Post-Secondary Pathways for Pasifika and Refugee Young People in SE QLD

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Definitions & Demographics of Target CALD Groups

1. **Polynesian** - New Zealand (Maori) & **Pacific Islander (PI)** - Niue, Samoan, American Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, and Easter Island.

   For this study **Polynesian & PI** participants were classified as **Pasifika People**

2. **Refugee background young** people are defined as those who are immigrants who have come from approved humanitarian settlement programs. General areas of origin are in three main geographical groups – Africa, Middle East and SE Asia.
CALD Profile of South East Queensland (South)

SEQS has a significant and growing Pasifika and refugee community

- 215 ethnic communities in Logan City (Logan City Council 2013)
- **Samoan** is the most frequently spoken non-English language in Logan City
- Pasifika students comprise more than 50% of the student population at some schools in South East Queensland.
- This includes a significant number of people of Pasifika heritage who are **New Zealand citizens**.
- Logan City has the highest number of humanitarian refugees who have been settled in Queensland
Trans Tasman Travel Arrangement

- The TTTA is an informal agreement between Australia and New Zealand which allows for the free movement of citizens of one of these nations to the other.
- Came into effect in 1973, and allows citizens of each country to live and work in the other country, with some restrictions.
- The Australian Federal Government amended the TTTA to restrict New Zealand citizens arriving in Australia after 26 February 2001 access to certain social security payments (those not covered by the bilateral agreement).
- For majority of New Zealand citizens who migrated to Australia after this date in 2001, the cost and process of pursuing a permanent residence visa (and therefore citizenship) can be prohibitive if not unattainable.
Pathways for NZ Pasifika Young People

- Increasing evidence suggests that the 2001 amendment is causing highly detrimental outcomes for non-protected SCV holders and in particular our young school leavers being unable to pursue higher education, job search assistance and/or join the armed forces.

- As a result we are seeing an increase in social and economic pressures within families leading to exacerbation of community issues such as anti-social behaviour and homelessness.

- With migration barely slowing, there will be ever increasing numbers of school students affected by the lack of access to HECS-HELP.

- In February 2014, PM Abbott agreed to honour the proposal from the former Labour government for amendments to the Higher Education Support Act 2003 to allow some New Zealand SCV holders access Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) loans. This has yet to be legislated.
Humanitarian Refugees

- Defined as those people who have been granted permanent residency to live in Australia owing to a ‘well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, owing to such fear, to avail themselves of the protection of that country’. (UN High Commissioner for Refugees)

- The complex and often traumatic prior life experiences of many refugees, especially the young, has a profound impact on their socio-emotional capacity and needs to be recognized and addressed by educational providers.

- The humanitarian refugee population is not homogenous, with considerable diversity amongst different nationalities and cultural groups – variations occur in visa categories, family structure, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, prior school experience, location of settlement services, etc.
Young Refugee Statistics for SE QLD

- ABS 2011 Census reports 4658 refugee young people living in QLD, with majority in SEQ in Logan, Ipswich & Brisbane.
Research Question – Refugee Study

- What enables and inhibits humanitarian refugees’ transition into further education pathways?

- Small scale pilot study with a survey amongst 160 post-18 year old participants (50% African, 25% Middle East, 25% SE Asian) who fitted into 3 main target groups:
  - Enrolled in AMEP language training courses
  - Completed or enrolled in a tertiary preparatory program
  - Completed or enrolled in university
Research Questions – Pasifika Study

• Where do young people of Pasifika backgrounds go after secondary school?
• What differences emerge for these young people based on citizenship and socio-economic status?
• What are the main factors influencing post-secondary pathways for these young people?
Pasifika Methodology

- Survey with 500 respondents –post-18 year olds attending church groups & educational institutions in Brisbane and Logan.
- (A comparison group of 120 Anglo-Australian)
- One third PI from low SES suburbs and over 70% of PI respondents were of Samoan cultural background (SEIFA index)
- Focus groups with 50 young people using trained PI co-facilitators.
1. What we know about education outcomes for selected sample of PI young people.

- Majority (90%) are completing Year 12.

- Just over half (54%) have certificate level qualifications (Cert I-IV).

- Higher level of certificate qualifications (54% to 30%) than Anglo-Australian group

  - Low completion rate of tertiary diploma/degree qualifications:
    - NZ PI ...... 10%
    - AUST PI ........ 21%
    - Anglo-Aust. group.. 37%
2. What we know about education outcomes for selected sampled of refugee young people?

- 60% had completed Year 12 or equivalent
- 32% left school between Year 8-11
- 8% had no secondary schooling
- 45% had completed Cert.I-IV level qualifications

- Completion rate of tertiary diploma/degree qualifications – 34%
- Rates of higher education qualifications are very similar to the Anglo-Australian cohort
3. Current post-secondary study

Table 3: Currently undertaking further education or training by citizenship and ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current study status</th>
<th>NZ &amp; PI/M N=243</th>
<th>AUS &amp; PI/M N= 125</th>
<th>AUS &amp; Caucasian N= 121</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not currently studying</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A full-time student</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A part-time student</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have deferred study</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NZ citizen PI are least likely to be engaged in further education or training compared with the AUST PI and non-PI peers.
4. Type of education or training by citizenship and ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of education or training</th>
<th>NZ &amp; PI/M N=243</th>
<th>AUS &amp; PI/M N=125</th>
<th>AUS &amp; Anglo N=121</th>
<th>Refugee background N=160</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None undertaken</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee/cadetship</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE cert/diploma</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad. degree</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-grad. degree</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Of the refugee group, 30% were engaged in the AMEP training in English.

Tertiary participation rates are significantly lower for all PI groups whether NZ or AUST citizens. AUST PI more likely to be engaged in TAFE & training pathways than their peers. Refugee participants had high educational aspirations and participation rates.
5. Comparison of type of education by citizenship & ethnicity (Pathways Study) compared with SES in Logan LGA Region (Next Steps Data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of education or training</th>
<th>NZ &amp; PI N=243</th>
<th>AUS &amp; PI N=125</th>
<th>AUS &amp; Anglo N=121</th>
<th>Refugee background N=160</th>
<th>SES Lowest quartile N= 849</th>
<th>SES Highest Quartile N= 384</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None undertaken *</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%#</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee/cadetship</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE cert/diploma</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergrad. Degree</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-grad. Degree</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>¶</td>
<td>¶</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This category includes those who are working, or seeking work. # For the refugee cohort, this figure includes 30% who were involved in the AMEP language course. ¶ Younger age group not yet at post-graduate degree level.

**Next Steps** is a Queensland post-Year 12 destination survey for 18-19 year olds, who have a 3 year age differential with the Pathways Study participants (average age 22 and a half).
What we know about factors influencing PI young people in education & career choices?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Component Matrix</th>
<th>Positive attitudes</th>
<th>Negative attitudes</th>
<th>Important others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am very interested or motivated to continue my education</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have plans to undertake further education or training for my career</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident to undertake further education</td>
<td>0.816</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think it is important for my future to obtain as much education as possible</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe I have the ability to be successful with further study</td>
<td>0.730</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to improve my qualifications by further study</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to obtain advice on the career that best suits my skills</td>
<td>0.539</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to continue with further education due to a lack of finances</td>
<td>0.914</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further education is too expensive for me</td>
<td>0.899</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents expect me to work to help with family finances</td>
<td>0.807</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many of my friends have continued with their education after high school</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my family, studying after Year 12 is considered very important</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.688</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In high school, my teachers encouraged me to continue my education.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other members of my family have completed further education</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.680</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
<td>.872</td>
<td>.850</td>
<td>.658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whilst most PI young people have positive attitudes towards education, their level of participation is largely influenced by financial constraints – a combination of HECS ineligibility for NZ PI and parental expectations about putting work before education.
What we know about financial inhibitors for PI young people.

- Funding of higher education problematic for NZ citizens due to HECS ineligibility.
- Pressure on young people to contribute immediate income through working to assist the family financial position.
- Clash between some family & cultural traditions and faith-based emphasis on putting time, effort and resources into obtaining a good education.
- Continuing financial difficulties due to large family size or limited employment.
What we know about context factors that support and constrain PI young people.

• + Plus +

• Some young people highly motivated to become successful in improving career options.
• Small number of parents very supportive and willing to sacrifice to assist those who were studying.
• Strong positive influence and encouragement of peers, friends, teachers and church leaders.
• Those ‘first in family’ to attend university felt pressure to fulfil expectations – skilled mentors have critical role in first year.

• - Minus -

• Parental expectations were very high, and somewhat unrealistic, for those studying and caused distress if outcomes were less than expected.
• Many parents had difficulty understanding the higher education environment and often limited by poor English language skills – communication complexity.
• Poor study environment in the home and lack of appreciation about the time demands for tertiary level study.
• PI young people entering university are often under-prepared for tertiary study – fear of failure/shame.
What we know about **enablers and inhibitors** for refugee young people

**Enablers**
- High educational aspirations
- Supportive families
- Provision of flexible access to AMEP (510 hours) and English language support services
- Positive interpersonal engagement and ability to access educational system.
- TAFE add university provision of safe environments for learning and adopting social inclusion and cultural competence

**Inhibitors**
- Traumatic life experiences and disrupted schooling
- Lack of English language proficiency
- Unfamiliarity with education system and support services
- Changing family dynamics
- Some TAFE’s not attuned to socio-cultural needs of refugee immigrants.
- Some university lack support programs and understanding of different learning styles
Recommendations for Pasifika

Financial Support

• Further initiatives are needed to improve the pathways for HECS-ineligible young people who desire to undertake post-secondary education or training. Investigate institutional arrangements (e.g. tertiary enabling and bridging courses) and funding options (e.g. scholarships and trusts) that may incorporate a mixture of public, private, corporate or organizational resources.

Parents & Pastors

• Develop appropriate suite of resources that emphasizes the important role of parents in shaping young peoples’ educational futures.

• Work with church leaders to complement parent programs and provide relevant resources and strategies that ministers and youth leaders can use with young people in their respective faith communities.
Recommendations for refugees

• Build stronger collaborative linkages and arrangements between refugee settlement agencies and the TAFE and university sector.

• Focus more efforts on community based learning and English language experiences.

• Ensure transition programs into tertiary education pathways are linked to positive interpersonal relationships with family, peers, teachers and the community.
Suggestions for further research in **Pasifika and Refugee Communities**

1. *Further research is required in exploring socio-economic disadvantage and understanding the specific ethnic, cultural and linguistic aspects which are prevalent within the PI and refugee communities and how these may contribute towards stereotypes and hegemonic practices that are detrimental to the respective young people.*

2. *Further research is required to understand more deeply the experiences that enable and hinder humanitarian refugees transitions at key points – AMEP to TAFE, secondary school to TAFE, TAFE to university, school to employment.*
Acknowledgements

Prof. Lesley Chenoweth: Head of Logan Campus, Griffith University.
Dr Judith Kearney: Director of Community Partnerships, School of Education & Professional Studies, Griffith University.
Dr Gerald Onsando: Post-doctoral student, Griffith University.
Ms Glenda Stanley: Pasifika Liaison Officer, Griffith University.
Mr Sanesie Dukuly: Student Support Officer, Griffith University.
CEO and Youth Settlement Managers of ACCESS Community Services, Queensland.
Students from AMEP courses, Logan TAFE and SE Qld Universities.
Griffith School of Education Higher Degree Research Internship.

Thank You