



Massey University

The Literacy & Employment Research Programme

**Social Marketing
Downunder
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Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa





Massey University

The Literacy & Employment Research Programme

**“We are not
social marketers,
sorry!”**

**But...we are social
researchers and
communication
specialists.**

Te Kūnenga
ki Pūrehuroa



Quotes about research

“Most public health and social change projects fail to reach their lofty objectives [because] most research is either avoided or designed to confirm the known” (Lefebvre, 2007).

“Social marketers often are charged with influencing highly sensitive behaviors ... with limited budgets - or immediate deadlines” (Andreasen, 2000).

We had an **opportunity**, to explore drivers and levers in more depth than these quotes suggest is sometimes possible.



Massey University

FRST grant for a 3.5 year community-based study in Wanganui and Districts, which:

- responds to local needs**
- is built on local knowledge**
- employs the University's research abilities**
- acknowledges differing expectations and perspectives.**

**Te Kūnenga
ki Pūrehuroa**



The **Wanganui District Library** originally inspired the research. It is both our main research partner and a subcontractor

Other partners and subcontractors included:

- **Literacy Aotearoa** (Wanganui)
- **The Whanganui Community Foundation** (both a funding body and an entity with some research capability) and
- **Te Puna Matauranga o Whanganui**, an Iwi Educational Authority.

Other community stakeholders included:

- Wanganui District Council
- NZ Police
- Work and Income NZ
- Enterprise Wanganui (Chamber of Commerce)
- Ministry of Justice
- UCOL
- GoodHealth Wanganui.

All of these groups strongly support the research, but have differing hopes and perspectives surrounding literacy.

The research issues:

- The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), 1996, indicated that about 48% of adult NZers lack adequate literacy skills (100,000 adults in work) (but may be measurement problems here)
- According to IALS, about 64% of NZ managers have very poor to average literacy skills (likewise measurement issues?)
- Possibly around 20% of school-leavers 'lack' 'good' literacy.

What we mean by 'literacy':

Literacy as a social practice.

“this view moves beyond simplistic understandings of literacy as a functional skill, or indeed something people don't have, to views which encourage research and teaching based on the ways in which learners (and indeed practitioners) might use literacy as part of their everyday lives. This view of literacy takes account of the cultural practices, local contexts and historical patterns shaping literacy use and, in my view, is an improvement on functional approaches” (Shore, 2003, para. 1).

Our matrix of research methodologies:

There are currently **22 methodologies** and five spin-off projects, including: **telephone survey** of 400 residents; **in-depth interviews** with adult literacy training providers; **follow-up survey** of training providers; Approx. 100 **one-to-one interviews** with participants in adult literacy and numeracy training; Approx. 30 follow-up **interviews** with the same participants a year on; Approx. 30 **interviews** with new participants; **annotated bibliography** and two **literature reviews**; Approx. 40 **interviews** with persons not currently participating in adult literacy and numeracy training; **Iwi-based research** exploring issues including ancestral literacy and bi-literacy within the traditional rohe of River Iwi; **Focus groups**, **e-survey**, and **interviews** with employers; **correlational research** into motivational factors; **focus groups** with Wanganui residents, Wanganui stakeholders, literacy practitioners, and community agencies; **action research**; family literacy within a prison setting; a **formative evaluation** of the development of a workplace literacy programme; and several **case study** researches.

See: <http://literacy.massey.ac.nz/methodologies.html>

Today we are discussing

Findings from:

79 one-to-one interviews with participants in adult literacy and numeracy training; **22 follow-up interviews** with the same participants a year on; and **34 interviews** with new participants.

From these interviews we hoped to uncover **barriers** to literacy and literacy **needs**, however we also found that respondents discussed conduits or **pathways** to literacy.

Participants' top perceived literacy barriers

1. **Health** or physical
2. **Goal** orientation
3. **School** not meeting needs
4. School **teaching**
5. **Learning style** not catered for
6. School, **behaviour** at
7. **Time** employment commitments
8. School **peer pressure**
9. School **moving**
10. **Time**: family or community commitment
11. No positive **reinforcement**

Something else we noticed....

Participants were asked: “What does the word ‘literacy’ mean to you?”

“Nothing. It’s just a word to me. Honestly, it doesn’t mean anything. Literacy means... I’m not sure what literacy means. I think it’s all to do with that English stuff, but literacy, I should imagine, means making things sound right and having your words spelt correctly.”

“Literacy? To me it’s a problem of learning.”

“Literacy was that you were illiterate.”

“It’s just a word, but...I don’t know. When I first used it...I’m talking about me now...Literacy, that’s a word...that’s what I said to myself. I thought they’re talking about dumb people. That’s what I thought. I don’t know what other people think. I don’t know what that word means, but that’s what it meant to me. I’m learning, and starting again.”

And yet those who overcame that barrier reported enormous benefits:

Top six perceived benefits of participation in a literacy course:

1. Better interpersonal or family communication
2. Greater confidence, achievement, & motivation
3. Employment
4. Better health
5. Enhanced life skills
6. Greater community participation

Literal pathways to literacy

More than half of the respondents who supplied a method of finding their course mentioned some form of **word of mouth** as important either as an endorsement of something they had also seen or heard elsewhere (newspaper, WINZ, etc.) or as their primary reason for joining, and **more than two-thirds of those word-of-mouth endorsements were from current or former training participants.**

Around **a quarter** of respondents who commented on their method of finding the course **mentioned WINZ** as having a role in locating the course or sending them to it, usually through a referral from their case manager.

Around **a quarter mentioned** seeing it in a **newspaper** or someone else seeing it in a newspaper and telling them.

A handful mentioned other kinds of non-WINZ referral such as from a **community group** or school counsellor

A few had it found for them by **family members**

Only three of the respondents who commented on how they located a course mentioned a **pamphlet** and all three had also received a **personal recommendation or endorsement**

Two said they had found it themselves

One found it by walking past and **only one found it on the internet**

Why did they stay?

1. Internal motivation or goal orientation (2/3)

- Career, qualification, personal sense of self, able to imagine self in a particular role, desire to perform a particular task (e.g. family tree)

2. Family environment (1/2)

- Encouragement and support, a family mentor, or desire to transcend discouragement

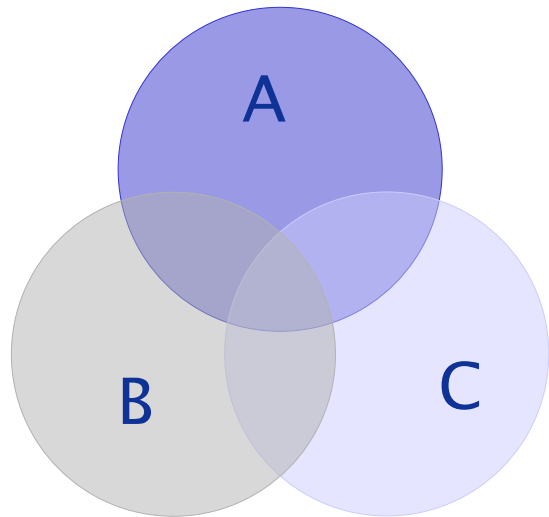
3. Non-family mentor, usually a particular teacher (1/2)

- Respect, firm but fair, belief in ability
- Just **one person** intervening and mentoring changes a life

In their own Words: Drivers & Levers

- 1. Communication skills**
- 2. Computer skills**
- 3. One-on-one training**
- 4. Reading and writing**
- 5. Life skills**
- 6. Maths**
- 7. Cultural literacy or whakapapa**
- 8. Qualifications**
- 9. Job-related skills**
- 10. Group training**
- 11. Confidence or sense of empowerment**
- 12. English**

Literacy as comprising three dimensions



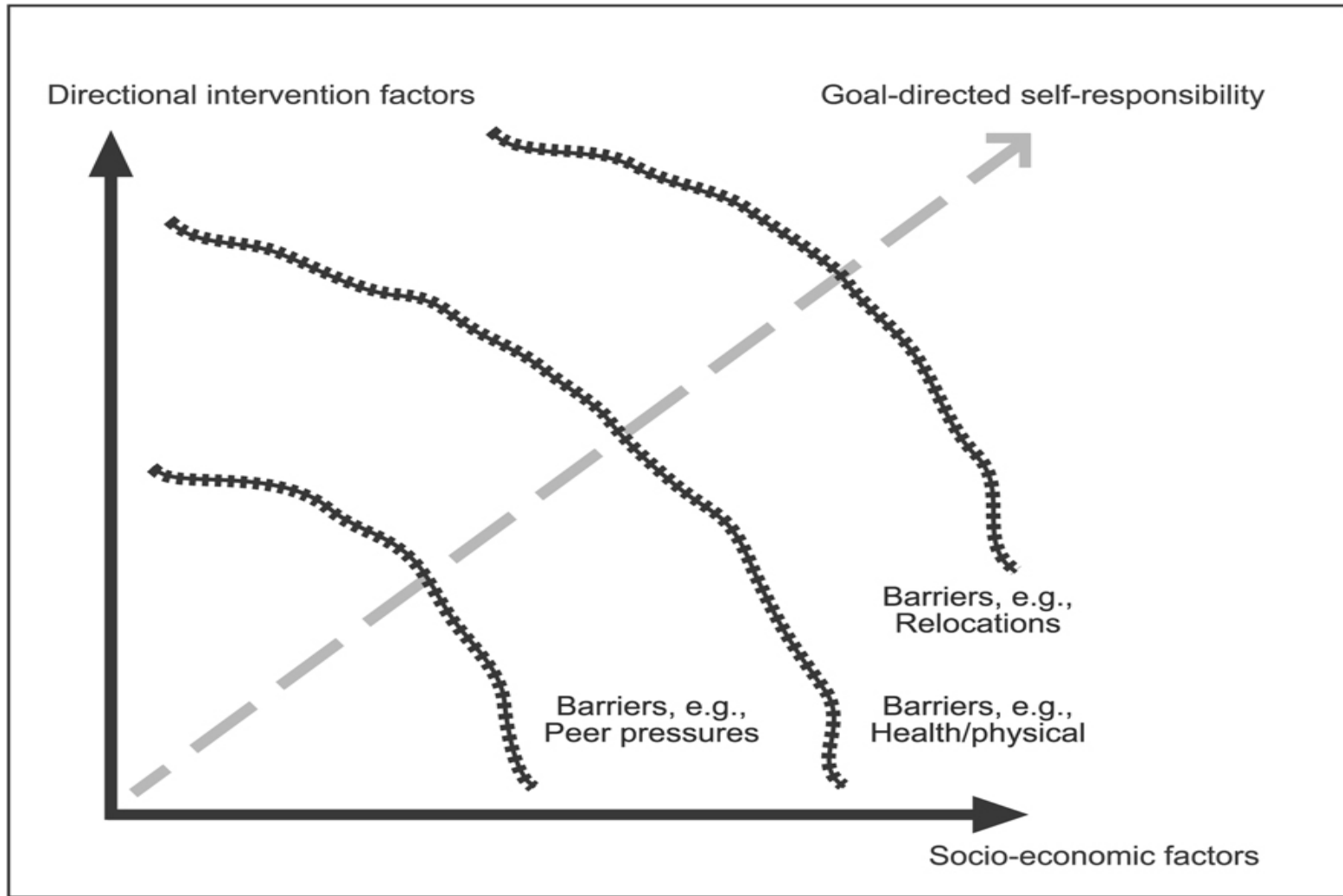
A: The mechanics of a person's literacy

B: The whole person and their attributes

C: The person's life world

"We now call collectively for social marketing to embrace a broader perspective that encompasses not just individual behaviour, but also the social and physical determinants of that behaviour" (Hastings & Donovan, 2002, p. 4).

Change requires at least three things.....



The spin-off PhD project on literacy marketing

Research Questions

- How do we better connect potential participants with courses?
- Is there potential for different/better/more targeted marketing?
- How is literacy talked about in communication practices/campaigns for adult literacy?
- Is the way literacy is talked about in comms part of the problem? How? How can it be better?

PhD Work in Progress

- Theory and method
- Working with organisations
- Results

In conclusion

The recommendations we have made in policy reports so far as a result of these findings include:

- Ways to **formalise pathways** such as mentoring or goal orientation and make them standard, not serendipitous
- A three-pronged social/community/individual approach to **creating the conditions** for behaviour change
- A comprehensive and multifaceted **social marketing** programme around literacy designed to create a new brand, and using among other methods the resource of current participants and their word-of-mouth endorsement, and working off the subtler goals and drivers

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