

PACIFIC MASCULINITIES: UNDERSTANDING MEN'S PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES ON MASCULINITY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG) AND FIJI

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Research Rationale & Aims



Masculinity as a **'problem' to be fixed** has emerged as a dominant theme in public policy and the agendas of development agencies and NGOs across the Pacific, but notably these often exclude the voices and experiences of the men themselves. Masculinity is **inflected through place and local culture**; hence this study is undertaking a place-based approach.

The primary aim of this research is to **put the voices and experiences of Pacific men at the center of attention**: to hear from men themselves about the challenges they face and ways in which they adapt and negotiate in being men in the contemporary Pacific. The secondary aim of this research is to **understand the current work of gender related programs that work with men and boys in the region**.



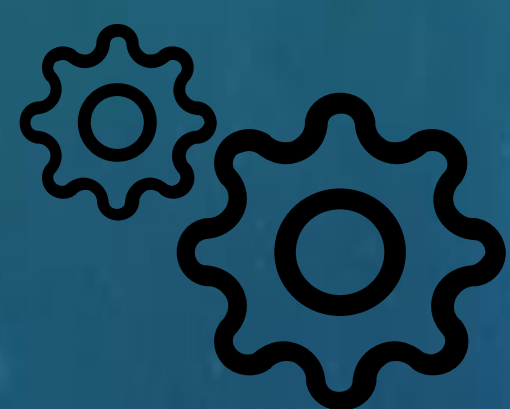
Research Questions

What are the main factors that **shape or influence notions of masculinity** among Pacific Island men?

How do men's experiences of **navigating cultural and gender norms and relationships** shape their perspectives on construction of masculinity?

How do Pacific Island men **view violence against women and gender equality work** in the region?

How do NGO representatives **currently implementing gender related programs** in the region view violence against women and gender equality work?



Research Methods



11 Semi-structured and In-depth interviews were conducted with men in three sites: Port Moresby (PNG), Bougainville (PNG) and Suva (Fiji) over a period of 4 months

Interviews were conducted with **46** men (age between 21 and 63) and representatives from **6** organizations

Interviews were conducted in **Tok-Pisin** and **English** using a voice recorder

Results & Findings



Religion and culture continues to encourage conformity of traditional gender roles and identities such as breadwinner/provider, protector and leader in the Pacific.

Being a **breadwinner/provider** in the Pacific means economic and financial success that **enables men to have autonomy and justify their authority**. Economic authority can provide the **pre-conditions for abuse**.

The effect of urban and rural precarities on masculinities has led to **hybrid, fluid and less traditional ways of being men**. For instance, men taking on feminine gender roles in a household setting.

The urban and rural precarities tend to define **new values and ways of being a man and gives grounds for men to prove their manhood** by way of overcoming or dealing with the struggles of precarious living.

Men are willing to be involved in gender equality and violence against women work and therefore there is a need to rethink the way development agencies and organisations engage men and boys.

Potential for impact



This research recognizes the **limited voices of Pacific island men** on discourses of masculinity, especially masculinity as a problem to be fixed, and therefore focuses on the views and experiences of men. The outcome of this research **contributes to the limited pool of knowledge** on contemporary Pacific masculinities.

Findings from the research will provide **alternative paths** to better understanding dimensions of masculinity in order to **deal with the issue of gender violence and inequality** in Pacific Island societies. Moreover, **gender policies, programs and initiatives can be developed or enhanced** to achieve better outcomes for men and boys and women and girls in the Pacific.

Map of Oceania



[This poster was designed by Mercy Masta]

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