

Pepa S1

Session 2 - 3.20 to 4.50pm - 303-B09

SIG: Adult & Higher Education

Discussant/Chair: Pania Te Maro, Massey University

Keywords: Indigenising, kaupapa Māori, Healing Intergenerational Trauma



Symposium Title:

Indigenising the Institution from the Inside

Māori, working in the educational space of the western Institute of higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand seek to arrest perpetuation of intergenerational trauma of tamariki, rangatahi, and pakeke Māori in courses and programmes that we teach into. Through a variety of Kaupapa Māori frameworks, such as aroha ki te tangata, mana wāhine, and environmental models we seek to privilege Mātauranga Māori and other Indigenous ways of knowing and experiencing. Our places and spaces in education are not always conducive to kaimahi and ākonga Māori teaching, learning, and assessment needs and aspiration. Given our landscape of colonisation, we do this work whilst also dealing with our own historical and perpetual colonisation. In this symposium, we share our stories of hope as a tira using our overview as our abstract, because our collective is stronger than each of us as individuals. Each of us form a rōpū of Māori staff (Kia Tū Tira Mai) who meet monthly to discuss the issues that are barriers and/or affordances for sustaining equity in each of the five disciplines that we represent. We hope to share our stories and to invite the audience to contribute their experiences with us during the symposium.

Abstract 1 title: Constitutional obligations

As an institute of higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand, funded in part by public money (government/parliament), our university has a constitutional obligation to rectify the wrongs in education in this country, and to arrest or at the very least mitigate the wrongs currently perpetrated in education. Using the kaupapa of our overview, we discuss how we are getting better at doing this.

Pania Te Maro and Timu Niwa

Te Kura o te Mātauranga, ITE Massey University

Abstract 2 title: The kōhanga Kids

With the 'Kōhanga kids' coming of age and their entry en masse into higher education, it is imperative that kaimahi Māori and kaimahi non-Māori are prepared to at least match, if not exceed these students' levels of knowing and experiencing Mātauranga Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi simply as a matter of course. This progress can no longer wait for those with coal-face teaching and student engagement responsibilities to feel okay about embarking on their development journey – the time is now.

Leanne Romana, Nicole Mincher and Linda Clarke

Te Kura o te Mātauranga, BA Education, Educational Psychology and Early Years Education

Abstract 3 title: Making Transformation Real

While rates of retention and success of ākonga Māori have shown significant improvements, particularly of on-campus ākonga Māori, ākonga Māori in general continue to be overrepresented in statistics concerning failure and/or withdrawal from courses including high-traffic courses (e.g., BA Core Courses). There are simply not enough kaimahi Māori in the university, and depending on where they land in the university, too many who come do not remain, or do not remain for long. In our sharing of successes and challenges, we want to share about transformative successes; Indigenisation; decolonisation; establishment of kaimahi Māori rōpū and Māori research and pedagogical work programmes. We will also share about our challenges to transformation; structural/systemic/institutional/organisational racism; interpersonal racism; intrapersonal racism and colonisation.

We want to share how transformation comes through bringing people together; recognising that safety is a key issue for Māori staff, and setting up systems that eventually work to contribute to the safety of all staff. We hope that those who attend will also find space to share their stories, their experiences, their questions and steps that they are taking.

Emma Quigan and Bianca Vowell

Te Kura o te Mātauranga Speech Language Therapy



Pepa S2

Session 1 - 12.45 to 2.15pm - 303-G01

SIG: Education Policy

Discussant/Chair: Claudia Rozas, University of Auckland John Morgan

Keywords: Policy, Curriculum, Teachers

Symposium Title:

State Policy, Curriculum, and Teachers' Work

Curriculum reform has taken an unprecedented turn in Aotearoa New Zealand resulting in a tussle between state-driven policy agendas that conceptualise the curriculum and teachers' curriculum work in significantly different ways. This symposium addresses three aspects of recent state curriculum policy and considers them in relation to teachers' work. The first presentation examines how the development of a 'knowledge-rich' curriculum has become state curriculum policy and the extent to which teachers have an understanding of the concept's history and meaning. The second presentation explores some of the power dynamics at play between the Teaching Council and the Ministry of Education, focusing on the struggle over who gets to define the relationship between Aotearoa New Zealand's curriculum and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The final presentation examines the consensus between state policy and teachers in the context of Labour's original curriculum refresh and the corresponding potential for dissent in the context of the National-led curriculum. All three presentations bring a focus to the role of state policy, curriculum and teachers' work.

Abstract 1 title: A knowledge-rich curriculum: what does it mean for teachers?

In this paper, I attempt to clarify the concept 'knowledge-rich' which has received considerable uptake internationally as part of the so called 'knowledge turn' in education. The phrase has been used as a policy directive in current curriculum reforms in a number of jurisdictions, however its history and precise meaning remain unclear, moreover its use in a number of instances points to a conflation with curriculum content. The presence of such a reductive account is of concern as it does not take account of more nuanced, epistemological accounts of the concept present in particular in the social realist literature. In that context 'knowledge-rich' is intertwined with Young's concept of 'powerful knowledge'. A knowledge-rich curriculum is one populated with 'powerful knowledge', knowledge that is specialised and structured as coherent and generative 'systems of meaning'. In such a scenario awareness of 'the parts and the whole' of conceptual meaning systems combined with carefully chosen content provides a rich basis for curriculum design because of the capacity for abstraction, generalisability, transfer, and 'deep learning'. It remains to be seen if the increased sign-posting of knowledge and pedagogy in the new curricula will be utilised in autonomous and creative ways by teachers to ensure access for students to a 'knowledge-rich' curriculum. In other words, access to concepts, content, and skills with which to view the world in fresh and critical ways.

Graham MacPhail
University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Symbolic control: Who gets to define the relationship between curriculum and Te Tiriti o Waitangi?

In 2022, Aotearoa New Zealand's first Tiriti o Waitangi-led curriculum, Te Mātaiaho: The Refreshed New Zealand Curriculum emerged under a Labour-led government. Following a change of government in late 2023, Te Mātaiaho (2022) was replaced by new learning area curricula for English and mathematics and the curriculum framework in Te Mātaiaho, which identified Te Tiriti o Waitangi as its central pillar, has disappeared. In contrast the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand has recently published revised Teaching Standards for the sector which identify Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation for all of the standards. Drawing on Bernstein's concept of symbolic control, I explore some of the power dynamics at play between the Ministry of Education and the Teaching Council focusing on the contest over who gets to define the relationship between curriculum and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This contest may be viewed as one manifestation of Aotearoa New Zealand's current political struggle in the search for a national identity. I also consider the relative autonomy of teachers who, as they enact the curriculum, are likely to continue to honour or ignore Te Tiriti o Waitangi based on their own personal beliefs, not because of who has symbolic control of the discourse.

Megan Lourie
Auckland University of Technology

Abstract 3 title: Can teachers be 'conscientious objectors' to state curriculum policy?

Most teachers are state employees, yet when the National-led Draft English Curriculum was released earlier this year, one Head of English at an Auckland school publicly stated he would refuse to teach the new curriculum. Such action raises timely questions about 1) the extent to which teaching is 'subordinated labour' and 2) how curriculum consensus is created with teachers in the first place. These questions matter because despite Labour's English Curriculum (2023) reframing both the purposes of curriculum and teachers' work in more radical ways, it is the National-led English Curriculum (2025) that is seen as an ideological state imposition to be rejected. This presentation will examine English teachers' contrasting responses to these two curricula to consider the questions posed. I will explore the assumption that teachers control the curriculum and are mandated to be curriculum workers and then consider how curriculum consensus is built through various state actors such as faculties of education, initial teacher education programmes, the accrediting body, and broader discourses about what it means to be a teacher in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2025.

Claudia Rozas
University of Auckland

Pepa S3

Session 7 - 9.35 to 11.05am - 303-G01

SIG: Education Policy

Discussant/Chair: Katie Fitzpatrick, Waipapa Taumata Rau-University of Auckland
Katie Fitzpatrick

Keywords: gender, policy, sexuality education



Symposium Title:

Colonialities of gender, sex and relationships education: Centring communities and contesting erasure

At the time of writing this abstract, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curriculum policy in Aotearoa New Zealand is under erasure. Existing curriculum documents have been removed as the result of an agreement between two parties currently in Government. There is a related shift to the political right coupled with attacks on Māori and trans communities. Schools are confused about what direction to take and teaching about gender, in particular, is more socially contentious than at any other time in the history of this nation-state. Internationally we are seeing increases in transphobia, the rollback of laws to protect LGBTQI+ rights, and reduced access to gender affirming healthcare for young trans and gender diverse people. This symposium considers these latest policy moves within histories of colonisation, coloniality and marginalisation but also centres research with those most impacted. Authors each present their RSE research as it relates to takatāpui, LGBTQI+ and Pacific communities and explore the possibilities that remain for practice in schools.

Abstract 1 title: Sex, gender and sexuality diversity, decolonisation and RSE

A range of quantitative datasets challenge the politicised assumptions that transgender, non-binary, and otherwise gender-expansive children and young people do not exist and therefore do not need to be explicitly acknowledged in the curriculum. Data from Youth 19, Growing Up in New Zealand, the Identify survey, and the government's own What About Me survey, all demonstrate that trans, non-binary and gender expansive children and young people do exist in Aotearoa. Furthermore, data from Identify, a bespoke takatāpui and rainbow survey of young people (N = 1,699 secondary school students), shows that 2 in 5 takatāpui and rainbow students reported being asked to educate others in schools about rainbow issues without volunteering to. Against this backdrop, this presentation showcases the initial findings from an HRC-funded project that explores the experiences of ākonga Māori who identify as takatāpui and/or sex, gender and sexuality diverse (SGSD) in Relationships and Sexuality Education in schools (RSE) in Aotearoa. The project drew on focus group hui and individual interviews, underpinned by Kaupapa Māori and feminist decolonial theory and methodologies to explore the RSE experiences of ākonga Māori who identify as takatāpui or SGSD.

Dr Hayley McGlashan-Fainu and Associate Professor John Fenaughty
Waipapa Taumata Rau -University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Gender Affirmation is for Everyone

This presentation contends that the political invocation of gender panic exploits inadequate gender literacies in communities to conjure (unsubstantiated) vulnerabilities around children and education. Policy and professional development have not been able to maintain pace with generational shifts in gender politics, which demand new literacies around gender. Effective RSE is dependent on educators who are prepared to relinquish traditional gender roles and embrace the uncertainty of change; however, the under-resourcing of teacher education around gender diversity, vulnerability of addressing this increasingly polemic topic, and schools' general risk-aversion have impeded the development of a language that enable teachers to dialogue with students around their varied needs. 'Evidence-based' discourse has provided an effective method of stoking panic through claims of 'gender ideology' in past curricula, despite the substantial research and community consultation that has underpinned said curricula and providing no evidence to the contrary, because communities have been deprived of the literacies to speak back to these baseless claims. This presentation simply highlights the simple truth that gender affirmation – from picking dresses and colours to donning lipstick and facial hair – is not exceptional to trans (young) people. In short, gender affirmation is for everyone.

Dr Ampersand Pasley
Waipapa Taumata Rau -University of Auckland

Abstract 3 title: Nesian Narratives in Relationships and Sexuality Education - Centering Pacific Voices

This paper presents insights from Pacific communities on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), drawing on talanoa-informed engagement across Aotearoa and the Pacific. Feedback from parents, educators, and community leaders highlights the need for RSE that reflects Pacific worldviews, relationality, and cultural safety. Participants voiced concern over educational approaches that lack cultural resonance, limited inclusion of Pacific languages and values, and inadequate support for intergenerational learning. Pacific stakeholders called for RSE frameworks that honour vā (relational space), empower children, youth, and families with identity-affirming knowledge, and promote open, values-based communication. Such approaches support holistic wellbeing, strengthen family and community bonds. This research contributes to the growing body of Pacific-led education scholarship and urges policymakers to reimagine RSE through culturally sustaining praxis. It advocates for co-designed curricula rooted in Pacific pedagogies and offers strategic recommendations for integrating ancestral knowledge with contemporary health education.

Dr Analosa Veukiso Ulugia
Waipapa Taumata Rau -University of Auckland

Pepa S4

Session 3 - 9.05 to 10.35am - 303-B11

SIG: Educational Leadership

Discussant/Chair: Pania Te Maro, Massey University

Keywords: Te Tiriti principles and provisions, Institutional frameworks, Tiriti partnerships, Indigenising



Symposium Title:

Living Te Tiriti

To explore the practical implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles and provisions within a treaty-led university's institutional framework. This contribution will showcase specific initiatives, challenges, and successes experienced at Massey University. By examining our journey toward meaningful Tiriti partnership, this presentation will provide valuable insights for others tertiary institutions and for the wider education sector. Anticipated Outcomes: - Foster critical dialogue around the practical application of being a Te Tiriti led university. - Inspire attendees to develop or enhance their own approaches to Treaty-based teaching and leadership - Contribute to the growing body of knowledge regarding tangible ways to honor Te Tiriti obligations within academic contexts This presentation aligns with broader national conversations about decolonisation and Indigenising in higher education and offers timely, practical perspectives that will benefit the wider education community.

Abstract 1 title: Practical applications of being Te Tiriti led

In this presentation we discuss the main moments that our students articulate as making a transformational change in their understanding of Te Tiriti. We will talk about the resources that they highlight and how they describe their lives going into the future. We will then talk about how we develop our courses to make Te Tiriti a touchstone in each of our contexts. Following that, we will provide an overview of how we as staff are enabled to be partners in each of our spaces, as a team of Māori staff.

Kia Tū Tira Mai

Te Kura o te Mātauranga, Māori Staff Rōpū, Massey University

Abstract 2 title: Tangible Ways to Honour Te Tiriti Obligations

In this presentation we will showcase the kinds of things each of us do in our programmes and courses to ensure that Te Tiriti is living in the courses, rather than a series of cold, 2 dimensional pieces of de-contextualised sentences on "paper". We will also showcase the use of a Critical Tiriti Analysis framework used to analyse a particular course.

Kia Tū Tira Mai

Te Kura o te Mātauranga, Māori Staff Rōpū, Massey University

Abstract 3 title: Enhancing our Approaches

In this section of the symposium, we hope to share questions and responses, to allow participants to share their different ideas and experiences. Ultimately, to ensure that attendees can go away with new networks of supporters. Based on our collective work, we hope to inspire other collectives who can collaborate and support each other.

Kia Tū Tira Mai

Te Kura o te Mātauranga, Māori Staff Rōpū, Massey University

Pepa S5

Session 7 - 9.35 to 11.05am - 303-G02

SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Discussant/Chair: Vivienne Anderson, Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka | University of Otago Vivienne Anderson

Keywords: Responsibility, Critical hope, Empathy



Symposium Title:

How can education engender solidarity and imagination through attention to whakapapa, whenua, language, and le va?

In 2002, Heidi Ross (2002, p. 407) asked, "Can universities, so implicated as a regime of utilitarian power, ... help students hold fast to their humanity?". Ross wrote in response to the 2001 attack on the Twin Towers in New York City and its aftermath, but her question feels relevant to this time and place. How can educators exercise and engender responsibility and imagination when dehumanisation and displacement are affecting people's lives on a global scale? How can we foster our students' capacity to exercise critical hope and empathy, and to identify and respond to disinformation? How can attention to our own (hi)stories inform our work? Ross highlights a range of relational "genres" that are helpful for grappling with such questions (p. 417), including critical curriculum scholarship, scholarship that centres indigenous knowledges and ecological thinking, scholarship that attends to questions of language and power, and scholarship concerned with care ethics. Our presentations draw on all of these, alongside personal reflections, and empirical, conceptual and autoethnographic research. Through our presentations, we reflect on the role of education and educators in promoting care and responsibility in this time and place, through scholarship, advocacy, and practice. Reference Ross, H. (2002). The space between us: The relevance of relational theories to Comparative and International Education. *Comparative Education Review*, 46(4), 407-432. <https://doi.org/10.1086/345417>

Abstract 1 title: Educating in an era of mass displacement and genocide denial: Some reflections on whenua, whakapapa, and collective responsibility

Since the beginning of 2024, numerous Hīkoi and ceasefire marches have been held in Ōtepoti and nationally. Hīkoi have asserted the enduring mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa. Ceasefire marches have asserted the right of Palestinian people to life, livelihoods and land. Like many educators, I have written submissions against the removal of references to Te Tiriti o Waitangi from education and other social policy. I have watched with horror the targeted destruction of Gaza's educational infrastructure, and concurrent efforts by governments to shut down educators' critique. In Ōtepoti, ceasefire marches have been supported by mana whenua, and hā«koi, by Palestinian community members. As a tauīwi scholar, marching shoulder to shoulder with Palestinian and Māori friends and colleagues has made me reflect on questions of whenua, whakapapa and oranga; historical legacies of harm; and the role of education in disrupting and enabling solidarity and imagination. In this presentation, I reflect on the past 18 months, drawing on critical educational scholarship and my research with displaced young people and their teachers. I consider what 'collective responsibility' looks like for educators at a time when displacement, dehumanisation, and disinformation threaten our collective future.

Vivienne Anderson

Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka | University of Otago

Abstract 2 title: Sustaining critical literacy practices with critical hope

In this conceptual paper, I locate critical literacy practices as a vital component of future-focused literacy in Aotearoa New Zealand. Critique constitutes a core practice in most descriptions of critical literacy. Descended from the Greek word krinein, meaning to distinguish, judge and separate, the term 'critique' and its cousin 'critical' have taken on largely negative connotations in the literature. Critical literacy practices such as resistant reading position critique as a neutral, intellectual pursuit, separating the mind (cognition) from the body (affect). Rather than reinforcing this artificial separation, I argue that we reinforce critical literacy practices with critical hope. Critical hope unites the cognitive act of analysis with affective, embodied meaning-making. Using examples of young people speaking back to unjust texts, I argue that critical literacy practices underpinned by critical hope can support young people to interrogate the power of texts and their effects, opening spaces to take action by affirming, resisting, transforming or creating new texts.

Susan Sandretto

Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka | University of Otago

Abstract 3 title: How might personal narratives 'ground' practice for teachers of Pacific learners?

Teaching and learning occurs beyond classroom walls. They are influenced by the choices made by those around us, where we live, and what we hear, see, feel, taste and smell. My parents are my first and lifelong teachers, as are my family, my church and the wider Samoan community in Dunedin. However, in my formal years of learning, all my teachers were palagi. In this presentation, I draw on my master's research, which used autoethnography to explore my personal narratives of learning and teaching. My study also considered how these might be utilised to inform the practice of future faiaoga (teachers) of Pacific learners. Attention to Pacific learners in Aotearoa classrooms is important since, by the year 2050, an estimated 20 percent of our learners will be of Pacific descent. In this presentation, I consider how I draw on my personal experiences to 'ground' (mainly palagi) students' understanding and connection to Pacific people's experiences, and to foster a sense of responsibility to 'teu le va', or foster reciprocal, positive relationships.

Karina Nafatali
Ōtākou Whakaihū Waka | University of Otago

Pepa S6

Session 5 - 2.15 to 3.45pm - 303-G02
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Discussant/Chair: Jude MacArthur, University of Auckland
Dr. Molly Mullen
Keywords: inclusion, diversity, disability



Symposium Title:

Enriching connections: Diverse perspectives informing inclusive communities within education and beyond. PART 1: Primary School

This year's conference theme reminds us that education is intricately embedded and situated in place. The place of education is both general and specific, shaped by history, time, and lived experience. We are asked to consider how our relation to the places of education shapes how we connect with each other, our worlds, and the sites, spaces and objects we engage with. The five papers in this symposium use Disability Studies in Education (DSE) to explore relationships between education and communities for all. The presentations illustrate how studies shaped by DSE provide opportunities for participants in education spaces, from primary through to tertiary level, in rural and urban settings, in Aotearoa and internationally, to recognise and resist traditional deficit theorising that can lead to the exclusion of children, young people and adults. In documenting the perspectives of children, adult students, families, teachers and teacher aides, we consider how these perspectives enrich our understanding of human diversity, and how our connections with each other contribute to the development of inclusive communities within education and beyond.

Abstract 1 title: Perpetuating exclusion while declaring inclusion

The conference theme enjoins us to consider connections, responsibilities and futures in education. But what if your educational future has already been mapped out – a future devoid of connections? This paper draws on a recent review of literature on residential schools and an evaluation of the direct entry pathway into NZ's three remaining Residential Specialist Schools. These two studies described decades of Ministry of Education and other research showing the negative effects of segregated residential provision for disabled children. The studies also show the history of the refusal by successive governments to take responsibility for changing this provision.

How can we begin to make sense of a continued reluctance to change practices that dismiss the mana (dignity, respect for) disabled individuals and their families? Bacchi (2012) contends that a useful strategy of looking at the apparent resistance, or reluctance to change is to consider what is the problem represented to be? van Aswegen et al (2019) extend this approach with attention to evidence presented.

This paper examines the perpetuation of particular arguments about whose rights should be recognised, and if recognised, prevail in decision making about "what is best?"

Prof. Missy Morton
University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Understandings of disability: Through the lens of teachers and children

This presentation explores teachers' understandings of disability and the ways children make sense of their experience of disability. Sri Lanka's inclusive education policy framework for disabled children remains largely unresponsive and institutional readiness insufficient. In such a context, an ethnographic case study approach used participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and informal discussions to explore a teacher's and children's understandings of disability through their experience with a disabled child in their classroom. I also explore the disabled child's own understanding of the world around them. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Taylor et al., 2015) and findings interpreted through Skidmore's (2002) theoretical model of pedagogical discourse.

My presentation explains how teachers' and children's understandings of disability commonly align with discourses of deviance, as reflected through their responses related to children's educability and the reasons for education failure, the theory of teaching, and suitable curriculum models. Conversely, the disabled child's view of learning, reflected through their work, aligned with a discourse of inclusion. In some instances the class teacher and a peer shared this same positive view. Findings shed light on a

pedagogical framework that caters to all children in the classroom, including disabled children, through context-based teacher development.

Hemanthi Bogoda Gedara
University of Auckland

Abstract 3 title: Connecting perspectives: Child, teacher and family experiences informing inclusive mathematics teaching at primary school

In this presentation we draw on findings from the first year of TLRI funded research to consider how children's, families', teachers' and researchers' perspectives on mathematics learning, can inform a process of planning for inclusion in primary mathematics classrooms.

Despite Ministry of Education policy on inclusive education, teachers do not always have the time and support they need to work through professional dilemmas in classrooms that include neurodivergent and/or disabled children. In our research, three researchers collaboratively planned and reflected on video recorded mathematics lessons with each of six participating teachers. The disciplinary field of Disability Studies in Education (DSE) informed our understanding of barriers to children's presence, participation, belonging and learning. DSE emphasises a capability and anti-deficit understanding of disability, and a prioritising of disabled children's and young people's perspectives, and those of their families, in education decision-making.

Teachers described seeing their working classroom from a new angle with valuable opportunities to notice and respond to barriers to learning. Diverse knowledge bases from mathematics education, inclusive education and teachers' knowledge of children and communities enriched the reflection and planning discussions. DSE, inclusive pedagogies and the principles of universal design provided a valuable framework for inclusive pedagogical decision making.

Jude MacArthur, Lisa Darragh, Jules Coup
University of Auckland

Pepa S7

Session 6 - 4.05 to 5.35pm - 303-G02
SIG: Inclusive Education and Community

Discussant/Chair: Jude MacArthur, University of Auckland
Dr. Sean Sturm
Keywords: inclusion, diversity, disability



Symposium Title:

Enriching connections: Diverse perspectives informing inclusive communities within education and beyond. PART 2: Tertiary Education

This year's conference theme reminds us that education is intricately embedded and situated in place. The place of education is both general and specific, shaped by history, time, and lived experience. We are asked to consider how our relation to the places of education shapes how we connect with each other, our worlds, and the sites, spaces and objects we engage with. The five papers in this symposium use Disability Studies in Education (DSE) to explore relationships between education and communities for all. The presentations illustrate how studies shaped by DSE provide opportunities for participants in education spaces, from primary through to tertiary level, in rural and urban settings, in Aotearoa and internationally, to recognise and resist traditional deficit theorising that can lead to the exclusion of children, young people and adults. In documenting the perspectives of children, adult students, families, teachers and teacher aides, we consider how these perspectives enrich our understanding of human diversity, and how our connections with each other contribute to the development of inclusive communities within education and beyond.

Abstract 1 title: Lifting the double mask': neurodivergent, non-traditional students and the university experience

There are similarities between the adaptations a non-traditional student must make to 'fit in' culturally and succeed at university, and the 'masking' that neurodivergent students employ to hide or temper neurodivergent traits, usually with the aim of social assimilation. There are complexities of living and studying at the intersection of these identities, which are uniquely interwoven. The neoliberal university is an environment designed and managed by the (largely) white middle-classes (Reay, 2001) within which certain social 'rules' are expected as inherent. For students who may be the first in their family to attend university, and/or come from a lower socioeconomic background, learning these rules may lead to the development of a 'cultural mask'. Similarly, universities embody and embed neurotypical social practices which do not accept neurodivergent ways of being (Jurgens, 2020). The dual existence of identities outside of the expected 'norm' means 'non-traditional', neurodivergent students must expend significant extra effort to survive and succeed at university.

Twenty-eight neurodivergent working-class people were surveyed online using open text responses. The resulting themes revealed that working-class, neurodivergent students feel they must mask both their class background and neurotype whilst studying. This study has implications for support provision, as well as wider university culture-making.

Nyika Suttie
University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Some university bridging mathematics students and their expectations of failure

Bridging courses provide another opportunity to access university. However, this access remains a challenge to those who struggle with mathematics. My presentation draws on my thesis study of university bridging students who failed their foundation mathematics course. For these students, this was just the latest setback in their mathematics learning. The same students were then asked to repeat the course they had failed in a following semester, where several expected to again fail.

In this interpretive study, students recalled key influences on their learning: the practices and actions of teachers and parents; high stakes assessments in the last three years of high school; their removal from classes of their peers by retention or streaming; and labelling based on an ableist discourse. The students also created strategies to camouflage their actions and/or mask their struggles within the increasingly complex demands of learning mathematics. While each student finally gained university entrance by passing the gateway mathematics course that they had previously failed, where they could then start on their degree studies proper, this in no way guaranteed their future success in degree courses that required

mathematics. My findings have implications for both practice and policy within bridging mathematics courses at universities.

Phil Kane
University of Auckland

V2 11/11/2025

Pepa S8

Session 7 - 9.35 to 11.05am - 303-B07

SIG: Learning Environments

Discussant/Chair: Elaine Khoo, Massey University Elaine Khoo

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), Social Sciences, criticality



Symposium Title:

Fostering Learner Criticality with Generative AI in Social Sciences Classrooms

With the advent of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), supporting ākonga critical engagement is crucial for navigating environments that are increasingly being shaped by GenAI ecosystems. This symposium brings together three interconnected presentations from a pilot study that explored how Social Sciences kaiako in two junior secondary classrooms supported ākonga criticality in their diverse school settings. Our study adopts a software literacy framework, recognising that GenAI is not neutral; social and cultural factors shape its design and our interactions with it. Software literacy involves the ability to use, problem solve and critique software in pursuit of learning goals (Khoo et al., 2017). Data collection involved classroom observations, interviews, teaching plans, samples of learner work, and surveys which were thematically analysed. Two presentations will be led by teacher-researchers, one from each case study school. They will share their teaching context, teaching-learning approaches, and insights into learning outcomes. The final presentation draws from cross-case analyses to offer recommendations for practice and scholarship. Findings identify GenAI-supported pedagogies that are equitable, and culturally sustaining, thereby contributing insight into responsible digital citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand and wider discourse on critical and ethical GenAI use. Reference Khoo, E., Hight, C., Torrens, R., & Cowie, B. (2017). Software Literacy: Education and Beyond. Springer.

Abstract 1 title: "Prompting"?for perspectives: Re-seeing the Dawn Raids with GenAI

This presentation focuses on a case study in a large, culturally diverse urban secondary school with established innovative learning environments. The Year 10 Social Studies kaiako integrated GenAI into a unit on the Dawn Raids to deepen ākonga criticality and historical understandings. Prior lessons scaffolded ākonga learning to prompt GenAI use, and awareness of its strengths and limitations. Emphasis was given to questioning, research, and evaluative skills to support engagement beyond surface-level GenAI responses. ākonga engaged in a series of critical and creative GenAI-based learning tasks: writing diary entries from insider perspectives, creating visual representations of historical figures, and collaboratively scripting a podcast script to explore multiple perspectives. Throughout, criticality development was supported through fact-checking, assessing source reliability, and evaluating and refining understandings of historical narratives. Preliminary findings suggest positive ākonga engagement with the unit and growing confidence in using GenAI. Using GenAI to refine prompts for generating information or creative representations provided an accessible starting point for learning, reducing time spent on initial content gathering. This shift in cognitive demand created space for ākonga to engage more deeply with critical issues, supporting deeper engagement with the content and enabling more meaningful classroom discussions around bias, representation, and historical interpretation.

Elaine Khoo
Massey University

Abstract 2 title: Framing Fairness: Exploring the Ombudsman with GenAI in a Social Studies Classroom

This presentation shares insights from a case study in a diverse suburban secondary school. The year 10 Social Studies kaiako emphasised culturally responsive teaching to develop ākonga criticality ensuring GenAI served their learning and accurately represented their perspectives. A GenAI-supported learning unit was developed with a dual focus: enhancing ākonga understanding of the Office of the Ombudsman and developing their ability to refine GenAI outputs using a structured prompt framework. ākonga had prior exposure to GenAI through kaiako modelling and discussions about its limitations such as bias and prejudice/cultural misrepresentation. The three learning tasks developed involved generating and refining a YouTube script, fact-checking GenAI content using reliable sources, and conducting a comparative analysis of GenAI simulation of the Ombudsman's role in an authentic case study. Emerging themes highlight ākonga deeper understandings of the Ombudsman's civic role and developing skills to troubleshoot when GenAI's outputs failed to fully address their research questions. This included awareness of GenAI's limitations, including reliability and prejudices in information sourcing. The pedagogical approach supported ākonga to critically engage with GenAI as both a tool and a subject of inquiry.

Bronwen Cowie
University of Waikato

Abstract 3 title: Weaving themes together: GenAI Integration in the Social Sciences Classroom

This presentation draws together the findings from two Social Sciences classrooms of students from diverse backgrounds, to offer preliminary insights into the conditions, strategies, and considerations needed to promote ākonga criticality when learning with and through GenAI. Analysis highlights the value of carefully designed teaching sequences that scaffold ākonga engagement with GenAI as a pedagogical strategy to support deeper and more critical learner inquiry and meaningful learning outcomes. We conclude by : 1) Sharing practice-based recommendations for promoting GenAI-based teaching and learning in ways that foster learner criticality, and, 2) Proposing a potential conceptual framing through a braided rivers (He Awa Whiria) (Macfarlane et al., 2015) approach which interweaves software literacy and Mātauranga Māori to enrich GenAI-supported pedagogy and research. This approach extends our earlier theoretical framing by positioning GenAI as a cultural and ethical artefact that demands critical engagement, contextual understanding, and values-based decision-making. We invite dialogue on what it means to foster culturally sustaining, ethical and critical teaching practices that support learner criticality in relation to GenAI use in the context of preparing ākonga to participate in society as informed, critical, and responsible citizens. Our contribution offers conceptual and practice ideas for kaiako seeking to foster learner criticality with GenAI in Aotearoa New Zealand's evolving GenAI and cultural-political landscape. Reference Macfarlane, S., Macfarlane, A., & Gillon, G. (2015). Sharing the food baskets of knowledge: Creating space for a blending of streams. Sociocultural realities: Exploring new horizons (pp.52-67). Canterbury Uni Press.

Genaro Oliveira
Charles Sturt University

Pepa S9

Session 8 - 11.35am to 1.05pm - 303-G14

SIG: Māori Caucus

Discussant/Chair: Dr Cheryl Stephens, Te Rau Matatau@ Te Rau Ora, Dr Cheryl Stephens

Keywords: Kaupapa Māori Pedagogy



Symposium Title:

Kaupapa Māori National-Iwi/Pan Tribal Partnerships lead the way in Public Health Education : A Pedagogy of Matatini Ora

Nationally navigated, locally led Kaupapa Māori training programmes are vital to resetting the balance and connection to Mātauranga Māori for the Māori health workforce. This approach exemplifies a pedagogy that requires intentional focus and immediate attention. Partnerships between Te Rau Ora and iwi providers are integral to this pedagogy. A pedagogy which is unique, distinctive and adaptive having been informed by components of Kaupapa Māori research, Mātauranga Māori underpinned by its unquestionable commitment to whānau ora; the wellbeing of whānau in te ao hurihuri. This presentation will outline the key concepts of the pedagogy of Matatini Ora and will evidence these concepts since its 2021 implementation through to the current day. Whakapapa (Origins), Horopaki (Context), Whakawhanake (Transformation) and Whakarato (Delivery) will be the waka arahi by which the key concepts will be conveyed. The pedagogy of Matatini Ora honours the pioneering vision of Tā Mason Durie to bring about a sustainable model for Kaupapa Māori public health education delivery, providing valuable insights for sectors, communities and benefits for whānau.

Abstract 1 title: Whakapapa of Matatini Ora

The Whakapapa of Ancestral Intelligence in the development, implementation, of the pedagogy of Matatini Ora is articulated using a Mātauranga Māori lens.

Mikaere Norris

Poutiri Rangiora-a-papa Trust

Abstract 2 title: Whakarato: the Delivery

Whakarato analyses the programme's delivery and its impact on students, the Māori health workforce and Māori health services.

Kirsty Maxwell-Crawford

Poutiri Rangiora-a-papa Trust

Abstract 3 title: Horopaki - Context; Whakawhanake - Transformation

Horopaki outlines the contextual elements of the pedagogy of Matatini Ora. Whakawhanake illustrates the transformative journey of all components of the learning and teaching process.

Louise Ihimaerea

Poutiri Rangiora-a-papa Trust

Pepa S10

Session 5 - 2.15 to 3.45pm - 303-G14

SIG: Māori Caucus

Discussant/Chair: Dr Therese Ford, Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated Toby Westrupp

Keywords: Equity, Māori Leadership, Decolonisation



Symposium Title:

Huia Kaimanawa: Māori Leaders' Perspectives on Equity and the Equity Index in Aotearoa Education

This symposium presents key findings from the Huia Kaimanawa August 2024 report, "Equity? Where is it? Māori Leaders' Experiences and Perspectives of Equity." Commissioned by the Ministry of Education, this research, grounded in Kaupapa Māori and critical theories, explores the nuanced understandings and practical realities of equity as experienced by Māori educational leaders across Aotearoa. Through three presentations, we will delve into the historical context and methodology, the lived experiences and proactive strategies of Māori leaders, and their critical perspectives on the Equity Index and future pathways for genuine educational equity.

Abstract 1 title: Contextualising Equity - Whakapapa, Methodology, and the Enduring Challenge

This presentation will lay the foundational understanding for our symposium, drawing from the "Whakapapa - Background" and "Methodologies" sections of the Huia Kaimanawa EQI Report. We will trace the historical trajectory of equity in New Zealand education, from the 1989 Education Act and Tomorrow's Schools reforms to the introduction of targeted equity funding and the Ka Hikitia policy. Despite decades of policy, the report highlights that achieving genuine equity and excellence remains a significant challenge, with systemic issues persisting. We will detail the culturally responsive methodologies, including Kaupapa Māori and critical theory, that guided this research, ensuring the investigation was centred on Māori worldviews and experiences. This foundational understanding is crucial for appreciating the depth of Māori leaders' perspectives on equity.

Therese Ford

Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

Abstract 2 title: The Lived Realities of Equity - Māori Leaders' Understandings and Practices

This presentation will delve into the core findings from the interviews and surveys with Māori educational leaders, specifically addressing their understandings of equity and the practices they enact. Drawing from "Interview and Survey Data Findings", we will explore how leaders define equity in their contexts, often extending beyond equal opportunities to encompass cultural consolidation and authentic enhancement of Māori language, culture, and identity. We will share examples of learning-focused, pastoral-care oriented, and wider systemic interventions implemented by leaders to ensure equity. The presentation will also highlight the desired future responses leaders wish to enable, such as developing greater cultural consciousness within staff, increasing access to specialist skills, and fostering deeper inclusion of whānau, hapū, and iwi, underscoring the proactive and aspirational nature of Māori leadership.

Iti Joyce

Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

Abstract 3 title: The Equity Index - Perceptions, Impact, and the Path Forward

The final presentation will critically examine Māori leaders' perspectives on the recently introduced Equity Index, drawing from "Interview and Survey Data Findings", "Implications to Consider," and the "Conclusion" of the report. We will present the mixed responses to the Equity Index, acknowledging where it has provided appreciated increased funding for staffing and student needs, while also articulating the widespread sentiment that it falls short of addressing deep-seated inequities. Leaders' varying levels of understanding of the Equity Index will be discussed, alongside their assessments of its actual contribution to enabling equity. This presentation will underscore the report's conclusion: that despite reforms, the path toward true equity remains challenging due to systemic racism, cultural marginalisation, and insufficient resources. We will conclude with the report's recommendations for sustained commitment to policies that genuinely reflect the needs and aspirations of Māori communities, moving towards a truly equitable education system in Aotearoa.

Bruce Jepsen
Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

V2 11/11/2025

Pepa S11

Session 1 - 12.45 to 2.15pm - 303-G14

SIG: Māori Caucus

Discussant/Chair: Dr Therese Ford, Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders
Incorporated Phoebe Davis

Keywords: Māori Leadership, Indigenous resistance and transformation



Symposium Title:

Huia Kaimanawa: Cultivating Māori Educational Leadership for Educational Transformation in Aotearoa

This symposium will present key findings from Te Akatea: Huia Kaimanawa 2022-2025, showcasing the progress and impact of two pioneering Māori leadership programmes: Māori First-Time Principals and Emerging Māori Leaders. The kaupapa of these programmes is grounded in Māori two cultural frameworks: the light transition cycle of Ki Te Kore, Ki Te Pō, Ki Te Ao Mārama and three foundational pou (pillars): Rangatiratanga, Hapūtanga and Tuakiritanga. These leadership responses were established to address systemic inequities and enhance Māori leadership practice in Aotearoa's education system. Through three distinct presentations, we will explore the programme's design, the journey of its participants, and the tangible impacts on leadership practices and student outcomes.

Abstract 1 title: Foundations and Journey - The Huia Kaimanawa Programme Design and Evolution

This presentation will delve into the foundational principles and design of the Huia Kaimanawa Māori First-Time Principals and Emerging Māori Leaders programmes. Initiated in 2022, these programmes were developed in response to a critical need for Māori-specific professional learning and development that addresses systemic inequities in education. We will outline the "Input" phase, detailing the cumulative cycle of learning engagements, including National Wānanga, Regional Hui Tūhono, and individual Mahi Takitahi sessions. The presentation will highlight how programme content was co-constructed with iwi leaders and experienced Māori principals, grounded in He Wakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We will also discuss the adaptive evolution of the programme in response to contextual factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrating a commitment to responsive and culturally relevant leadership development.

Therese Ford

Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

Abstract 2 title: Participant Growth and Emerging Successes - Navigating Challenges in Māori Leadership

Building on the programme's design, this presentation will focus on the "Output" and "Outcome" phases, illustrating the growth and experiences of Huia Kaimanawa participants. We will present data on the characteristics of the cohorts, including their geographic distribution and representation from diverse school deciles. The presentation will explore how kaikōkiri/facilitators provide personalised support, contributing to the development of individualised Mahere Rautaki (leadership plans). We will share insights into the reported increase in participant confidence and leadership capabilities, drawing from survey data and participant reflections. Furthermore, this presentation will frankly address the barriers encountered by Māori leaders, such as the impact of natural disasters (e.g., Cyclone Gabrielle) and ongoing systemic challenges, while celebrating the emerging successes in leadership practices and professional development.

Iti Joyce

Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

Abstract 3 title: Impact and Future Directions - Transforming Education Through Māori-Led Relationships

The final presentation will highlight the significant "Impact" of the Huia Kaimanawa programmes on the broader education landscape in Aotearoa. We will showcase how the programmes have fostered stronger, authentic relationships with mana whenua, hapū, and iwi, providing concrete examples from various regions (e.g., Te Tairāwhiti, Te Tai Tokerau, Kahungunu, Te Waipounamu). This presentation will illustrate how these deepened relationships translate into changed leadership practices within schools, particularly in areas related to student well-being and achievement. We will discuss the cumulative nature of the learning cycle, emphasising how the programmes contribute to increasing rangatiratanga for hapū and iwi.

ultimately working towards a socially just and equitable education system for all. The presentation will conclude with reflections on the programme's long-term commitment and future aspirations.

Bruce Jepsen
Te Akatea Māori Principals and Leaders Incorporated

V2 11/11/2025

Pepa S12

Session 1 - 12.45 to 2.15pm - 303-B07

SIG: Pasifika Caucus

Discussant/Chair: Dr. Analosa Veukiso-Ulugia, School of Curriculum and Pedagogy, Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Auckland
Dr. Rae Siilata

Keywords: Pacific relationality, educational partnerships, Pacific knowledge systems



Symposium Title:

Weaving the Vā: Tamaiti, Moana, and Holistic Narratives of Connection and Care - Insights for Educational Empowerment

This symposium brings together three Pacific-led research initiatives- Vā o Tamaiti, Tamaiti o te Moana, and Nesian Narratives-that collectively reframe Pacific child wellbeing as holistic, relational, and deeply grounded in cultural and geographical place. Each project centers tamaiti (children) not just as recipients of care, but as relational beings whose development is intricately woven into families, communities, and the vast moana that binds Pacific identities. Vā o Tamaiti offers a relational resilience framework that affirms children's wellbeing through strengthened vā, the sacred relational spaces that sustain connection, identity, and collective responsibility. This framework is being refined into community-informed tools for use in education and clinical settings. Tamaiti o te Moana co-designs a wellbeing framework that bridges education and health systems by embedding Pacific values, languages, and co-created practices. Meanwhile, Nesian Narratives builds Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) resources that foster safe, culturally affirming conversations for Pacific children in Early Childhood settings. Together, these initiatives offer narratives of transformation that challenge deficit thinking and advocate for education systems that reflect the whole child-spiritually, emotionally, physically, and culturally-anchored in place, community, and Indigenous knowledge systems.

Abstract 1 title: Vā o Tamaiti: Honoring and Mapping Children's Relational Strengths Across the Home, School, and Beyond

This presentation expands on the construct of resilience to reflect a Pacific relational approach centred on child agency. Inspired by the Upu Tomua penned by Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese for the Fa'afaletui framework, the project draws on a mixed methods approach with children and families within the Growing Up in New Zealand Study. The presentation will focus on Talanoa with Pacific children about their strengths, worries, challenges, sources of joy and health and helped to illuminate factors that contribute to their resilience and wellbeing. Carers of Pacific children were subsequently engaged to provide further context to children's responses. Children's connections with others and the quality of relationships with primary carers, siblings, friends, teachers and other trusted significant adults were the strongest indication of resilience. These connections were influenced by values, beliefs and expectations within the interacted spaces. By identifying the range of resilience-promoting and resilience-inducing factors as described by Pacific children and reinforced by their caregivers, a Pacific relational resilience framework grounded in a Pacific relational construct of 'vā', was developed to describe children's navigation of five primary settings that are common childhood spaces - the home, school, their community engagements, the online world, and the outside or natural world.

Abstract 1: Malaetogia Dr. Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow, Professor Susan Morton, Professor Damon Salesa, Professor Judith McCool, Associate-Professor Vili Nosa, Dame Dr Teuila Percival
Moana Connect, University of Sydney, Auckland University of Technology, University of Auckland, University of Auckland, Moana Connect/University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Tamaiti o te Moana: Weaving Au for Child Wellbeing in Place-Based Early Childhood Education

Tamaiti o te Moana is an early years' wellbeing approach that draws on the Pacific concept of Au (strands that are weaved together to create a mat) and was co-designed by parents, ECE educators, and health professionals. It is a component of a Pasifika-led community-based research project funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand, designed to address the health and wellbeing of Pacific children under the age of 5 years in a family-centred, cross-sectoral, and holistic manner. The Tamaiti o te Moana approach builds on existing relationships between ECE centre educators and parents and leverages fono currently built into ECEs, such as partnership meetings between educators and parents to discuss their child's wellbeing, progress, and any concerns. As such, a Tamaiti o te Moana partnership session was trialled, involving educator, parent, child and a Well Child nurse, in a group talanoa about children's strengths, concerns, needs and opportunities. The evaluation findings describe positive experiences

among carers and their appreciation of a culturally anchored, strengths-based opportunity to identify their child's health and learning needs before progressing to primary school.

Dame Dr Teuila Percival, Dr Rae Si'ilata, Associate-Professor Mele Taumoepeau, Professor El-Shadan Tautolo, Faletese Asafo, Dr Jeanne Teisina, Maria To'omata, Brittany Newport, Vivien Pole, Martha Aseta, Malaetogia Dr Jacinta Fa'alili-Fidow
Moana Connect/University of Auckland, Va'atele Education Consulting, Victoria University, Auckland University of Technology, Moana Connect, Akoteu Katukakala, Mataliki Tokelau Akoga Amata, Puna o le Atamai preschool, Procure, Va'atele Education Consulting

Abstract 3 title: Voyages of Wellbeing: Launching the Nesian Narratives Toolkit - A Pacific-Informed Wellbeing Resource for Early Childhood Education

This presentation introduces the Nesian Narratives Toolkit-a Pacific-led resource designed for kaiako (educators) working with Pacific and non-Pacific children aged 4-5 in Early Childhood Education. Through talanoa and talanga with over 50 Pacific parents, educators, health professionals, and community members, the project explored culturally safe approaches to child wellbeing and sexuality education. The collective insights revealed a common discomfort with explicit terminology, highlighting the need to reframe these topics in developmentally appropriate and culturally affirming ways. In response, a co-design team comprising two Pacific ECE educators, a community researcher, and an academic researcher created the Nesian Narratives Toolkit: a strengths-based, health-educational resource organised into 13 themed sections-an Introduction and "12 Voyages." Each Voyage presents planned learning experiences centered on specific wellbeing topic, such as 'identity', 'brainworks', and 'body safety'. This presentation situates the toolkit within place-based education, recognising sexuality learning as deeply relational and rooted in the lived realities of children. It affirms the responsibility of educators and researchers to honour Indigenous and Pacific ways of knowing, and to co-create education resources that foster connection, belonging, and holistic wellbeing.

Dr Analosa Veukiso-Ulugia, Ang Mizziebo, Amelia Ah Mann, Michaela Roberts
The University of Auckland, Treehouse Middlemore Early Childcare Education Centre, Treehouse Middlemore Early Childcare Education Centre, Moana Connect

Pepa S14

Session 3 - 9.05 to 10.35am - 303-G20

SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Discussant/Chair: Jo Smith, University of AucklandJo Smith

Keywords: PLD, empathy, virtual reality



Symposium Title:

Hāpaitia te aroha: Exploring the use of virtual reality in teacher PLD to elevate empathy

Māori students experience personal and institutional racism in Aotearoa's education system. This bias can be embedded in teacher beliefs and behaviours. Our team's prior research has found that teachers typically have lower expectations for Māori students and more harshly judge their academic performance compared with Pākehā students. This translates into teacher behaviours that negatively impact Māori students' learning. Current approaches to teacher PLD typically entail passive learning with limited efficacy. Nascent research suggests that virtual reality (VR) is potentially a powerful empathy-builder. As such, this 3-year project develops, implements, and evaluates an anti-bias teacher PLD that includes an VR experience where teachers 'embody' a male Māori intermediate student facing bias at multiple points in the day, both within and outside of school. The scenario encourages perspective-taking to increase empathy. The symposium first describes the need for the project, detailing the history of systemic racism in Aotearoa. The second presentation describes the development of the PLD: writing the script for the VR, working with a Māori-run company to film the scenarios using a 360-degree camera, and integrating the VR into a multi-session PLD. The third presentation describes preliminary findings on whether the PLD reduces the bias experienced by Māori students.

Abstract 1 title: The context, historical and present: why we need to do something different if we want to see different results

There have been numerous initiatives and interventions aimed at addressing bias and racism in the Aotearoa New Zealand education context over the last three decades that we have been working within, all with positive intent but with varying degrees of progress being made. Some progress has been incremental, and some has been transformational for the educators and students involved. Despite the variability in consistency of approach and effort, and rate of change, there has been undeniably a general positive shift in teacher practices, as increasingly, our educators and leaders strive to become more culturally responsive, develop their cultural capability and change harmful practices and beliefs. Despite this progress, the issues of intergenerational prejudice, racism and bias against Māori learners remain endemic in our education eco-system and continue to cause inequitable and harmful outcomes for Māori learners and their whānau. This research attempts to be a circuit-breaker, something new that hasn't been tried before, that hopefully will provide a new way of inspiring educators to mobilise for change by helping them to see the inequities and racism experienced by many Māori learners, and providing them the knowledge and skills to transform teaching practice and engagement. This kind of intervention is needed now more than ever.

Hana O'Regan
Tawhiri Consulting

Abstract 2 title: Development of a virtual reality scenario and its integration into an anti-bias teacher PLD programme

Research suggests that virtual reality (VR) holds promise for participants to develop empathy for others by enabling them to 'walk in another's shoes'. This presentation describes the first year of a three-year project, in which we developed a VR scenario and anti-bias professional learning and development (PLD) programme aimed at reducing teacher bias by having teachers 'embody' a male Māori intermediate student and experience his day. To create the VR scenarios, we engaged in a series of interviews with teachers and community members to identify common situations in which Māori tamariki experience racism. The development of the VR considered five user experience dimensions intended to support increasing empathy: 1) immersion, 2) presence, 3) engagement, 4) virtual body ownership, and 5) agency. Having experienced the VR, the PLD then has teachers discuss their experience and introduces them to the history of systemic bias in the Aotearoa New Zealand education system. To increase teachers' recognition of systemic and possibly personal biases, they then participate in three online sessions and a further hui where they are trained in high expectation teaching practices which have been shown to raise teachers' expectations and positively influence student psychosocial and academic outcomes.

Pam O'Connell
Core Education

Abstract 3 title: Transforming teachers' beliefs and practices: An intervention study

The final presentation will report findings from our intervention study involving 40 primary and secondary school teachers and leaders from Aotearoa New Zealand who participated in an anti-bias PLD that included a 15-minute VR scenario and five PLD sessions. We draw on quantitative data-teachers' attitudes and beliefs pre- and post-intervention-and qualitative survey responses to evaluate the intervention's impact. Quantitative measures included perspective-taking and feelings of embodiment in the VR scenario, both key to developing cognitive and affective empathy. We also administered an implicit association test and a culturally responsive teaching efficacy scale to assess shifts in teacher beliefs. Qualitative responses explored participants' reflections on the training and the VR experience, including perceived impacts on their teaching practices. The PLD involved two in-person hui (3 hours each) at the beginning and end, and three 2-hour Zoom sessions in between. The VR scenario was embedded in the first hui. This study provides novel insights into how immersive experiences and targeted professional development may influence teachers' beliefs and practices related to bias and cultural responsiveness. We hope that the intervention offers a promising approach for teacher professional learning and development and impacts positively on the learning experiences of Māori students in Aotearoa New Zealand schools.

Frauke Meyer
University of Auckland

Pepa S15

Session 8 - 11.35am to 1.05pm - 303-G20

SIG: Teaching and Teacher Education

Discussant/Chair: Rāhira Cowie, Faculty of Education, University of Canterbury
Rahera Cowie

Keywords: Noho Marae, Place-based Education, Experiential Learning



Symposium Title:

The role of Noho Marae as Authentic Classrooms: Exploring the Transformative Potential of Mātauranga Māori in Teacher Education

learning environments that transform teacher education across Mātauranga Māori, Primary, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand. Drawing on experiential learning, participatory learning, and situated/embedded learning, the marae is a relational site where student teachers engage with kaupapa Māori, bicultural pedagogy, and culturally responsive practices.

Action Research frames the Year One (Mātauranga Māori) and Year Two (Primary and ECE) student participation in immersive noho marae experiences. Reflective surveys captured perspectives on preparation, cultural engagement, and professional responsibilities under Our Code | Our Standards and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Data were analysed thematically to identify patterns in cultural learning, confidence, and professional identity development.

Findings show context-specific outcomes: Year One Mātauranga Māori students enacted leadership through whaikōrero, karanga, and waiata, strengthening identity and agency. Primary students gained confidence in applying bicultural pedagogy and integrating te reo Māori and tikanga. ECE students deepened their understanding of relational pedagogy and Te Whāriki, linking cultural knowledge to teaching young learners. Across cohorts, hands-on activities—poi, rakau, titi torea, pōwhiri, and marae architecture—enhanced peer cohesion, confidence, and cultural competence.

The symposium demonstrates that the marae functions as an authentic, relational, and transformative classroom, embedding Mātauranga Māori in teacher preparation and fostering culturally responsive professional identities that cannot be replicated in conventional lecture-based environments.

Abstract 1 title: Mātauranga Māori

Mātauranga Māori, the knowledge system of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, reflects a deep interconnectedness with the land, its people—both past and present—and the origins of all creation. In 2023, the University of Canterbury launched its initial teacher education (ITE) degree, titled Mātauranga Māori. Through noho marae involving two student cohorts—Year One, Mātauranga Māori, and Year Two, Mainstream Te Reo—opportunities naturally arose for tuakana-teina relationships to flourish. Our first-year students (many heritage language speakers) arrived with a wealth of language and cultural experience, taking the lead in key cultural practices such as pōwhiri and whaikōrero, waiata and facilitating small-group lessons in te reo. Ko te marae he wāhi e taea ai e ngā ākonga te tū rangatira i tō rātou tuakiri hei rangatira mō āpōpō. Noho Marae provides a place where students can stand strong in their identity as future leaders. Reclamation of te reo Māori, tikanga, pūrākau, and local history is integral to our noho marae, place-based experience. We look forward to sharing the insights and outcomes of this research as we continue to explore the transformative potential of Mātauranga Māori in teacher education.

Rāhira Cowie
University of Canterbury

Abstract 2 title: Primary Sector

The process to becoming sensitive to te ao Māori (the Māori world) is through a traditional welcome at a noho marae, as being welcomed to this social hub of the local people (tangata whenua) and being immersed with te reo me ngā tikanga Māori (the Māori language and its cultural constructs) Māori ways of knowing, being and doing are integral to establishing one's understanding of the Indigenous peoples of this land. Forming host and visitor relationships set the wheels in motion for responsive and reciprocal engagements. These engagements then provide the platform for a teaching and learning relationship known as 'ako' where teacher and learner roles are established and at times these roles interchange where learner becomes teacher and teacher becomes learner. The contexts of teaching and learning te ao

Māori then emerges from the noho marae where Whanaungatanga - Relationships are key to understanding Māori ways of being, knowing and doing as pedagogical innovations within teaching profession here in this country.

Tracy Dayman
University of Canterbury

Abstract 3 title: Early Childhood Education Sector

The emphasis in this presentation lies in the presence of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori in this country's Early Childhood bicultural curriculum, the complex layers of practice and thought student teachers navigate in their pedagogical practice the fostering of this country's Indigenous language and culture and the tensions that arise as a consequence. As a starting point all teachers need to be welcomed into te ao Māori and the authentic classroom for this is at the social hub of Māoridom, of Iwi 'the marae'. The marae classroom provides teachers with a philosophical grounding into the Bicultural Early Childhood Curriculum Te Whāriki from the outset which now contextualises their bicultural and bilingual journeys as teachers of our youngest generations here in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ngaroma Williams
University of Canterbury

Pepa S16

Session 6 - 4.05 to 5.35pm - 303-G16

SIG: Wellbeing Education

Discussant/Chair: Elizabeth Peterson, Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of AucklandValerie Sotardi

Keywords: Rangatahi, Wellbeing, Schooling



Symposium Title:

Rangatahi Voices from the Our Voices Study: Stories of School, Belonging, and Wellbeing

The Our Voices study, developed in partnership with rangatahi from the Growing Up in New Zealand cohort, was a youth-led initiative designed to authentically capture young people's experiences across multiple domains-including family, friendships, culture, and schooling. Central to this project was Tō Mātou Rerenga - Our Journey, a co-designed digital platform that invited participants to share their views through a gamified, interactive experience using text, audio, video, and images. Created by young people, for young people, the platform ensured their voices were heard in ways that felt relevant and empowering. While the platform explored a broad range of wellbeing-related themes, this symposium focuses specifically on education-related insights. The first paper outlines the development of the platform and highlights how school emerged as a central theme in youth definitions of wellbeing. The second paper explores enablers and barriers to school attendance, examining how tiredness, stress, peer relationships, and bullying affect students' motivation and belonging. The third paper investigates how fear of failure and error sensitivity shape students' views of good teaching and emotionally safe learning environments. These papers highlight the richness and depth of rangatahi insights, revealing nuanced stories often missed in quantitative studies. The platform demonstrates the value of youth-led, creative research in capturing authentic perspectives and informing meaningful change.

Abstract 1 title: Exploring understandings and experiences of wellbeing in Aotearoa: Amplifying the voices of young people

In Aotearoa, research exploring youth wellbeing is currently limited by measures that are typically derived from actuarial, deficit-based, adult-centric, uni-dimensional data and that lack a te ao Māori lens. Accordingly, understandings of wellbeing, particularly of and for young people, may be incomplete. Building upon the trusted relationships established by Growing Up in New Zealand, the Our Voices study sought to explore 13-year-olds' understandings of wellbeing to produce more inclusive and representative knowledge. This paper discusses the motivations behind the Our Voices study and outlines the co-design process, implementation, and outcomes of a digital platform, Tō Mātou Rerenga – Our Journey, which was made by young people for young people to authentically capture what wellbeing meant to them. An overview of the sample demographics and general insights from the large-scale, multi-modal qualitative data shared by rangatahi from the Growing Up in New Zealand study will also be presented, emphasising the salience and importance of school experiences as being both contributors to and reflective of wider wellbeing outcomes.

Georgia Rudd

Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

Abstract 2 title: Barriers and enablers of school attendance: Exploring social challenges

Declining school attendance is a complex issue, determined by factors both directly and indirectly related to the student. School engagement is positively associated with achievement and can protect against absenteeism, but levels of engagement are also decreasing. The Our Voices study asked rangatahi which groups of people had it easy or tough at school, why this was, and what could be done about it. We also explored the enablers and barriers to attending school. Nearly one-quarter of students found it 'quite often' or 'always' difficult to attend school. But they had clear views on what should be done to motivate them, stating they are more motivated when less tired and stressed, have positive relationships with their friends and teachers, and when they are taught content where the importance for their future is clear and aligns with their aspirations. Rangatahi also acknowledged that school can be tough for different groups of students. While these groups were diverse, the underlying factor was they were different in some way, which often resulted in being bullied. Rangatahi have ideas about how to make school a more inclusive space but want the support of school staff and leadership to affect change.

Emma Marks, Waipapa Taumata Rau
University of Auckland

Abstract 3 title: Safe to Fail: How Error Sensitivity Shapes Student Views of Teachers and Schools

Creating learning environments where students feel safe to make mistakes, ask questions, and attempt challenging tasks is increasingly recognised as essential for fostering deep learning and resilience. While a growing body of research has explored the characteristics of error-friendly classroom climates, much of this work has been theoretically driven. This paper investigates how students' individual profiles—particularly their fear of failure and attitudes toward making errors—shape their perceptions of what makes a good teacher and a supportive school environment. Drawing on data from approximately 400 rangatahi participating in the Our Voices study, we explore whether these psychological factors are reflected in students' expectations of teachers and their experiences of educational spaces. Our aim is to understand how fear of failure and error sensitivity influence students' views on effective teaching and school climate. By centring student voice, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how to design inclusive and emotionally safe learning environments that respond to diverse learner needs.

Elizabeth Peterson
Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland

Pepa S17

Session 6 - 4.05 to 5.35pm - 303-B05

SIG: AARE

Discussant/Chair: Annette Woods, AAREJoce Nuttall

Keywords: Joint imaginary play; Intersubjectivity; Zone of Proximal Development, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI); Formative intervention; agency, Cultural-Historical/Activity Theory, professional identity, perezhivanie,



Symposium Title:

Human development through the lens of Cultural-Historical & Activity Theory

One of Vygotsky's great contributions to educational psychology was to give us both a theory and methodology for understanding human development. This symposium brings together three papers, each using powerful ideas and methodologies arising from Vygotsky's seminal work applied to three stages of human development. Nowhere is Vygotsky's mantra that higher psychological functions originate from relationships more dramatically illustrated than in Suxiang Yu's elegant studies of imaginary play in infants with their caregivers. Moving into the formal education system and the challenge of GenAI, Vygotsky's concept of double stimulation is used in Hongzhi Yang's powerful formative intervention with pre-service language teachers. The final paper examines the transition from formal education to professional practice using the concept of perezhivanie and the integration of Vygotsky's juxtaposition of everyday and scientific concepts. Together these papers combine to provide an incisive survey of both the methodological and theoretical tools that Vygotsky provided to understand of human development a century ago applied to our contemporary challenges.

Abstract 1 title: Caregivers' support for infants' engagement in joint imaginary play at home

The roots of imaginary play begin in early infancy with adults' support. However, little is known regarding how caregivers support young infants' imaginary play at home. Through an educational experiment using Flee's Conceptual PlayWorld, with Michael Rosen's (2016) "We Are Going on a Bear Hunt" story narrative, more advanced forms of imaginary play are introduced to 14 infants under 12 months old (mean age, 8.1 months) upon entry into the study. The findings show that caregivers provide proleptic instructions by making more advanced forms of imaginary play available for infants, acting as if infants already know how to imagine and play. They extend infants' play beyond their current competencies by suggesting new play ideas, providing physical support for imaginary actions, attributing voices to infants' imaginary roles, or reinterpreting infant-initiated actions with new meanings. They also create a sense of intersubjectivity with infants in joint imaginary by creating vivid imaginary spaces, supporting infants' developing understanding of imaginary scenarios, sharing infants' emotions, and adapting play resources to enable engagement. It is argued that these findings provide novel empirical evidence of the capacity of infants under 12 months to engage in joint imaginary play with adult support, thereby contributing to the minimal existing body of literature. More importantly, these findings provide nuanced insights into how caregivers can support infants' engagement in joint imaginary play within their Zone of Proximal Development, with implications for both theory and practice.

Suxiang Yu
AARE

Abstract 2 title: Student teachers' agency in engaging with GenAI – A formative intervention from an Australian University

The rapid development of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) raises questions about how best to integrate it into teaching and learning. This study explores the development of student teachers' agency during their interaction with various GenAI by using a formative intervention design grounded in CHAT. The participants were six student teachers enrolled in a language teaching methods course at an Australian university. The design used the structure of the double stimulation to foster teachers' agency in learning with GenAI. In each session, student teachers were assigned a task to engage with GenAI for a specific purpose. The initial output from GenAI served as the first stimulus. Participants then collaboratively evaluated the generated content and refined their prompts. The second stimulus was the revised GenAI outputs, group evaluations, iterative prompt adjustments, and reflective discussions. The data included the recorded group discussions and the records of their interaction with GenAI. The findings indicated that the double stimulation design empowered student teachers' agency in evaluating GenAI and its potential for language teaching, particularly fostering their engagement in translanguaging practices. During their collaborative evaluation of GenAI outputs, the student teachers identified both the strengths and limitations

of GenAI in language education, particularly its multilingual and multimodal capabilities. Building on these insights, they generated ideas for integrating GenAI into language teaching while defining the roles of GenAI in the learning process.

Hongzhi Yang; John Cripps Clark; Michael Hoover
AARE

Abstract 3 title: The Trainee Dilemma

A critical phase in professional identity formation is the "trainee dilemma". This dilemma marks the transition from formally qualified to a capable professional. During this period individuals are qualified but not yet capable. Using concepts from Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) we consider how the development of professional competence extends beyond formal education to include development of a new professional identity shaped by workplace experiences and interactions with senior colleagues. Formal educational achievements do not fully equip trainees for the practical demands of professional life. The workplace introduces new stimuli that require the integration of scientific and everyday concepts through experiential learning and social interaction. This analysis was developed drawing on the literature, interviews with professional educators, and our own research data. The concept of *perezhivanie* is central and used to show how transformative experiences are integrated into the trainee's personality, reshaping their professional identity through impactful events and interactions. Measured support systems, such as mentorship and authentic tasks involving risk, are essential for fostering the trainee's growth while providing safety nets to mitigate failures. Becoming a competent, confident, and committed professional is a transformative journey that not only enhances practical skills but also aligns the trainee's professional and personal identities.

Megan Anakin; Hongzhi Yang; Suxiang Yu; Biljana Ivanova-Miloshevska; Andy Blunden; John Cripps Clark
AARE
