendix One: Workplace literacy and numeracy (WLN) programmes

The Workplace Literacy and Numeracy Fund

The WLN Fund has two strands; the Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO)-led strand and the Employer-led strand. The TEO-led strand accounts for the bulk of the fund, with hours being allocated 'on-plan' to around 20 TEOs, all of whom have NZQA approval (via ITP or PTE status). The balance of the fund is allocated on application to employers, who usually work in conjunction with a provider. While a number of the TEO-led providers are also contracted by employers to provide Employer-led Workplace Literacy and Numeracy (EWLN) programmes, there is a small number of LN providers who work only with EWLN programmes and who don't necessarily have PTE status.

There are some interesting differences in ethos and approach across workplace LN providers. Some providers are more business-focused, with LN being only one element of the education and training services that they offer. At the other end of the spectrum, some LN providers have a strong community focus and have developed from more of a social inclusion/emancipatory background. In choosing the research sites for this project we have been able to engage with both TEO-led and EWLN programmes and to work with a range of LN providers, each exhibiting different approaches. It would appear that these make only minimal difference to the nature of the programmes observed - the key element remains the fit between the tutor/facilitator and the learners.

What does a workplace literacy and numeracy programme look like?

The variety of LN providers also means there are variations in the nature of the programmes offered. The WLN funding rules require that programmes be 'standalone' literacy and numeracy programmes, of between 25 to 80 hours (programmes generally tend to run for around 40 hours). There is also an expectation that programmes will be contextualised to the workplace, for example, by using workplace documentation and processes as the basis for programme activities. These general guidelines, however, leave plenty of scope for providers to develop programmes that reflect their philosophies and ways of doing things. Thus, programmes may emphasise:

- More traditional LN activities e.g. comprehension, form-filling, numeracy activities etc
- Project-based learning, often utilising a continuous improvement project that employees will present to management at the conclusion of the programme
- Communication and employability skills, e.g. active listening, above and below the line behaviour, asking open questions etc.
- ESOL, in the workplace context
- Compliance, with a very focused workplace focus e.g. SOPs, health and safety processes etc.
- Digital skill development - this is becoming an increasing focus of many programmes as workplaces move to digital reporting, health and safety process, employee information (e.g. payroll and HR activities) etc.
- Personal or social outcomes, e.g. some programmes have a strong financial literacy component or will proactively engage with local libraries

- Qualification achievement - some programmes are closely tied to an industry qualification, and taught in the context of that qualification (WLN-funded learners may be concurrently enrolled in a level 1 or 2 industry training programme).

What's different about a workplace literacy and numeracy programme?

- The programmes are **delivered in the workplace**, at a time that can accommodate shifts, production schedules etc. Employees are generally paid for the time they attend and the employer often provides food.
- There is a strong degree of **employer commitment** required to run and ensure the success of the programme. As well as paying employees for attending, employers sometimes have to pay for backfill, arrange transport for remote employees, and provide a training area and other training supports.
- The programmes have a degree of **flexibility.** While there will usually be a series of lesson plans, most tutors/facilitators ensure they retain the ability to react to an issue or something new that occurs in the workplace. The programmes could be described as organic, reflecting learner needs, and bespoke to the employer.
- These programmes **don't generally directly result in a qualification**. Recognition often comes via a completion certificate presented at a graduation ceremony. However, given that the learners have often had a poor experience with the formal education system, the anxiety and 'fear of failure' involved in being enrolled in a qualification may significantly outweigh the benefit of obtaining a qualification.

Appendix Two: Workplaces

Over the course of the project we engaged initially with over ten workplaces. The realities of workplace commitments and changes in some of the programmes meant that there were varying levels of engagement across those workplaces. While all of the data gathered is relevant and useful, we have chosen to focus on eight of the workplaces, developing case studies for some and engaging more fully with the employers, tutors and employees (and their families) who participated in these programmes.

The eight workplaces:

- An Auckland-based manufacturer specialising in the building components industry, with more than 40 years of supply to the New Zealand building industry.
- An Auckland-based manufacturing company that was founded by the current owners' forbearers in 1930s.The multi-site organisation employs over 500 people, with approximately 65% being Pacific people.
- An Auckland-based labour hire company that has been operating for 20 years providing an efficient labour supply to the greater Auckland area. They specialise in the construction and civil industries and currently have over 300 staff working daily on sites throughout Auckland.
- An Auckland-based designer, manufacturer and marketer of health care products and systems.
- A central North Island wood processing company.
- An Auckland-based food and product packaging solutions company.
- A civil construction company that works across the wider Auckland region.
- Porirua City Council, one of 13 city councils in Aotearoa New Zealand. The Council employs around 400 staff, with approximately 17% being Māori and 11% Pacific people.

The predominance of Auckland-based companies reflects both the concentration of WLN programmes in this area, and the logistical realities of conducting this type of intensive research. The nature of the companies' activities is also reasonably reflective of the broad mix of industries where WLN programmes are delivered. We also had a reasonable number of women participants, given the nature of the industries and roles of the employees.

In keeping with our role as observers and 'witnesses', we did not collect detailed demographic data, being mindful of being as unobtrusive as possible. While the programme groups were mainly comprised of Māori and Pacific peoples, the groups all had different mixes of ethnicities and ages (with a number of participants in their late 60s and older!).

Appendix Three: Leata's Story

Company A is food and product packaging company based in West Auckland. Many of the employees are of Māori and Pacific descent, some of whom have English as a second language, left school at an early age, didn't enjoy school or perhaps have had a bad experience at school. However, they find themselves working happily at Company A. They talked of it being a good place to work because of the culture, it's closeness to their homes, or because it suits the family situation and they can be around for their children.

Company A saw a need to upskill their staff with a focus on quality. They wanted to ensure everyone knew how to carry out good quality reporting and at the same time improve the literacy and communication skills of their team. Some of the staff lacked confidence, so having a workplace literacy programme was an opportunity for staff to work on improving their communication as well as build their confidence.

The majority of the staff are Samoan and have worked at the company from between three and 30 years. Leata, is a Samoan-born employee who has been working at the company for 21 years. She likes working at the company because it's close to her home and is supportive of her family. The hours are also flexible and based around her family.

Leata works in data entry and her job is entering job components into the system. Before the data entry role she was a machine operator. She says that when she was asked to do data entry, she was scared and nervous because she hadn't learnt about this in Samoa. She mentioned that the company could see the way she worked, gave her an opportunity and were very happy. There was a condition from her in that she asked if she could trial for three months to see if she would be okay and if she would cope. She mentioned that being from Samoa, she had a lack of education, no computer skills and wanted to see if she could manage the data. It's now been six years and she is really enjoying her job!

Leata works in the office and speaks of being too scared to ask for help with her English and her learning. From the interview it appears that Leata is hungry to learn and improve. She talks about when she was given the opportunity to join the training programme she was so happy as she had been waiting for an opportunity like this for so long. She did not hesitate to show her interest.

An explanation about the course and its purpose was given and Leata saw it as an opportunity to help staff upskill their knowledge with the New Zealand way of doing things and giving everyone a better view of how things should be done.

She says, 'To be honest, this is my first time to sit in a classroom here in New Zealand.' (She is beaming with excitement and joy.) She mentions that this was an opportunity for her to catch up with what she lost when she was at school in Samoa. She also talks about English being her second language and that participating in the course was a good opportunity for her.

Leata took the LNAAT test and found it very difficult and wasn't sure. She went home and talked to her family and told them about the course. Her family encouraged her to do it as they saw it as a good opportunity for her.

> I'm on top of the world, I learnt a lot. I got my confidence especially speaking English because it's my second language. Before I sit back, as much as I want to ask, like in meeting or discussion, I'm not sure what I was going to say and if it's in a right place. But now, I'm not quite there but I think I've got my confidence to ask and I'm very happy about it.'

Leata talks about her communication with management and other workmates and says she now has the vocabulary to explain herself, to express her thoughts and what she would like to contribute to in conversations. She also talks about an improvement in emails to her supervisor or production manager. Before the programme she wouldn't use emails, she would go down and talk to people because she was too embarrassed to email, or just leave it. After attending the programme she is quite comfortable to write her emails and sees her grammar improving. This is what she sees are benefits of the programme for her.

She feels comfortable in class because the tutor is a Samoan. There is a sense of trust from her as she speaks openly. It seems she is also comfortable speaking with another Samoan woman [the researcher] while she is interviewed. This isn't the only reason she is opening up telling her story, but it's part of the whanaungatanga, the trust and the nurturing of the 'space' (teu le va).

Leata also talks of being familiar with her classmates and feeling confident to speak up in class. She speaks of when the tutor asks questions, she is confident to join in and contribute.

> [Facilitator] says there is no wrong and no right answer, he will assist to keep the conversation going and if it's not in place, well, that's why he is there, to correct our thinking so we don't think it's wrong.

Leata is buzzing, she loves everything about the course. She would be the first one to put her hand up to do it again, and she mentions that she would do it again and again.

Outside of work Leata talks of being a Sunday School Teacher and how she is teaching the Samoan language to the New Zealand born Samoans using the Bible. Before this course, she would conduct all her classes in Samoan because she was not confident and too shy to speak to the students in English. This has now changed. Leata teaches her classes using both Samoan and English languages.

This course has given her more confidence to speak regularly in English. Even at home with her children, they would speak to her in English and she would always use the Samoan language. Now, she feels that her vocabulary has increased and improved and that she is confident to have conversations in English with her children.

Leata's children know that every Wednesday is her 'school' day. She says her children are so proud of her. Every Wednesday morning, they would tell her to enjoy school and then that night at home they will ask her what her 'word of the week' is.

> We use the word when we are driving around in the car making sentences and having spelling tests ...'My children know every word on my course.

Leata really enjoys sharing her learning with her children. She says they have a lot of fun talking about her learning and they have lots of laughs. She knows her children are proud of her and always look forward to finding out what she has been learning.

Appendix Four: Ako in Action

This programme involves workplace behaviours and communications. Observations of lessons showed employees coming to understand behaviours and practices such as, collaborative problem solving, communication styles, active listening, above and below the line behaviour, and SWOT analysis.

Employees said they felt valued and privileged to be asked to go on the programme. They see this as managers showing an interest in them, seeing their potential, and possibly thinking of them for job promotions. One employee said he, "jumped at the chance" as he'd only been with the company for three months.

Settling employees into programmes and getting them comfortable in the learning environment is important. To help with this the facilitator provided space for conversations about whakapapa and whānau interests at the outset. Employees are also invited to to mihi. The facilitator says this honours and celebrates them as Māori. It's as if, "They need to be given permission to be Māori". This deliberate approach to manaakitanga allows employees to settle in, talk about themselves, get to know each other, and at the same time allows them to bring their own cultural experiences to the learning space.

Personalising the learning to home and work is key to the holistic teaching approach in this programme. Here the employees get to set themselves a 30 day personal challenge and a 30 day work challenge. Connecting the two worlds of whānau and mahi is important, as the employees recognise the skills they learn for work are transferable to their home lives.

Part of the 'whole-self' approach allowed the employees to open up about themselves. This was led by Steve who also opens up about himself and shares his struggles and challenges. A small example of this comes with employees being able to share something they feel ownership for in their personal lives. Here employees talked about a range of things and gave examples including; taking care of their homes; being able to build trust and honesty with their children; being able to afford to take children on outings; and being able to cook for their family.

The facilitator also sets tasks where employees are expected to use what they learn in the workshops either at work or at home and report back on actions they take. For example, one of the employees set their action to, "ask tough questions" at work, rather than just taking things for granted or not saying anything. The tough question was to ask the boss whether there was, "a plan for me as two other employees that started after me had been getting training in other areas." The outcome for this employee was twofold. Firstly from a work perspective there was clarification "that I was good at my job". Secondly from a personal, wellbeing perspective was the sense of pride that came from having the confidence to raise this issue with the boss.

The 30 day personal challenge allows employees to come to the programme at a personal level and see the benefits it brings to their own lives. One employee took on the

challenge of saying something postive to herself every day. “My self-confidence and self-belief has grown. I’ve applied for two internal jobs since then. I didn’t get them, but feel okay about this.I would have probably have applied for them anyway, but I went into it feeling more confident. I used to think that these jobs were beyond me.”

Underpinning the growing self-belief of the employees was their desire to also do things differently at work. Here it was not a case of just doing their own job better, but they also wanted to be able to think about innovation, how they contribute to or increase productivity, and improve workplace culture. This comes from thinking about improvements to the way work is structured or completed and also through the ways in which they communicate their thinking.

This then sets the tone for their 30 day work challenge to come up with a solution or improvement to the way in which they work or the way in which something can be done differently. This is where classroom learning is transferred to the workplace and literacy and numeracy used to solve real problems. Employees presented their solutions to the plant manager at their final workshop.

Overall the programme impacts on all involved. For the facilitator the concept of ako is important. He said he has as much to learn from the employees as they do from him. He consistently affirms the employees, endorsing their thinking and feelings about personal and work situations. The employees talked about the changes that have happened for them during the course as they have been given techniques to manage themselves and situations differently.

As a result of the programme the employees have ideas about where they want to go next.

E wants to progress to the next course. She is going to use a SWOT analysis to identify her own strengths and weaknesses. She also plans to use more active listening techniques, be more present and to ask open questions to invite conversation with others. J wants to get a permanent role at the plant. He also wants to work on his active listening, develop a positive attitude with people, get more involved with his team and acknowledges that he needs to initiate this.

Observation of workshops and the conversations with the employees and the facilitator show that the workplace literacy and numeracy programme was valued and has led to changed thinking, to reflection and changed ways of working with families and at work.

D highlights this. He said he was grateful to have been part of the group and feels like he matters as result of having been put on the course. The key learning for him has been about active listening and about how to change to more passive, but assertive rather than aggressive behaviour. He acknowledged that it is important to keep calm. He said this has led him to be a better team member and also to being better at home.

Appendix Five: Keeping the city sparkling

As part of the research project this story was published on the Skills Highway website, May 2019 (https://www.skillshighway.govt.nz/success-stories/keeping-the-city-sparkling)

Frontline staff at Porirua City Council take great pride in their work and their city. They recognise that what they do impacts how people view the city and surroundings.

As Parks Operations Manager, Julian Emeny puts it, "I see the pride and passion they have in looking after the city – keeping it sparkling. It's their backyard. It's meaningful. They put their heart in to it. We want to create opportunities for personal development and growth. If you focus on the person, they feel valued and you get better customer service."

After being approached by the training provider Capital Training, the Council recognised they had a great opportunity to upskill some of their workers so they were better placed to complete paper work, engage with colleagues, contribute ideas, and to gain computer skills. "Overall it was a perfect storm," says Senior People & Capability Advisor, Joanna Parker. "Our people had a need and were ready to learn, Capital Training arrived with a flexible programme, great tutor and fantastic behind-the-scenes support, and our managers were happy to enable it."

The option to attend the course was voluntary, and initially some participants from frontline roles in Recreation, Parks and Operations Support were uncertain. "We approached it with a positive twist," says Julian. "We made sure there was food for morning tea and the support of one of the supervisors who also went along to the course."

The Council had both business and social motives for instigating the training. Likewise for learners on the programme, attending improved their skills at work and at home. While they appreciated that their reading, writing and communication had improved, what they valued the most was learning about computers. "I used to just watch the kids on the computer and I'm now able to join them – but their fingers are really fast!" said Iaone.

Naing Ha commented that learning about computers has really helped him. Before the course he didn't use the computer much. "Now I can email and look up plant types. It's easier for me to find things on the computer." Sale also loves changes it has made to him. "I can go into work early in the morning and see the news. I also send emails to my boss. I now know how to take photos on my phone and send them to the boss. He thinks it's amazing." Setu and Laseng also talked about how they'd learnt to log-in and were using computers for the first time. Empowering staff in this way delivers benefits that can be measured way beyond just the workplace.

Keeping learners' interest up over an 80-hour course takes something special. Joanna commented that after their early hesitancy the workers became personally invested in their learning. This was demonstrated by their commitment to attending (sometimes even when on leave), interest in the content, the motivation they showed to continue their learning and also in the respect they developed for their tutor David. They variously described David as, "patient, understanding, humble, respectful, and kind." David thinks his approach works

so well because he uses the principles and values of the community. “Manaakitanga and tuakana-teina - they are surrounded by this thinking.” And from the Council’s perspective Joanna said they appreciated David’s reliability, flexibility, responsiveness, and ability to deliver content that met the Council’s and learners’ needs.

And what difference has it made to the way of working? As with other programmes, improving confidence is one of the biggest differences that managers have noticed in their workers. Charmaine Berkland, Street Works Supervisor, said this confidence is shown by proactive and positive participation in workplace activities. She cited the example of a recent team building day the workers on the programme were more confidently able to interact with managers and co-workers – better than other workers were. They are also now filling out their own time sheets and sending emails. Learning about computers has also meant the learners have been able to undertake the new health and safety training programme that is totally online.

Getting programmes like this underway and maintaining the commitment isn’t always straightforward. As Joanna says, “The programme is funded, but there are costs in terms of on-the-job productivity, managers’ time, and resources like computers and meeting rooms. However, offering this opportunity also shows people they are valued. I believe that we have a responsibility to support the holistic development of our people. And when we do, we also benefit. Not only from more engaged and confident employees, but also from more actively contributing members of our community.”