



Is your research making a difference to Pasifika education?: Towards guidelines for enhanced Pasifika education research/ policy linkages

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This presentation...

- Project purpose and progress to-date
- The draft guidelines - overview
- Draft guidelines - principles
- Draft guidelines - proposed actions
- Development and consultation process for the Guidelines
- Seeking you thoughts....



Project purpose & progress

- A collaboration between the Ministry of Education and NZARE (Pasifika caucus).
- To assist the production of high quality research that informs government policy aimed at improved Pasifika education outcomes.
- To increase policy makers' capability to plan for, and commission, quality research projects, and enhance policy through the integration of quality research.



The guidelines aim to:

- assist the production of high quality research that informs government policy aimed at improved Pasifika education outcomes;
- increase the quality and quantity of research;
- widen the pool of capable Pasifika education researchers;
- increase policy makers' capability;
- integrate Pasifika education research methodologies; and
- generate more research evidence that can be used to inform policy.



Progress to-date

A two-day symposium (November 2007) to inform the development of the guidelines:

- 7 Government agencies, 7 Universities, and independent consultants were invited participants.
- Original papers commissioned (Dr Melanie Anae, Dr Meaola Amituanai-Toloa), along with presentations from Government agencies and researchers.

Draft Guidelines have been developed along with a further development process.



Draft Guidelines

- 28 pages
- Prepared by Karlo Mila-Schaaf with advice from Symposium participants and on contract to the Ministry of Education.
- Working title: *Guidelines on translating Pasifika education research into policy and practice: Taking a collective approach to knowledge generation.*

Sections:

- Principles
- Action points
- Working definition of Pasifika education research
- Working definition of Pasifika peoples
- References



A working definition of Pasifika Research

“Educational research involving Pacific participants”

(Anae et al 2001:6).

- Research that touches the life and wellbeing of Pasifika people; a net that catches everything important.
 - high expectations of Pasifika research, its contents, methods, codes of conduct governing it, plus its pragmatic outcomes.
- The Draft Guidelines are not only about the production of information via research, but also the transfer of that research into ‘knowledge’ with a strong emphasis on the transmission, translation, reception, integration, and uptake of the research product.



A working definition of Pasifika Peoples

Term of convenience used throughout the Draft Guidelines and by the MoE.

Those peoples who have migrated from Pacific nations and territories. Holds much cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity.

New Zealand-based (and born) population, who identify as Pacific, via ancestry or descent.

And...



“We should be able to determine who is in and who is out”
(Symposium participant, 2007)

“I don’t agree. Who has the right to do this?”
(Symposium participant, 2007)

- Demand for ethnic-specific approaches, information and determination, even *within* ethnic-specific groups
- Pasifika in Aotearoa/New Zealand is about ongoing engagement and interaction with other cultures.
- Research of Pacific young people identified a preference for an inclusive “Come as you are” approach to culture (Mila-Schaaf 2007); a non-judgemental and creative approach to changing cultural orientations and affirmation of the identities young Pacific people express or identify with, as acceptable and valid.



“We need to create and participate in conversations that put forward multi-dimensional reference points that explain the rich ethnic identities of Pacific children, youth and their families” (Anae 2007).

“Both strands [as a convenient grouping and ethnic-specific approaches] are necessary to make things work for our children”

(Symposium Participant 2007).

Any definition of what we mean by “Pasifika” will always be a work in progress.

“Pacific peoples are both local and global, genealogically, spiritually and culturally connected to the lands, the skies and seas of the Pacific region”

(Tofamamao Working Party 2007).



Founding principles of the Draft Guidelines

- Collective knowledge generation will lead to optimal Pasifika education and development outcomes.
- Good relationships are the precondition for a collective approach to knowledge generation and translation.



Action Points in the Draft Guidelines

- Identify the knowledge stakeholders of Pasifika Education Research
- Set research agendas collaboratively
- Take a co-ordinated approach to knowledge generation
- Take a cumulative approach to knowledge generation
- Speak knowledge languages to enable Pasifika research translation
- Synthesize knowledge to share knowledge
- Recognise that everyone is a potential knowledge broker



Action 1: Identify the knowledge stakeholders of Pasifika Education Research

- Learners and their families
- Teachers as Practitioners
- Pasifika Communities
- Researchers
- Policymakers



Learners and their families
Teachers as Practitioners
Pasifika Communities
Researchers
Policymakers

“When will our children taste the fruit?”

“We know things have to change, but how do you change what goes on between a teacher and child in a classroom; what happens between a parent and a child; what happens within a child’s head?”

“Listen to those at the interface, who have strong links to grassroots and experiences – they must inform research and policy”

Researchers as Knowledge Translators

For research to be useful to Policy-makers, it should employ:

- Methods that stand up both nationally and internationally
- Methodologies that are replicable
- Methodologies that demonstrate a thoughtful dialogue and synergistic exchange between quantitative and qualitative knowledge, e.g. strategic use of small case studies to illuminate big picture trends.



Action Point 2: Set Research Agendas Collaboratively

Facilitating a good quality interaction at the outset so that research project topics are of increased relevance.

Seeking an understanding of the full range of questions asked by the users of research to identify useful knowledge gaps (Lavis 2005).

When agencies are involved in shaping research questions in topical areas, and are briefed on results, they are more likely to implement results

(Howden-Chapman 2005).

Possible Activities:

- Commission scoping reviews prior to research
- Use systematic reviews to inform priority setting
- Engage the users of research in priority setting
- Engage in constructive problem talk with stakeholders
- Reward researchers who have demonstrated evidence of consultation with other knowledge stakeholders in the development of research topics





Action Point 3: Take a Co-ordinated Approach to Knowledge Generation

“It is clear that a strategic approach will be required in order to prioritise where further research resources should be directed” (Coxon et al 2002:138).

At the 2007 Symposium, a strong desire was expressed by participants for a national research agenda for Pasifika education research.

Discussion:

- Map the sector; operate collaboratively
- Shortage of outcomes focused Pasifika education knowledge
- Even knowing the negative statistics is fundamentally empowering
- Strengths-based, not deficit in orientation; strategically relevant.
- Pasifika-specific research is appropriate for New Zealand



Action Point 4: Take a cumulative approach to knowledge generation



There is a sense that research tends to be haphazard and developed in an ad-hoc manner that does not dialogue effectively with what is known already in an area.

The desire to generate knowledge in a cumulative fashion challenges researchers to use findings and systematically build knowledge.



4: Systematic reviews to improve the uptake of research into policy



Systematic reviews (Lavis, 2004) :

- Identify gaps in existing knowledge.
- Reduce bias in the estimation of effectiveness of particular approaches / interventions.
- Can identify that there is no research-based answer for a problem, which may be useful in itself and possibly enable new innovations.
- Become useful resources in themselves that can be easily used by others.



Action point 5: Speak knowledge languages to enable Pasifika Education Research translation



Five critical partners of Pasifika education research have been identified, each with a different approach to knowledge and different knowledge-needs:

- Research
- Policy
- Teachers/ practitioners
- Community
- Learners

For optimal outcomes, there must be a collective approach to knowledge generation involving and engaging all parties.



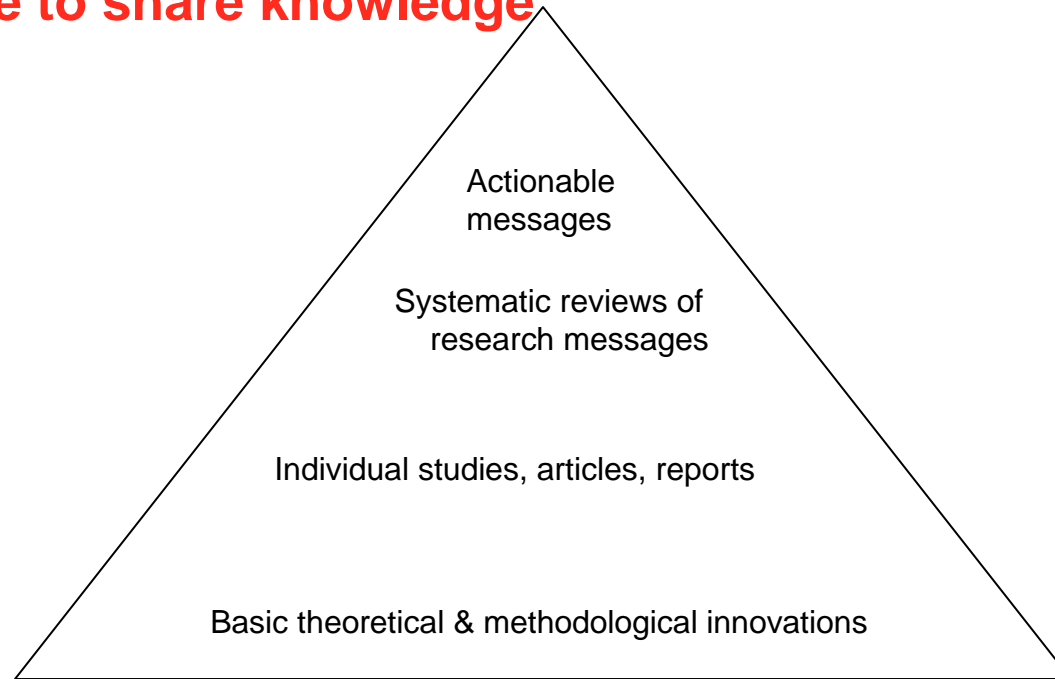
Action point 6: Synthesize knowledge to share knowledge



- Knowledge synthesis is the precondition for knowledge sharing.
- Getting the “message” right, is just as important as the methods of dissemination.
- Ways of communicating knowledge include:
 - User-specific websites and CDs.
 - Face to face knowledge dissemination
 - Use of libraries
 - Media (particularly Pacific media) and social marketing techniques



Action point 6: Synthesize knowledge to share knowledge



- Knowledge Synthesis Pyramid (Lavis 2005).



Action point 7: Recognise that everyone is a potential knowledge-broker

Knowledge-brokers are people who can facilitate direct exchange between researchers and user groups, as well as match knowledge with a user groups.

“To the Western mind, bio-ethical concerns are the concerns of science and scientists. To the Pacific indigenous mind, bio-ethics is the concern of all”

(Tamasese Ta’isi Efi 2007).



Everyone is a potential knowledge-broker



Conclusion: Draft guidelines for enhanced Pasifika education research/ policy linkages

A collective approach has been nominated that is consistent with Pasifika world-views but also because it is practical.

Principles for knowledge transfer - good relationships, and collective knowledge generation.

Action points for collective knowledge generation

identify knowledge stakeholders, ... recognise that everyone is a potential knowledge-broker.



Proposed development and consultation process for the Guidelines

- NZARE Conference 2007
- Working party review and refinement (Jan-Feb 2007)
- Consultation in-person, stakeholder groups, on the web (March-May 2007)
- Final drafting (June-July 2007)

Seeking your thoughts....



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