



12TH FORUM EDUCATION MINISTERS MEETING

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SESSION FIVE: PacREF RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

(PacREF(21) FEdMM.07)

(Paper prepared by USP-IOE & Education)

Title/Topic	PacREF Research Framework
Presenting Agency/Unit	University of the South Pacific (IOE & Education)
Purpose of the Brief	<p>This Research Framework which is underpinned by Pacific philosophies and value systems including respect and reciprocity (values that promotes dialogical and relational approaches) provides an overarching guide for conducting research that aims to support the policies of the PacREF. The framework seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect Pacific knowledge systems and that are used for the benefit of Pacific people and future development. • encourage a developmental perspective on PacREF research by supporting program designs that are based on sound authentic evidence founded on deep appreciation of Pacific contexts. <p>This research framework is situated within the overarching Wansolwara Framework for strengthened learning, deeper collaboration and relationship building.</p>
Summary	
<p>The <u>PacREF Research framework</u> is made up of the 8 posts drawn from Pacific knowledge systems. It should be recognised from the onset that the PacREF Research Framework is a guide to encourage deeper collaboration.</p> <p>1. Motutapu¹: a space of collaboration</p> <p>Motutapu is a sacred space that symbolises a point of collaboration – where different ideas, agendas and views come together. In this collaborative space, we must recognise the potential to create more meaningful and worthwhile understandings of the regional educational context but must also recognise the unspoken tensions, competing agendas and rather messy context of Motutapu. Further to this, a relational approach should be encouraged through dialogue and an openness to co-exploring new ideas and solutions.</p> <p>2. Rebbilib²: ‘feeling’ the swells</p> <p>In ancient Pacific navigation, there were navigators who were able to ‘feel’ the swells, feel the currents and know their locations. In research, like navigation, we sometimes only focus on the obvious, the apparent and the visible (e.g. the stars and the moon) and in the process, we ignore the invisible, the quiet and less clear structures. We sometimes forget that they are all inter-connected to provide a complete context and direction for work. In an ideal situation, the conceptualisation of the study should be identified and requested by a member country. Pacific researchers from national universities and teacher training institutes are strongly encouraged to be part of the research team and to contribute to the conceptualisation and design of the research study.</p>	

¹ Motutapu (sacred island) – at the entrance of harbors in Tonga, Bora Bora, Tahiti, Rarotonga, and Wai-te-mata Harbor, New Zealand. A place of sanctuary, for negotiations, a middle ground, a place for rejuvenation and to launch new journeys. Seu’ula J Fua, 2016. ‘The Comparative Researcher and the Search for a Space in Comparative and International Education’, The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol 15, No 3, 2016, pp.30-41. <http://openjournals.library.usyd.edu.au/index.php/IEJ/index>

² Rebbilib - the Rebbilib covers the whole or large part of the archipelago with a focus on islands. (David Lewis, 1974. ‘We, the Navigators, The Ancient Art of Landfinding in the Pacific’, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu. pg. 245, 247). The Rebbilib is used rather than the mattang or the meddo in support of the existing SPC MEL framework that also uses the Rebbilib.

² SPC Monitoring and Evaluation framework: https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/SPC/Publications/Pacific_Monitoring_Evaluation_and_Learning_Capacity_Strengthening_Rebbilib.pdf

3. Baurua³: seeking access

The exceptional navigational skills of the iKiribati remain evident to today. We recognise that the Baurua contains a complex set of knowledge systems that are required to construct and sail the Baurua. This research framework fully recognises that in each member country are deeply complex sets of knowledge systems and values that underpin their way of life and the way they see the world. To gain access to the people and their knowledge systems, the research framework recognises that there are ethical protocols for each member country, that must be observed and respected whether these are written, spoken and/or practiced. A key principle that researchers are encouraged to observe in conducting research in the Pacific is the principle of **reciprocity** – the act of giving back to the community.

4. Tok stori: our stories

A key consideration in the data collection is the use of relevant Pacific language to tell the story of Pacific people. Where at all possible, Pacific people should be encouraged to share their stories in their language. This is reflected in the design of the research tools: including but not limited to surveys, interviews, observations and focus groups. These should be conducted in the language of the participants. This research framework strongly encourages the use of Pacific-based research tools – including the Talanoa⁴ and the Tok Stori⁵ that have been studied, published and applied. As researchers, we must also remain open to other practices that are being explored as research tools, including the Cook Islands Korero (conversation or discussion), Marshallese Bwebwenato (story telling session), the I-Kiribati te Maroro (exchange of ideas), and others.

5. Vanua⁶: making sense of our stories

A key principle in the PacREF Research Framework is that the analysis of the data is a collaborative process of sense-making and data analysis. In this context, the Vanua Research Framework, recognises this interconnectedness and collaboration – and allows the researcher to use a holistic lens to analyse and make sense of data collected. This process of analysis should actively encourage Pacific researchers and participants in the data analysis.

6. Jaki-ed⁷: ‘from kindness springs life’

The acts of gifting, honouring and affirming relationships are vital to ensuring unity, harmony and sustainability of the collective. Researchers are strongly encouraged to ‘return the gift of knowledge’, that they have asked from Pacific people, to Pacific people. By affirming the act of gifting, researchers re-affirm the values of respect and reciprocity which are core to Pacific people’s way of life. Researchers are encouraged to give back to the communities and thereby capture the spirit of the Jaki-ed affirming that ‘from kindness springs life’. A key consideration in any research, is the issue of intellectual property (IP). Researchers are strongly encouraged to carefully and dutifully consider issues of intellectual property and the respective laws that operate within each country.

7. Malie⁸: Worthwhileness, relevancy

The PacREF Research Framework borrows the monitoring concept of Malie from the Kakala Research Framework. As a monitoring concept, there are key questions that are asked to assess the state of a performance. These key monitoring questions can be used by researchers to design relevant quantitative or qualitative tools, to aid in the

³ Baurua – a Kiribati large voyaging canoe, with a hull, outrigger float and two masts made from oblong pandanus-mat sails. The Kiribati and then the Carolinian canoes are said to be the best performers for their size in the western Pacific. (David Lewis, 1974. ‘We, the Navigators, The Ancient Art of Landfinding in the Pacific’, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, pg. 75- 77)

⁴ Talanoa – Halapua, 2000, ‘Otunuku, 2011, Suaalii-Sauni, Tamasailau, Saunimaa Ma Fulu-Aiolupotea, 2014, Laumua, 2016, Violeti, 2013.

⁵ Sanga, K., Reynolds, M. 2018. “Melanesian *tok stori* in leadership development: Ontological and relational implications for donor-funded programmes in the Western Pacific” The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol. 17, No. 4, 2018, pp. 11-26. <https://openjournals.library.sydney.edu.au/index.php/IEJ>

⁶ Nabobo-Baba, U. 2008. Vanua refers to the clan, the interconnectedness of culture, knowledge systems, values, land, spirits and the relationships that are drawn in this web of connectivity.

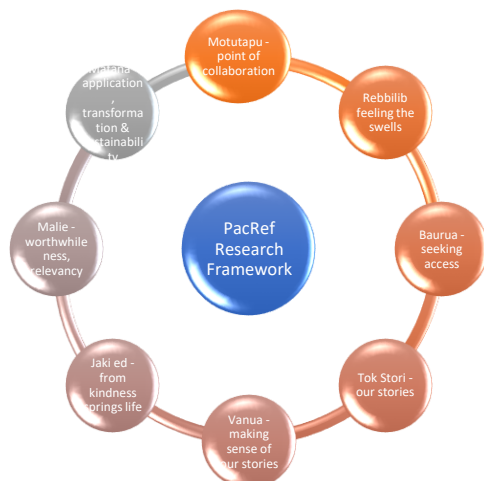
⁷ Taafaki, I.J., Fowler, M.K., 2019. Clothing Mats of the Marshall Islands, the History, the Culture, and the Weavers, Majro, Marshall Islands. The term jaki-ed refers to the finest of the Marshallese mats. These mats are soft with very narrow weave and the designs are intricately decorated. The Jaki-ed and its use as a clothing also captures the philosophy or spirit of Marshallese society where ‘jouj eo mour eo’ or ‘from kindness springs life’.

⁸ Johansson-Fua, S. 2014 - Malie is a Polynesian term used by the audience when a performance is enjoyable, performed beautifully and that the aesthetics are pleasing to the audience’s sense of joy. A traditional performance is described to be Malie, when the music, the dance movements, the dancers’ costumes, the musicians, the performance space and the occasion of the day, all come together to weave a joyful moment.

monitoring of their research project. As a monitoring concept, Malie is applied throughout the process of the PacREF Research framework: from the conceptualisation, to the final gifting – we constantly ask, was the process worthwhile? The Malie monitoring concept is used iteratively and collaboratively throughout the research process.

8. Mafana⁹: application, transformation and sustainability

The evaluation concept of Mafana is also taken from the Kakala Research Framework to guide the PacREF Research Framework in articulating an approach to evaluating research. Mafana is a process that is designed to be a collaborative learning opportunity built in from the initial point of collaboration at Motutapu, to gaining access, to a collaborative approach to data analysis, to gifting and giving back to the community, to a monitoring process that is re-iterative. Mafana is not achieved immediately or instantly, it is a series of steps that leads to that moment of transformation. Within a full cycle, it is the final culmination of a research process that is respectful, affirming and honouring of Pacific people.



Ministers are invited to note:

The framework is intended for member countries, implementing agencies, universities, donor partners and students who wish to engage in research related to the policy areas of the PacREF. The framework can be used as a methodological guide on: conceptualisation and design, ethical protocols and processes, the appropriate use of Pacific research tools, reporting and reciprocating, monitoring and on evaluation.

<p>Decision requested</p>	<p>Ministers are invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) approve the Research Framework; and (ii) encourage all researches undertaking research in the policy areas of PacREF to adhere to the requirements of the Framework particularly to observe Pacific cultural and traditional practices and respect for Pacific values when undertaking research.
<p>Ministers' Position</p>	

⁹ Johansson-Fua, 2. 2014 - Mafana is a Polynesian term that is used to express the warmth, and heartfelt appreciation and the emotional joy that one experiences having gone through moments of Malie. In most traditional Pacific performances, and certainly for Tongan and Samoan dances, one can often witness a moment, when the audience, in their appreciation of the performance, joins the performers.