Pushing back at accountability policy: Reframing adult literacy

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Current context
• Skills, to support business and innovation
• Recognition of wider benefits
• Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga for Māori learners
  (Hutchings, et al, 2013)

Theoretical perspective
• Literacy as a social practice
• Wellbeing: holistic and integrative
The wellbeing study: Research objectives

• Further develop a wellbeing framework that is meaningful, manageable, and engaging for tutors and learners

• Identify learners’ broad wellbeing outcomes from their literacy and numeracy learning

• Understand how a wellbeing framework can help learners assume greater ownership of learning

• Explore the alignment to *Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga*

• Unpack and critically respond to the simplified generic cause-effect discourse (eg., confidence)
Participants (Community literacy programmes)
Year 1: 3 programmes, 3 tutors, 12 learners
Year 2: 4 programmes, 4-5 tutors, 20 learners

Research procedures
• Mapping
• Social media (year 1), journaling (year 2)
• Learner focus groups
• Classroom observations
• Document review
• Tutor interviews
Findings

- Tutors and learners need support to identify wellbeing-related outcomes
- Need for regular attention over time to wellbeing
- Richest sources of wellbeing information are from talk, in focus groups
- Issues with social media
- Potential value of mapping to shape curriculum
Challenges

In the classroom

• Valuing, awareness, reflection and recording
• Regular, safe embedding into the classroom discourse
• Reporting: voice vs task

Sector-wide

• Discourses of skills and deficit (Sandlin & Clark, 2009)
• Supremacy of standardised assessment
• Absence of student voices beyond testimonial
• Reductionist corporate language
Outlook and outcomes: What difference can we make?

- Refinement and extension of *Hei Ara Ako ki te Oranga*

- Contribution to calls for multilateral accountability and assessing what matters to people (Bob Lingard, 2017)

- A call for literacy curriculum that addresses wellbeing not only individually and relationally, but also in the broader community

- Deeper analysis of reductionist outcome descriptors
References


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