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RESEARCH ARTICLE (PEER-REVIEWED)

Hīnātore: Empowering Māori and Pacific Workplace Learners

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Abstract

Hīnātore: Empowering Māori and Pacific workplace learners research project investigated the development of employees who undertook literacy and numeracy programmes in their workplaces, during work time. This article 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 after a programme; and how learning is taken into and contributes to whānau/aiga (family) lives.

Introduction

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,

1 This 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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the first glimmer of light was Hinātore. 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 Hinātore 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.

Policy Environment

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 & 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, Bynner and Parsons (2006) 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, when they do, they can cope with simple tasks and use minimal functions in generic computer programmes (Ministry of Education & 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).

Policy Intervention

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

- upskill workers throughout their working lives, particularly as the age of the working population increases;
- bring equity to training delivery so 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) 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 New Zealand's 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 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 (Tertiary Education Commission 2008). They have access to 25-80 hours of learning usually in the workplace and in worktime.

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. This thinking aligns with Jurmo's categorisation of 'collaborative, problem-solving' (cited in Derrick 2012:13) in that programmes are about

workforce and workplace development. Here approach looks to lead to the transformation of both, through taking a holistic view of learning that is contextualised to the workplace and to the wider needs and interests of 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 just under 40 percent of the employees who access WLN funded programmes are Māori and Pacific people. They

- have gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills as shown by the results of the Literacy and Numeracy for Adults Assessment Tool (LNAAT)² 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.

The evidence also shows Māori and Pacific employees are engaged and retained in these programmes and use their newly developed knowledge and skills in their work, whānau/ aiga (family) and community lives. It also shows that during the time of these programmes and shortly after them, economic, social and wellbeing outcomes accrue to these employees (Alkema 2015; Alkema 2016; Alkema 2017; Skills Highway 2018; Alkema & Murray 2019).

However, not enough is known about the ako (teaching and learning) of the programmes, the cultural values that underpin teaching and learning, and the extent to which approaches which lead to success are practised, as articulated in literature (Kerehoma, Connor, Garrow, & Young 2013; Luafutu-Simpson, Noa, Uta'I & Petelo 2018; Ryan, Kitone & Fleming 2017; 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 Project

In 2017 the Industry Training Federation applied for and was awarded funding from Ako Aotearoa to support a co-funded research project to explore the above aspects.

Research Approach

The key questions for this project were:

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?

² Further information on LNAAT can be found at <http://assessforadults.nzcer.org.nz/support/solutions/articles/4000121824-what-is-the-assessment-tool-lnaat-what-was-it-designed-to-do-> ; and 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>

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 Approaches

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, and programme facilitators.

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).

A fuller description of both approaches can be found in the final report that is due to be published by Ako Aotearoa early in 2020.

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 and facilitators who were willing to participate in the research.

Researchers visited eight workplaces at the beginning and towards the end of their literacy and numeracy programmes. A combination of semi-structured and narrative, face-to-face interviews; focus groups; and observations were used to collect data from around 100 participants (employees, employers, programme facilitators, and family members). All the participants had the opportunity to tell their own stories by talking about their own perceptions and experiences.

The face-to-face interviews with employees were conducted in workplaces usually during the teaching programmes. They 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/aiga evening when, over a shared meal, researchers shared project findings and then invited them to share the stories of change for families that had occurred during the time of the programmes.

An observation framework was developed for the project.³ As a data collection tool it helped to ensure similar data were collected by the different 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). In addition to the framework being used in session observations it also served as a touchstone for interviews with employees and facilitators.

Data Analysis

A grounded theory, inductive approach was used to 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 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 findings emerge from the perceptions and experiences of those who told their stories.

Of interest in the way it was undertaken was the iterative and sense making approach used 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 (Davidoff 2014) took place during and after the data collection process. Here each of the researchers brought a different cultural lens along with different perspectives about adult teaching and learning. This allowed for analysis, discussion, and reflection about what was observed and heard.

Our position as researchers was that of witnesses to the events and stories of the Hinātore 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.

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, and as mentioned above, the findings were described to and discussed with around 60 *whānau/aiga* members at an end of project dinner.

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).

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.

Findings and Discussion

This section describes the findings under three headings:

Ako – teaching and learning

Mahi – the workplace and connections to work

Whānau / Aiga – the family and community

Ako: Teaching and Learning

Upskilling Māori and Pacific 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 and using culturally appropriate pedagogies that incorporate the context in which the employees live and work (Luafutu-Simpson, Noa, Uta'I & Petelo 2018; Prebble n.d.; Sciascia 2017). In her review of 45 research projects on teaching adult Māori learners Sciascia (2017) concluded such teaching and learning incorporates 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, 2017:11).

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.

In a similar vein, 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.

This thinking is affirmed by the Ministry of Education (2018) in the school sector where examples of four 'Pacific-based pedagogical models and frameworks' are presented (p. 26). The models talk about the importance of acknowledging cultural identities, understanding diversity, and the importance of connecting Pacific world views with those of the mainstream education system.

Such approaches are necessary for adult learners who may not have had positive experiences at school. A number of Māori and Pacific employees in the project spoke of negative experiences that resulted in learning trauma such as feeling ‘dumb’ or being ‘anxious’ around learning environments. They also noted the whakamana (restorative nature) of workplace learning in that they now identify themselves as learners and have a growing sense of self-efficacy in relation to this.

Effective facilitators in this project moved employees away from this state of anxiety and provided the space for deep relationships and reciprocal learning to emerge. Before they started the programmes employees talked about their concerns about going back to learning given their less than positive schooling experiences.

It’s very different from school – where we were asked to absorb all those things. Now these things stick. We’re more active in how we learn. Before it doesn’t mean anything to you. Here you take it on. ... You can talk your mind out. It’s more fun. Have fun, enjoy and it sticks. (Employee)

Underpinning the facilitators’ approach is the high expectations they have for themselves to be successful educators of Māori and Pacific employees and, in turn, the expectations they have for these employees.

They shine when they come to class. I try make it simple. I think about my own school experience. I really wanted to learn [and couldn’t]. There’s a cultural barrier [in workplaces]. We’re [Pacific people] carefree around time management and communication with others... (Facilitator)

In keeping with this is the cultural inclusivity practised by the facilitators who openly honour these employees for who they are. This is promoted in the learning spaces and the workplace, and was recognised by the employees and the employers

... [the programme participants] were thinking, is this just another course that the employer wants us to complete to make us faster workers? But they could see that it was engaging them and the provider is really focused on cultural awareness in the workplace and what it is Māori people like to see in their workforce and what’s important to them, as well as the Pacific Islanders. (Employer)

Another important finding in this work was the vulnerability of the facilitators. This was noticed by employees when facilitators were open 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 cultural experts and were prepared and able to learn alongside, with and from, the employees in the spirit of ako. The following two vignettes illustrate some examples of ako that incorporate deliberate acts of cultural competence and co-constructed approaches to teaching and learning with Māori and Pacific employees.

VIGNETTE ONE: AKO

Daniel is a tutor with Māori heritage, running 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 to the way they were. 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.

Employees discussed the factors that made the ako approach work for them. Here their responses mirror those of the facilitators. Employees talked about their facilitators having

high expectations of them and challenging them to think about and reflect on their workplace practices and behaviours.

He 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)

Having fun and relaxing into learning was also important, '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 the employees feel 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 created both by the facilitators and the employees themselves.

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)

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)

... 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)

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.

...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 ... (Whānua/aiga member)

Mahi – the workplace and connections to work

There is an expectation that programmes be negotiated by participants, and be bespoke and contextualised to individual workplaces, for example, by using workplace documentation and processes as the basis for programme activities. Workplaces are strong teaching and learning environments because, as described above: 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.

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. But with this one, I think he started with some of the boys that he knew from work. ... Outside would be no. (Whānau/Aiga Member)

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.

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 ... [but] we found it was so much more ... it was more about gaining confidence to speak up, why meetings happen, why we fill out forms ... and what happens to them. (Employer)

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.

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)

In the main, the approach aligns with Derrick's (2012) 'situated-expansive' framework . Here, for example, literacy and numeracy are embedded into learning programmes; facilitators and employees take a collaborative approach; what is taught and learned is negotiable; literacy is seen as a social practice; and developing employees happens for work, and social and wellbeing purposes.

In keeping with this framework, programme content has, for example, included workplace documentation (Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), health and safety processes); project-based learning, often utilising continuous improvement projects that employees will present to management at the conclusion of the programme; and digital skill development – as workplaces increasingly move to digital reporting.

While these cover off the knowledge and skills needed for work, programmes also look to improve social and wellbeing outcomes through a focus on, for example, communication skills

(active listening, above and below the line behaviour), financial literacy skills, and through connecting employees into community based services such as libraries.

Given the direct relationship of the learning content to the workplace, employees' self-efficacy grows as they 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.

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

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

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)

Programmes that have included workplace project-based learning 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. His motivation for doing this was 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 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)

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.

A lot of a change - not only towards me, but towards our children. I definitely know it's also in his workplace, because I'm hearing a lot of positive feedback from his workplace... Now it's come to our church. He's a deacon. (Whānau/Aiga Member)

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)

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)

The transfer of learning to home and family lives comes about as a result of the conversations facilitators have with employees about the transfer of skills, 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. Employers also appreciate this 'snowball' effect as they see and hear about how their employees are engaging more with partners and children.

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)

Interviews with family members show how improved communication skills improve the engagement and relationships employees have with their families. Here the common theme is that employees have the confidence to engage more with their families. They not only talk about what they are learning, but also take more interest in the what family members are doing.

Most definitely it's been beneficial for my mother. Yeah, she's very happy to have done this course. Like I was saying earlier, she gives me full paragraphs about her day instead of saying just 'good'. (Whānau/Aiga Member)

... since being part of the programme, he's more talkative, wanting to know how we're doing at work, how are the kids at school. It's very good. He's more active in their learning and in our lives too. Cos we were quiet, but now we're able to talk and able to understand. He's able to understand our world as well in regards to education. Yeah, we're very proud of him. (Whānau/Aiga Member)

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'.

Employees also 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.

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 workplace learning as they observe changes that occur for family members.

Conclusion

Programmes run through the WLN fund attract and retain high numbers of Māori and Pacific employees. The research described in this article explored why these employees stay in workplace literacy and numeracy programmes and engage with learning; illustrated the factors that lead to successful outcomes; and looked at culturally responsive pedagogies and how new learning transfers to employees ways of working and to their whānau/aiga and community lives.

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, whānau-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 workplace learning.

The programmes develop people through working in an expansive, rather than functional way. As a result of this the Hinātore research suggests that successful outcomes for Māori and Pacific employees, their workplaces and whānau/aiga are the result of a nexus of factors.

- Through ako the facilitators deliver with vulnerability and humility; understand the ako process and its collaborative, reciprocal nature; acknowledge the importance of relationships and cultural connections; and facilitate learning that incorporates a range of teaching strategies and in a culturally competent way.
- Through mahi, the programmes are bespoke and contextualised to the workplace, developing organically in response to authentic workplace issues; and the workplace context ensures relevance and shows employees they are valued by their employers.
- Through whānau/aiga comes the additional impetus that can lead to wider whānau/aiga wellbeing; greater connection with partners and children; and the realisation that they can engage with the wider lives of family and community members.

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