

Unconscious Bias and Education

A comparative study of Māori and African American students

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Anton Blank (Oranui), Hautahi Kingi (Cornell University)

<http://apo.org.au/files/Resource/unconscious-bias-and-education.pdf>



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Outline

- Background
- Describe implicit bias & racial/ethnic bias.
- Māori and education.
- How biases are reinforced and the consequences of bias
- What can be done?



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NEW ZEALAND

Teacher bias hurting Māori education

6:17 pm on 10 July 2016



Kate Pereyra Garcia - kate.pereyra@radionz.co.nz

Unconscious bias from teachers is affecting the performance of Māori students, a new study has found.

Why unconscious bias?

- A contemporary “tool” to open up discussion and promote awareness.
- Mass denial?
 - Houkamau & Sibley (2015) Looking Māori Predicts Decreased Rates of Home Ownership. PLoS ONE

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0118540>



Why the African-American comparison?

- Even though Māori and African Americans have different histories they have strikingly similar inequities.



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TE AO MĀORI

Children's Commissioner says bias exists in justice, education

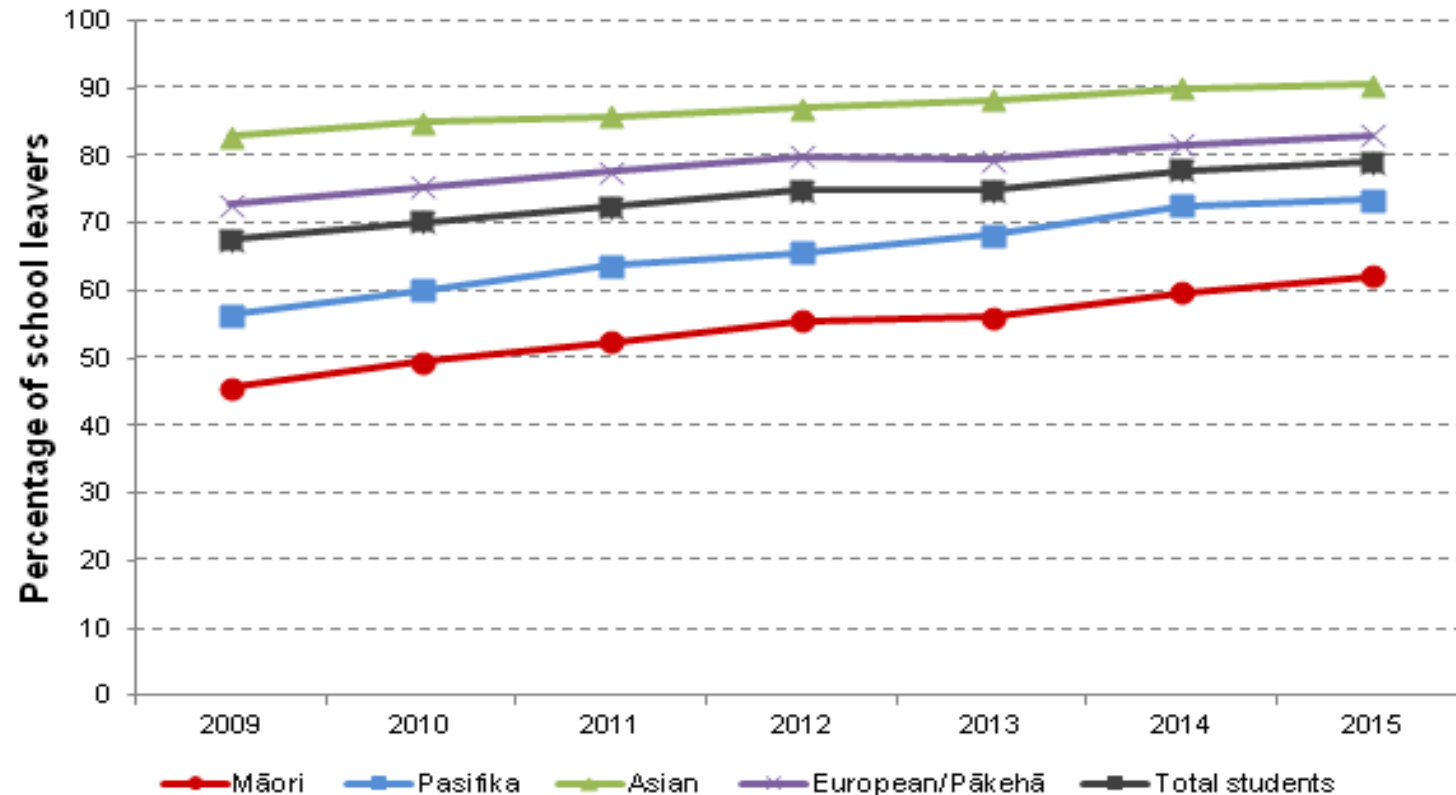
12:46 pm on 19 July 2016



Children's Commissioner Andrew Becroft has endorsed a study's findings showing there is bias against Māori in the education system, and says he has also observed it in the youth justice system.

Why education?

Attainment in NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement) Level 2 2009-2015



<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/indicators/main/education-and-learning-outcomes/1781>

What is implicit bias?

What is racial/ethnic bias?

- A mental process that causes (most) people to have automatically negative attitudes/feelings towards people based on their race/ethnicity.
- People are often not aware of bias or how bias influences perceptions.

Implicit bias and education

- Van De Bergh et al., (2010)
 - Teachers with negative implicit attitudes more likely to evaluate ethnic minority students as being less intelligent and less likely to achieve at school.
- Peterson et al., (2016)

A long history of low expectations

- Where do low expectations come from and what perpetuates them?
- Expectations of Māori low achievement was explicitly created.
- *1862 School inspector "a refined education or high mental culture" would be inappropriate for Māori because "they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour".*

<http://www.oag.govt.nz/2012/education-for-Māori/part3.htm>

Low expectations (research)

- Simon (1986)
- 43 teachers & 13 principals in 13 Schools in Auckland and Manurewa
- Over 50% had deficit view of Māori and “a number” of them expressed overtly negative views of Māori.

Teachers 'unconscious bias' making Maori students fail

LAURA DOONEY
Last updated 14:28, July 10 2016



Maori students face an inherent bias, an academic says.

JOHN BISSET/ FAIRFAX NZ

Low expectations (research)

- Rubie-Davies, Hattie & Hamilton (2006)
- 540 Auckland students (European, Māori, Pacific, Asian)
- 21 Teachers
- High expectations for all ethnic groups but not Māori (even though Māori were performing at the same level as other groups)

Teachers expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies (2013)

- Turner (2013)
- Auckland - 15 mathematics teachers and 361 Year 9 and Year 10 students.
- Teachers' expectations were highest for Asian students, followed by Pākehā and Pasifika students. Expectations for Māori were low.
- Some teachers assumed there was no hope for Māori at all – despite the fact 20% of them were performing above average.

I, Too, Am Auckland: Combating Racialised Microaggressions (2015)

40 Auckland University Students
sharing experiences in tertiary
education.

<http://socialspacejournal.eu/8%20numer/David%20Tokiharu%20Mayeda,%20%E2%80%98I.-Futa-Helu%E2%80%98Ofamo%E2%80%99oni,%20Hilary%20Dansey%20Dutton,%20Moeta%20Keil,%20Elaina%20Lauaki-Vea%20-%20Maori%20and%20Pacific%20student%20experiences.pdf>

8/09/2016

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The screenshot shows a news article from the website 'stuff'. The navigation bar includes categories like National, World, Business, Tech, Sport, Entertainment, Life & Style, Travel, and More. The main headline is 'education' with a background image of a rolled-up document. Below this is a 'BREAKING NEWS' banner with the text 'UK politician Jo Cox dead after shooting'. The article title is 'Racism at Auckland University tackled in project' by Michelle Duff, last updated on March 26, 2015. Social media sharing icons for email, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and a menu are visible. The main image shows three students: Chelsea Tevaga, Elaina Lauaki-Vea, and Zoe James. A caption below the image reads: 'CHALLENGING RACISM: A student-led Auckland University project has interviewed more than 40 Maori and Pacific Island students about the racism they encounter at university. Students Chelsea Tevaga, Elaina Lauaki-Vea and Zoe James.'

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How are biases reinforced?

<http://www.trc.org.nz/alternatives-anti-Māori-themes-news-media>

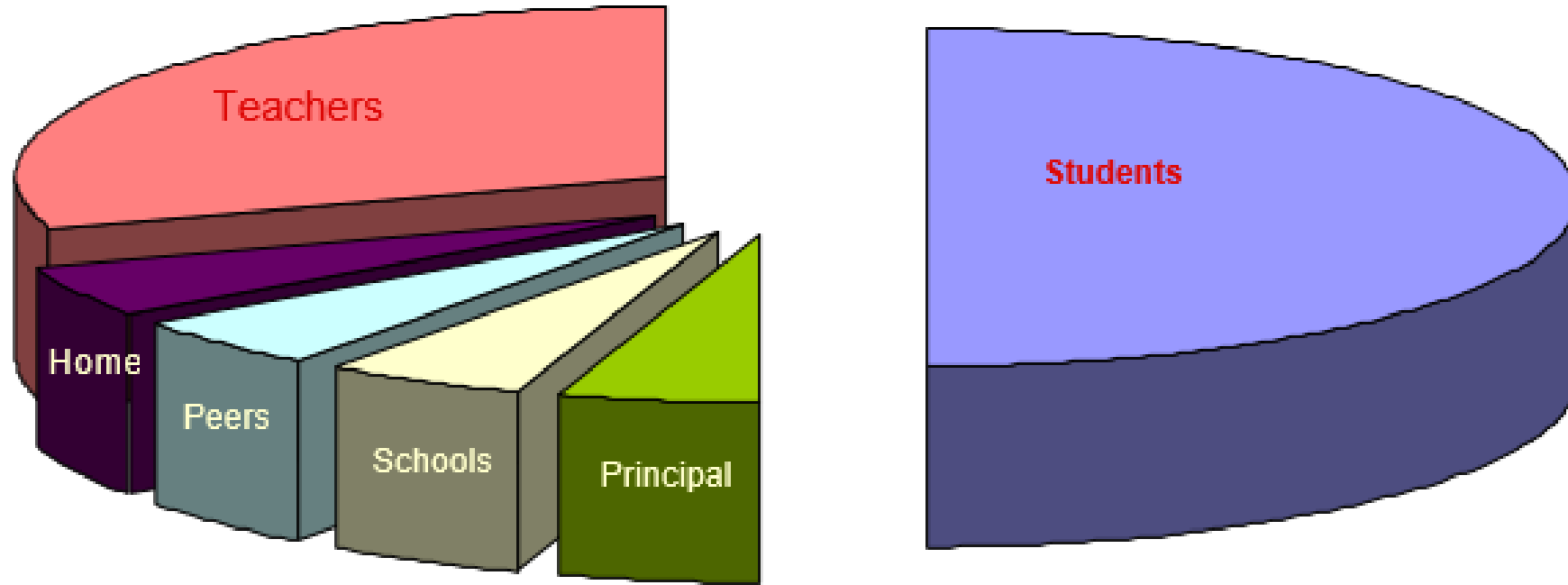
Expectations matter

- **Who believes in me? The Effect of Student-Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations**
- Gershenson, Holt and Papageorge (2015)
- 16,000 U.S. teachers
- **Black and non-Black teachers asked to predict future educational attainment of black students.**
 - **White teachers were about 30 percent less likely than Black teachers to predict their black student would someday earn a college degree.**
 - Teachers expectations shape student achievement.

Why does implicit bias matter for Maori education?

- If teachers have high levels of negative bias – this influences the way they interact with students.
 - Van den Bergh et al., (2010)
 - Rosenthal and Jacobson (1963) Pygmalion effect
- John Hattie (1999)
 - A critical factor in student success is the teacher.

Percentage of Achievement Variance




Hattie, J. (2003). New Zealand education snapshot: with specific reference to the yrs 113. Paper presented at the Knowledge Wave 2003 The Leadership Forum, Auckland. (page 10).

<http://www.educationleaders.govt.nz/content/download/48020/401086/file/John%20Hattie.pdf>

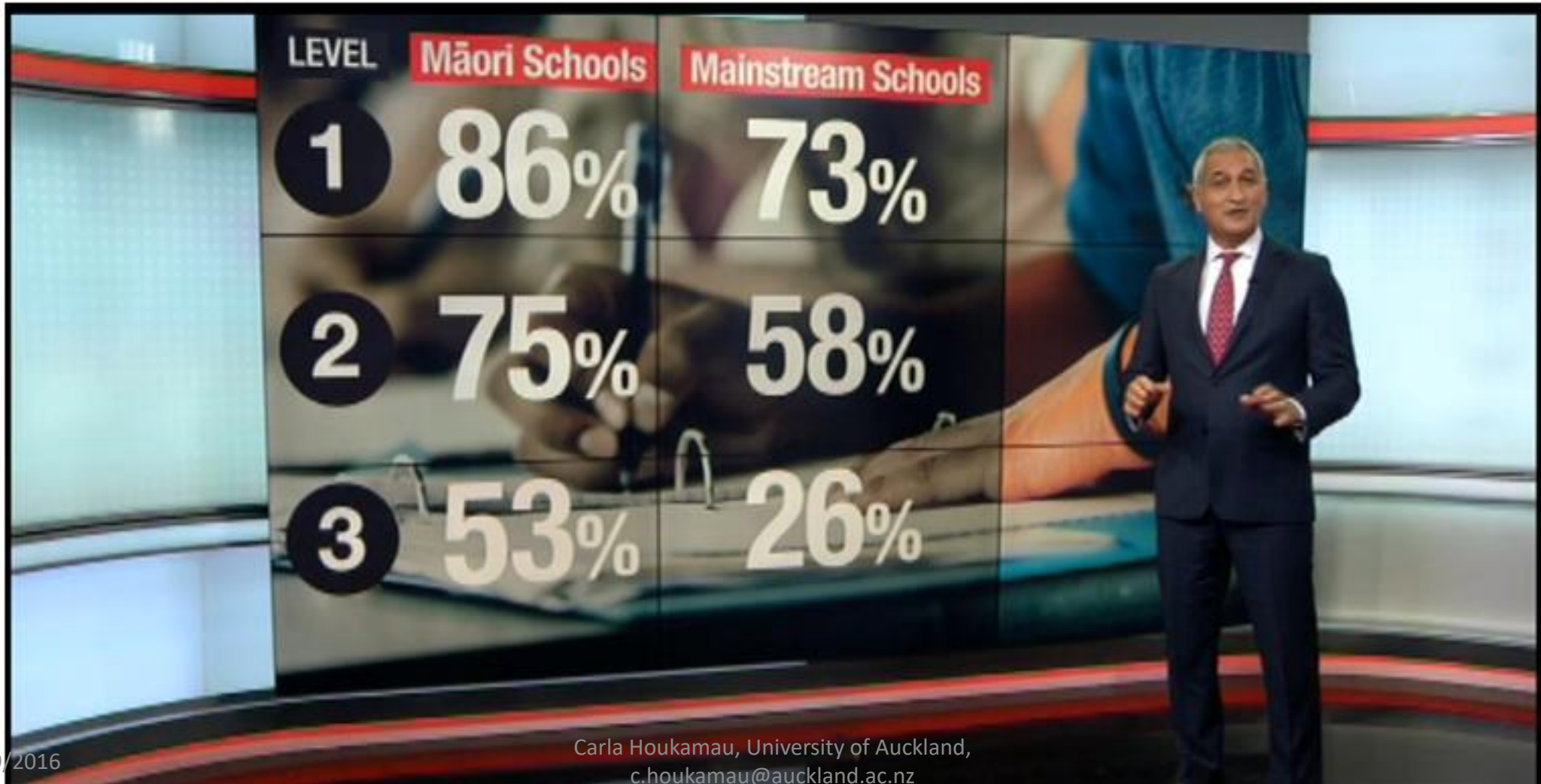
Summary

- This discussion is not meant to “blame” teachers.
- Biases in expectations do matter. These are generally unintentional and are an artefact of how humans categorise complex information.
- Low expectations and the associated bias represents a major challenge for Māori as it shapes interactions they have with non-Māori teachers.
- This, in turn, creates a downward spiralling, self-fulfilling prophecy.

Rising achievement at Māori-medium schools NZ

By Maiki Sherman 

Wednesday 6 Jul 2016 7:53 p.m.



Actively break associations

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Why study business at the University of Auckland Business School

Video ▶

Māori and Pacific students

<http://www.business.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/maori-and-pacific.htm>

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Ministry for Vulnerable Children name 'stigmatising and labelling'

JUDGE ANDREW BECROFT, CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER
Last updated 06:29, August 2 2016



What can be done?

- Domain specific interventions (education, health, corrections)
 - We are currently developing an intervention.
- Normalise discussions around bias.
 - Take the Implicit Association Test.
 - Educate students to deal with bias constructively.
- Realise what makes bias worse.
 - Ignoring it.
 - Mindfulness counters bias (Lueke & Gibson, 2014)

Existing resources

- Auckland University Business School
 - <http://www.business.auckland.ac.nz/en/for/maori-and-pacific.html>
- Te Kotahitanga
 - <http://tekotahitanga.tki.org.nz/> (success factors for Māori at school)
- Te Kete Ipurangi
 - <http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/supporting-Māori-students/>
- Te Mangaroa - Māori Success as Māori
 - http://temangoroa.tki.org.nz/tags/content?tags=effective_teachers

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