



# Enhancing Educational Success through Talanoa

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# The party madness of the education system

- ▶ What a weird and tangled web we have for the modern education system
  1. The products and services are designed by one party (MOE)
  2. Developed by a second party (NZQA, TEC, TERTIARIES)
  3. Delivered by a third party (Training institutions, teachers)
  4. To a different and separate fourth party (students)
  5. Yet paid for by a fifth party (parents/tax payer)
  6. Evaluated by a sixth party (ERO, Researchers)
  7. Moderated by a seventh party (NZQA) and
  8. Overseen by an eighth party (MOE, TEC, Government)
- ▶ Its little wonder we continue to struggle with the mess we find ourselves in

# Enhancing Educational Success through Talanoa

## Aim of the paper

- ▶ Review the identified factors that have impacted on Pacific Student educational success in *Aotearoa* New Zealand
- ▶ Review the Te Kotahitanga initiative for Maori as a potential mechanism for developing a strategy aimed at improving educational success for Pacific students
- ▶ Provide a framework for enhancing Pacific student success and retention through traditional *talanoa* and practices

# The current status

- ▶ Relatively low educational success in relation to both literacy and numeracy across all education levels
- ▶ Low participation in early childhood centres
- ▶ Low levels of engagement in the classroom
- ▶ Behavioural issues in the classroom
- ▶ Relatively high drop out rates
- ▶ Employment challenges more significant
- ▶ Loss of cultural identity and language
- ▶ Other social outcomes that have been associated with low educational achievement (crime, family violence alcohol and substance abuse)

# Factors that have had an impact on Pacific Student Educational Success

- ▶ The Influence of Parent and Community Engagement
- ▶ The Influence of Culture and Language
- ▶ The Influence of Early Childhood Education
- ▶ Attendance Engagement and Educational Success

# The Influence of Parent and Community Engagement

- ▶ Parent and community involvement contributes positively to educational success
- ▶ Parent involvement may be limited by their own education
- ▶ Reading at home with parent and children a strong driver of lift literacy levels
- ▶ Some schools have not actively engaged the involvement of parents
- ▶ Communication between parents and the school is needs developing

# The Influence of Culture and Language

- ▶ Some authors have suggested culture as a barrier to educational success (Meade et al (2003), Ferguson et al (2008))
- ▶ The predominant western culture of the Education system creates an inhospitable learning environment for students of other cultures (Zyngier. 2008)
- ▶ Pacific Students have raised concern of cultural discrimination (Wylie et al (2009))
- ▶ Pacific languages not encouraged
- ▶ Loss of opportunity to learn English through ones first language (Franken et al 2005)
- ▶ Opportunity for deep learning through bilingualism lost (Franken et al, 2005)

# The Influence of Early Childhood Education

- ▶ Opportunity to develop children during the years 0-5 not always carried out.
- ▶ These development can be achieved through ECE.
- ▶ Many Pacific families do not use ECEs
- ▶ Some ECEs have not focused on those attributes that will align children for future education



# Attendance Engagement and Educational Success

- ▶ Truancy no longer a significant driver of low educational achievement for Pacific students
- ▶ Engagement in the class room is still lacking
- ▶ Engagement may not be at the cognitive level
- ▶ The role of the teacher as a catalyst for engagement is important
- ▶ Effective Teaching Profile (ETP) a possible way forward for increasing levels of student engagement

# Te Kotahitanga

- ▶ A Educational Initiative lead by a number of leading Maori education academics
- ▶ Focus on collective data from the target audience of education namely Maori students, their parents and teachers
- ▶ The data was analysed to create a Effective Teaching Profile with a view to making the teaching and learning experience a collaborative exercise of knowledge sharing between equals

# Effective Teaching Profile (ETP)

- ▶ *Manaakitanga* – teachers care for the students as culturally located human beings above all else
- ▶ *Manamotuhake* – Teachers care about the performance of their students
- ▶ *Whakapitingatanga* – Teachers are able to create a secure and well managed learning environment through incorporating routine pedagogical knowledge with pedagogical imagination.
- ▶ *Wananga* – Teachers are able to engage in effective teaching interactions with Maori students as Maori
- ▶ *Ako* – Teachers are able to use a range of strategies that promote effective teaching and relationships with learners
- ▶ *Kotahitanga* – Teachers promote, monitor and reflect on outcomes that in turn lead to improvements in educational success for Maori students.

# Te Kotahitanga – Implementation and Evaluation

- ▶ Implemented in 2004 and 2005 in 12 schools and with 422 teachers
- ▶ One of the Schools is Kelston Girls College in West Auckland
- ▶ The educational achievements of both Maori and Non-Maori students have increased since the time the Te Kotahitanga programme was introduced.
- ▶ Achievement levels in both literacy and numeracy have increased beyond the national cohort average

# A Framework for Enhancing Educational Success through talanoa

- ▶ The education system in New Zealand is both complex and involves many participants
- ▶ The design and implementation of education services and programmes has been largely authored by government agencies, professional third parties with little input from the audience that it is supposed to most benefit.
- ▶ The accumulated literature on education by 'Maori for Maori' has created the 'tipping point' for change to happen.
- ▶ For Pacific education this initiative should encourage change and development to in education to address the disparities in educational achievement that current exist for Pacific students.

# A Framework for Enhancing Educational Success through talanoa

- ▶ The proposed framework and process involved directly engaging with students, parents and community to determine the needs and demands of students.
- ▶ This needs to be done in such a way as to reach a level of understanding that would in turn inform the development of tools and methods that are suited to the specific audience that participated in its design.
- ▶ Talanoa is the proposed mechanism that will achieve this level of understanding

# A Framework for Enhancing Educational Success through *talanoa*

- ▶ *Talanoa* is a traditional form of communication shared and common across the Island nations of the South Pacific ([Prescott, 2008](#)).
- ▶ The term is however more than a simple form of communication and is underpinned by a number of entrenched values and aspirations ([Halapua, 2003](#)).
- ▶ Halapua suggests that *talanoa* is laced with cultural protocols and is carried out in an environment of trust, respect, cooperation and a willingness to reach a status of understanding and relationship.

# A Framework for Enhancing Educational Success through talanoa

Cultural Practices that may be included as specific tools and values within the framework

- ▶ Event mentality
- ▶ Relationship and reciprocity
- ▶ Kinship and community
- ▶ Learning through doing
- ▶ White Sunday
- ▶ Celebration
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Church and Faith



# Conclusion

- ▶ The paper suggests the adoption of a modified version of the process and framework used by the Te Kotahitanga project.
- ▶ The use of *talanoa* as the mechanism for collecting and analysing the data will ensure the developed outcome reflects the needs and learning requirements of the student.
- ▶ The cultures, values and beliefs of the Pacific nations is the final component of the framework and is intended to provide the foundation upon which the specific tools and models are created.

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# Questions

