Pasifika learner success in workplace settings – thematic literature review

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1. Introduction

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

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

The project aims to answer the following questions:

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

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

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

2. Background

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The ITO context

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

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

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

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

Diversity in the Pasifika population

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

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

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

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

Some examples of these diversities include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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[3] Total figures exceed the total number of Pasifika people reported earlier because people are able to claim more than one ethnicity.
[4] At the 2013 census around 30% of the Pasifika population were born outside of New Zealand, a significant change from the percentage at the 1986 census which was 50%. Samoan (35.1%) and Tongan (37.1%) people are more likely to be overseas-born compared to Cook Island (20.9%) and Niuean (17.6%) (Tanielu, 2014)
[5] Defined as managerial and professional roles mainly in these industries: education and training (teachers); professional and technical services; health and social assistance; and agriculture (farmers and farm managers).
[6] Including role such as carers, receptionist, drivers, clerks, process workers, sales workers, agricultural workers, and cleaners.

3. Methodology

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

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

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

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

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

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

Data synthesis and framework for analysis

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

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

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

4. Key themes

Overview

This literature review has identified six key themes:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Each of these themes are discussed below.

A. The need for new approaches

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

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

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

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

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

No roadmap yet

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

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

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

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

B. Context matters

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

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

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

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

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

Holistic approaches

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Involve trainees

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

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

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

C. Employers are central

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

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

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

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

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

Engage employers

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

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

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

D. Internal change is needed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meaningful changes

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

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

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

E. Mentoring can be effective

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mentoring works

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Contextualising mentoring within a wider set of overlapping sources of support that are provided collaboratively. See Appendix three. (Beckett, 2014);
- Deciding how mentors are selected including the relative priority given to, for example, cultural affinity, geographic location, and trade skills, and using profiling tools;
- Designing induction, training and support programmes that are culturally appropriate, and provide trainees with a degree of autonomy (for example, in the selection of mentors);
- Ongoing opportunities to mentors to collaborate on complex issues, share good practice, and access to useful information about trainee progress;
- Establishing degree of formality and structure to the mentoring relationship to set clear expectations, while not rigidly defining how mentoring should take place;
- Recognising that being mentored is a skill in itself, and that a sense of ownership needs to be engendered.
- Providing appropriate tools and resources such as mentor and mentee profiles, goal setting sheets, questioning techniques templates, formative evaluation forms and effective guides for mentors.

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

Approaches

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

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

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

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

F. Measure success

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

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

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

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

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

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

Measurement

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

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

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

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

5. Discussion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Appendix 1– Pillars for Pasifika Learner Success

Key findings from the research

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

Pillars for Pasifika Learners Success: A Holistic Learning Environment

Key themes in the Ako Aotearoa-supported research projects

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

AUTHENTIC ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES AND VALUES

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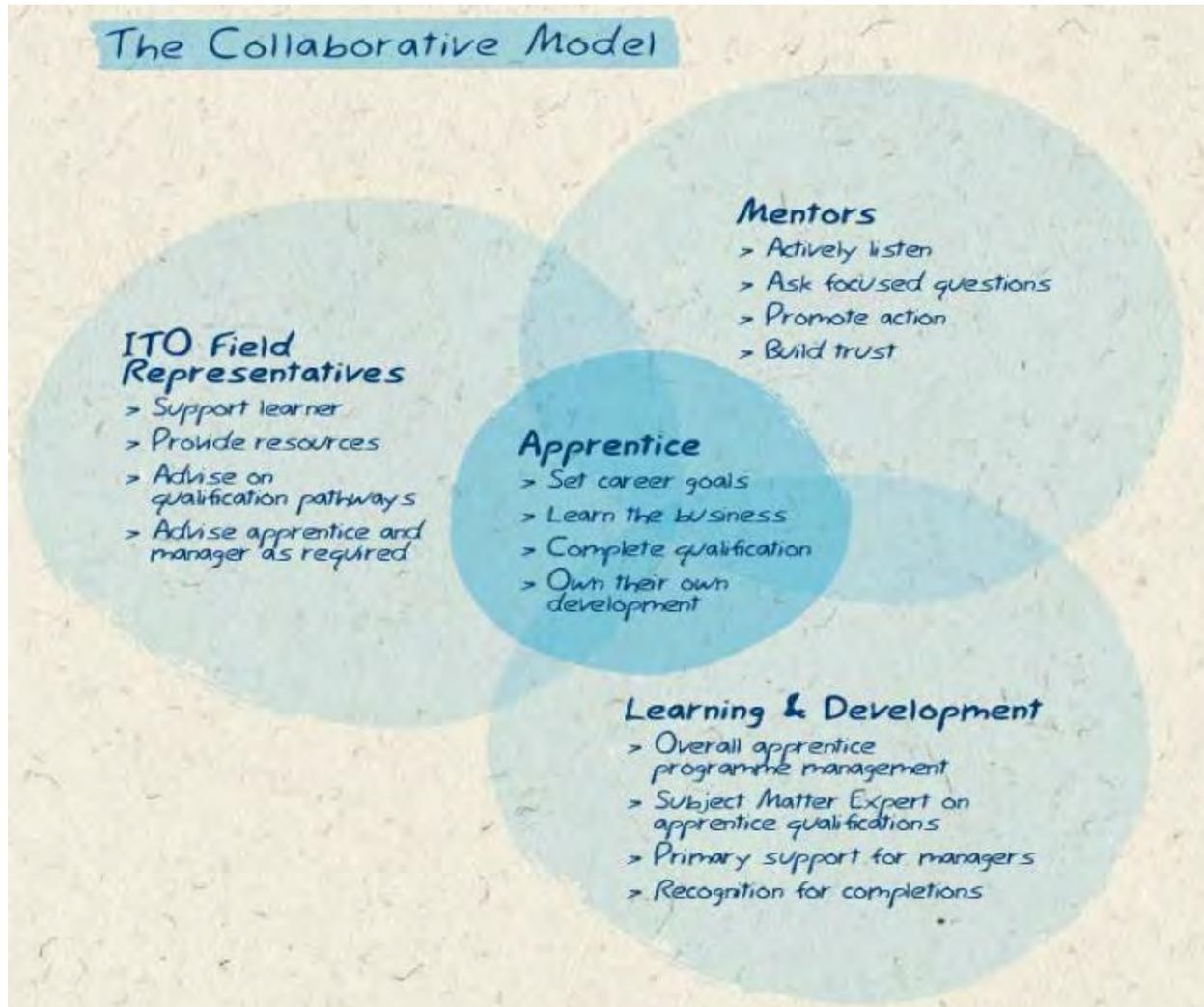
Appendix 2– Success factors[7]

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

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

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

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[7] Competenz (2014)

Appendix 3– Collaborative model[8]

The Collaborative Model

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

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

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

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

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[8] Beckett (2014)