

The quantification of migrant labour from the Pacific: gender and the f.....g Plaza

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Introduction

Prescott and Hooper (2009) drew attention in their paper to the change for Pasifika workers having to adapt from a “commons” driven society to an “anti-commons” society. They showed how migrants coming from a task orientated society had to adapt very quickly to what the French writer Foucault (1977a) identified as a disciplinary regime characterised by measurement, and surveillance from invisible managers. Compare this with, for example, the task of fishing among an island community. Fishing depends on nature. The tides, currents, winds and weather must all be right there being no fixed time of starting. The leader works with those preparing the nets, rigging and launching the boat. It is a common effort and the proceeds of the catch are shared. Equality between women and men is a fundamental value. According to Koester (2015), “Gender is one of the most persistent causes, consequences and manifestations of power relations. Understanding gender can therefore significantly enhance our understanding of power and vice versa”.

By contrast, migrant workers in New Zealand must adjust to an industrial society characterised by measurement and surveillance in workplaces where impersonal managers are driven by budgets and performance indicators. Western societies took over 200 years to gradually adjust to this change of lifestyle. Migrant Pasifika workers must adjust within months. That some do adjust so quickly is remarkable but many have difficulty and become stressed, while others drop-out harbouring feelings of social alienation. The latter part of this paper’s title refers to a conclusion drawn by a Thai migrant with poor English whose first job was to work as a cleaner in a shopping mall plaza. She got on well with her Pasifika co-workers but because they always referred to their workplace bitterly as “the F.....g Plaza” she thought that was the shopping mall’s real name.

Currently, Pasifika people in New Zealand feature proportionately adversely in a range of social statistics such as crime, imprisonment, health, drug addiction, gambling and life expectancy. Foucault (1977a) identifies a process of alienation brought about by the transition from an outcome society to an output society and identifies the subject as either divided inside himself or divided from others (Bannet, 1989). Such division occurred in a system of organisation dating back over a hundred and fifty years.

They came to govern the supposedly objective epistemology of measurement, inquiry and examination: and how they came to serve the play of power relations in the

confessional, in asylums, law courts, prisons, factories and schools. A product of knowledge and power, alienation in Foucault is a historical phenomenon which determines our subjectivation, our view of ourselves and our relations with each other. (Bannet, 1989. Pp. 94-95).

The paper explains the mechanisms of modern industrial society, how it engenders alienation, and the view Pasifika people have of themselves and their relations with society. The paper is organised first, to explain the role of accounting in power and governance and how quantification transforms relationships. The following section links the disciplinary power of quantification with Foucauldian theory and shows how alienation engenders either docile acceptance or stressful resistance. Lastly in this section on the theoretical/background we discuss the mechanism of control by measurement. Following a Method section, the empirical section details the findings of our interviews with Pasifika workers.

Accounting, Power & Governance

Mennicken and Miller (2012) state that:

The calculative instruments of accountancy transform not only the possibilities for personhood; they also construct the physical and abstract calculable spaces that individuals inhabit. Whether in the private or the public sector, activities are increasingly structured around calculations of costs and benefits, estimates of financial returns, assessments of performance and risk, and a plethora of other forms of numerical and financial representation. Yet, despite the influence of this vast yet still growing calculative infrastructure, relatively little attention has been given to the ways in which this economizing of the entire social field alters modalities of governing and forms of personhood and power.” (P.4)

The Mennicken and Miller (2012) contribution is to highlight the way the structure of quantification alters behaviours, governance and power relations. This is because as they observe accounting is both inherently administrative and political. It is at the heart of what Foucault (1979b) so aptly called the calculated management of life. Not only does accounting depend on administrative practices of recording and bookkeeping, but also because the calculative technologies of accounting are mobilized by a variety of political programmes for intervening in economic and social life (Rose & Miller, 1992). By employing Foucault's (1977a) concepts, it is possible to see the conjoint disciplining effects of accounting numbers, and their involvement in the production of neo-liberal subjectivities. Mennicken and Miller (2012) consider that accounting numbers have a distinctive capacity for acting on the actions

of others, one that goes far beyond the abstract injunctions of economic theory. By linking decisions to supposedly configure persons, domains, and actions as objective and comparable, in turn, renders them governable.

Mennicken and Miller (2012) stress that accounting numbers are not only involved in the ‘making up’ of economic entities, they also help construct the type of persons or identities that inhabit these entities. It is this construction of mechanistic, docile identities in the service sector that is the central concern of this paper. Miller and O’Leary (1987) explain how the rise of standard costing and budgeting in the 1930s, for instance, provided a new way of thinking and intervening that promised to render visible the inefficiencies of the individual within the enterprise, supplementing traditional concerns with the fidelity or honesty of the person.

Industry and discipline: The Foucauldian contribution

Penfield (2014) explains that disciplinary power, which emerges alongside early industrial capitalism, more insidiously invests the social field, for it functions through the “exhaustive capture of the individual’s body, actions, time, and behaviour. It is a seizure of the body and not of the product...” (p.145). Disciplinary institutions, such as prisons, schools, factories, hotels and asylums, are thus so many apparatuses of capture, by which power apprehends bodies themselves with their materiality and their forces. Penfield (2014) goes on to argue that discipline produces the very form of the modern individual; and by directly investing the body to capture and control its forces, discipline fabricates this individual as the obedient subject, the individual subjected to habits, rules, orders, and authority that is exercised continually around him and upon him, and which he must allow to function automatically in him. In this context, Connolly (2014) observes that Foucault, emphasizes how modes of discipline, governmentality, and bio-politics infiltrate civil society and impersonal market processes, both channelling desires and actions and setting impersonal (rather than personal or intended) constraints within which desires can be fulfilled. By contrast, Han and Altman (2009) state that in cultures like the Pacific, there is no clear demarcation between personal and organizational life. related pay and positive evaluations, which can result in negative perceptions of distributive injustice.

Accounting is a form of surveillance which provides a structure to enable knowledge. Roberts (2014) argues that accounting can be ascribed an agency in its own right by being drawn upon by human agents. That is accounting “frames meanings (for making sense of results) and norms

(standards by to judge both self and others)” (p.139). In this regard, even in universities, staff are now quantified and measured by their performance as a calculative contribution. By recording, outputs, managers can know if staff are achieving the metrics demanded as a performance measure. Failure to achieve the necessary target metrics can mean dismissal – not so much as at the manager’s arbitrary discretion but as a result of objectives embedded in a structure of norms and meanings which demands that certain metrics be achieved (Roberts, 2014).

Foucault (1980b) provides insights into how the differing power relationships impact upon “improving labour productivity and industrial performance in general, improving the competitiveness of firms, and giving more discretionary power to management” (Burgess & MacDonald, 1990, p. 18). In spite of power being a generally positive exercise, Miller (1987) maintains that “where there is power, there is resistance” (Miller, 1987, p. 205). Because male managers are common in service industries; it is important to consider how power is experienced by migrant female staff, as such finding could influence the application of internal control mechanisms in service providers.

Bernauer and Carrette (2004) observes that “power/knowledge is always a relationship between structures of “sayable” ability and “unsayable” ability” (p. 160). What is sayable? For instance, discourse taking the form of instructions from managers; records kept; key performance indicators; etc. And what is unsayable? That is the structure that regulates by, uniform, dress, body postures, speech tone, etc. Foucault’s concept of the “docile” body contributes to the concept of the unsayable. Foucault states that docile bodies are made by organizations through discipline by means of enclosure, examination and hierarchical surveillance and normalizing sanctions (1977a). Behaviours may be subjected to the normalising power of surveillance. We use our bodies to follow acceptable standards of behaviour. However, people can discipline their bodies in different ways to be seen as “normal” in their appearance (Foucault, 1980b). Therefore, we can see that Foucault does not view the body as an entirely natural entity. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983) state that Foucault also sees the body as discursively produced. Foucault’s theory concerning the “docile” body plays important part in our understanding of how the body is created to conform and also “the disciplinary technology of power to produce docile, useful bodies” (p. 160). Hopper and Macintosh (1993) argue that “enclosure, confinement and partitioning were the necessary first steps of a structure for turning a heterogeneous mass of humans into a homogeneous social order” (p. 193). Such theories have

relevance to service providers where the supply of unskilled labour is relatively plentiful and the structure reflects the authoritarian and calculative culture.

1977a) further elaborates that the examination of disciplined bodies incorporates aspects of surveillance, hierarchisation, measurement and normalization. Through its ceremony of power, it establishes “a regime of truth” about each individual that is one of the most effective instruments of discipline and control. Consequently, each individual is seen, examined, inspected and normalized. Hopper and Macintosh (1993) maintain that power is exercised on the individual through a punishing gaze over them. To be effective, disciplinary forms of power are also exercised on the individual’s mind rather than on the body. It may help to explain that disciplinary power is about getting knowledge of, and over, individuals.

In this context Bannet (1989) argues that alienation occupies a focal position in Foucault’s work. It appears as: a series of dividing practices in which the subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others. Such dividing practices have permeated the human sciences and have come to govern the supposedly objective epistemology of measurement, inquiry and examination.

Resistance and accommodation

Foucault (1980b) argues that “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.” (p. 95). Power relations in the workplace can be seen in the context of agency and structure. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), budgets and costs levels become embedded in a structure of rules and regulations governing labour relations. Hartstock (1990) states that Foucault insists that those of us who have been marginalized remain at the margins. Because of such marginalization, Hartstock (1990) points out that, “His [Foucault’s] account of power is perhaps unique in that he argues that wherever there is power, there is resistance” (p. 168). Resistance can take many forms, and female resistance to managerial agency can take a path of resistance that includes accommodation. Hartstock (1990) concludes that “one should conduct an ascending analysis of power, starting from the “infinitesimal mechanisms” which each have their own history. One can then see how mechanisms, such as KPIs and budgeted costs, these have been colonized and transformed into techniques for shaping behaviour. Thus, while as Roberts (2014) points out accounting mechanisms become embedded in organisational structures, and as such enable managerial dominance, the reaction to such

dominance in not necessarily resistance. As Hartstock (1990) observes, “It is certainly true that dominated groups participate in their own domination” (p. 169).

However, although the dominated may participate in their own domination, they may create an agency relationship of accommodation, and often such accommodations are fragile and short term. Weitz (2001) states that power is embedded in relationships, waxing and waning as relationships evolve. That the body is a site for struggles over power should not surprise us. (Foucault, 1979, 1980a) describes the tasks of modern economic and social life, societies require “docile bodies,” such as regimented soldiers, factory workers who perform their tasks mechanically, and students who sit quietly. In turn, these disciplinary practices have made the body a site for power struggles and for resistance. Yet Scott (1990); (Willis, 1977), have argued, open political resistance is far rarer than the informal, unorganized, and often covert forms of resistance embedded in everyday life: pilfering from factories, enjoying jokes that ridicule those in power, or “performing” gender in subtly subversive ways” (p. 668). Workers may also become docile bodies and become sites for power struggles. Not all will resist, but those that do are more likely to drop-out of the work force.

With regard to female staff in menial work, Weitz (2001) states that women are neither “docile bodies” nor free agents; rather, they combine docility and resistance as they actively grapple with cultural expectations and social structures. At any rate, defining resistance based on, whether it improves an individual’s life without creating broader change and if such resistance and its effects are only short-lasting. It is these questions, of how staff combine resistance with docility and if such docility creates broader change or is only short-lasting that are of interest.

Weitz (2001) states that, “We need to more narrowly define resistance as actions that not only reject subordination but challenges the structure that supports that subordination. By extension, docility refers to actions that accept subordination, by either adopting or simply not directly challenging the structure that supports subordination. Resistance and docility are not polar opposites but rather coexisting variables, so that any given action might contain elements of docility and elements of resistance.

Management control

Management control is part of a system containing accounting and administrative mechanisms used by an organisation to control its managers and other employees. They are

mechanisms used to motivate, monitor, measure and sanction the actions of managers and other employees so that an organisation achieves its business goals. In contrast internal control is part of a system of integrated elements (people, structures, processes and procedures) acting together to provide reasonable assurance that an organisation achieves its business goals. The paper concentrates on internal management control. Employing the analysis of Abernethy and Brownell (1997), the paper considers two aspects of management control: accounting controls, and behavioural controls.

Accounting controls suit tasks that are routine, familiar and certain and where few exceptions are likely to challenge routines. Examples would be highly standardised production models where costing, budgeting and targeted performance outputs can be applied. By contrast, behavioural controls suit similar objectives except those which require tasks that are transparent in terms of input-output, familiarity and routine. The essential difference between accounting and behavioural controls being timeliness, that is behavioural controls are preferred where tasks are to be monitored in real-time rather than after the event. The latter being the feature of accounting controls (Merchant, 1989). On the other hand, personnel controls cannot be programmed into routine operations and procedures which can be monitored by supervisors. Professional training and socialisation is a feature of personnel control where behaviour is regulated through self and peer group processes.

Abernethy and Brownell (1997) argue that where tasks are highly analysable and exceptions are few, reliance on both accounting and behavioural controls will be the preferred choice for performance management. Management control of cleaners exemplifies these choices. However, Berry et al (2009) point out that it is appropriate to recognise the link between culture and control, while Scott (1995) argues that culture dominates control: norms, cognitions and modes of order shape control structures and procedures.

Foucault (1980b) recommends that researchers investigate the micro elements of discipline and control rather than the macro approaches outlined above which identify likely variables that could indicate the presence of internal control weaknesses. Foucault (1980b) refers to 'subjugated knowledge' – memories that are disqualified for being unscientific. Such an approach, according to Foucault (1980b), "allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (p. 83). The behavioural problems that Ge and McVay (2005) refer to as being at the root of control weaknesses are central to this study. To get to this root, it is necessary to adopt a micro approach, because

macro approaches involving sampling for probabilities cannot expose these roots. Foucault (1980b) recommends that researchers should entertain local, discontinuous, and illegitimate forms of knowledge so that subjugated knowledge becomes a legitimate source of investigation.

The main objectives of behavioural controls are to encourage employees to follow policy, comply with routines, and promote the effectiveness and efficiency of operations (CPA Australia, 2008). Achieving these aims requires obedience to the internal regulations and procedures that apply in the organisation. In this way, real time control of staff behaviours are controlled as opposed to accounting control through budgets and KPIs which look backward at what was achieved.

Establishing and delegating responsibilities are the key features of managerial internal control (Chan & Ng, 2012). Workloads are established by management and the efficiency with which these workloads are performed is overseen by supervisors appointed for their knowledge of what is required. Technological controls in the form of cameras and calculative performance standards may be applied to supplement the oversight of supervisors. From such sources of information, management may more effectively perform regular and independent reviews of staff and their operations (CPA Australia, 2008).

Risk assessment refers to the recognition and analysis of risks and the formulation of a basis upon which those risks should be managed. Mitigation is managed by the extensive employment of migrant labour. Pasifika migrant workers are generally cheaper – which means less risk of overpayment – plentiful and less likely to fight dismissal – which allows greater management authority. As most cleaning positions are basically unskilled there is little risk of losing skilled and irreplaceable labour. Another feature of management's control is the means employed to identify information, such as record keeping and establishing performance standards.

Internal control mechanisms of measurement

The literature on measurement is important as what cannot be measured may become in a service context of lesser importance because it cannot be seen to effect revenue – the bottom

line. The extent to which the latter dominates the metrics of staff performance will be a contribution of this paper.

Goldratt (1991) points out that all behaviour can be predicted by what is being measured: “Tell me how you measure me, and I will tell you how I will behave.” (p. 26). Such a statement is borne out by the literature: that staff react to what is inspected. However, for managers faced with controlling a large and diverse workforce, measurement is important. The famous physicist Lord Kelvin was well known for saying that if you cannot measure something, your understanding of it is “meagre” (Lord Kelvin, 1883). This explains managerial drive to establish metrics around staff activities.

Spitzer (2007) observes that workers in service industries tend to do what it takes to obtain rewards or to avoid punishments. Thus, what is measured tends to get their attention among so many competing demands. In the other words, it is well known that staff will do what management inspects (measures), not necessarily what management expects (Spitzer, 2007, p. 16). Such observations may play a key part in research findings.

Knights and Collinson (1987) stress that accounting’s negative influence (they see the ability of accounting to calculate and measure performance as primarily disciplinary) on the labour force could be controlled and managed, because the accounting disciplinary power was inscribed in disciplinary mechanisms of hierarchical surveillance, enclosure and the discourse (1979a). KPIs are indicators with several characteristics, many of which are ostensibly non-financial measures, that measure and tie responsibility down to a department, to have a significant impact and encourage appropriate action (Parmenter, 2013, p. 6). But, when you put a dollar sign on a measure, you have already converted it into a result indicator. In this way, even the KPIs, which seem to measure non-financial performance can be tied back to the accounting results.

Therefore, KPIs are special performance tools and are very important to service providers such as cleaning companies. In the long term, it will affect the profit of the company. In the short term, when it is linked to pay, KPIs may be manipulated to enhance the probability of a larger bonus by individuals and departments (Parmenter, 2013).

Method

Interviews

The following section outlines and discusses the research method of the current study, selection of research participants, research questions and the Talanoa approach.

Purposeful Sampling

Probability and non-probability sampling are two major sampling methods. Probability sampling is used in quantitative research and particularly in surveys, to produce a sample which is statistically representative of the sampled population, therefore this sampling method is also known as representative sampling. This is in contrast to non-probability sampling which is intended not to produce a sample which is statistically representative, and the probability of units being selected is not known (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003). When such sampling method is adopted, relatively small samples are selected purposefully for study in depth. Therefore it is also known as purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002). Naturalistic inquiry relies on purposeful sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and typically involves which focuses on selecting information-rich cases or even single case to enhance understanding and illuminate the questions under study (Burgess, 1984; Patton, 2002). Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research (Patton, 2002). Compared with representative sampling approach, the purposeful sampling approach is useful for insuring that participants are suitably experienced to provide the necessary relevant and detailed data needed for the research project (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

For the purposes of this research, a snowball or chain sampling is adopted, which means getting to know some participants and having them introduce you to others (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The key to snowballing was to locate information-rich key informants and ask them to recommend people for the researcher to interview. However, one of the potential drawbacks of the snowball technique was that it can limit the diversity of informants. This potential drawback can be mitigated by specifying the required characteristics of new sample members who are dissimilar to the existing participants in particular ways (Ritchie et al., 2003).

Number of Participants - Saturation

Patton (2002) suggests that there are no rules for the number of participants selected in qualitative inquiry. It depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what are the critical issues, what will be useful, what are credible and what can be achieved within the constrained time and resources. As quoted in Patton's study:

The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size (Patton, 2002)).

The criterion to determine when to stop sampling, as introduced by Lincoln and Guba (1985), is to select participants until information redundancy is reached. That is the point at which no new information is obtained from interviewees and the themes in the data begin to emerge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Unlike the conventional sampling which is based on statistical considerations, naturalistic sampling is based on informational considerations. The purpose of naturalistic sampling is to maximise information instead of facilitate generalisation. In the current study, information redundancy was reached when in-depth interviews, a number of informal conversations, and follow-up phone calls were conducted with twenty-one interviewees. The next section discusses the conduct of the semi-structured qualitative interviews.

Qualitative Interview Method

This section justifies the use of semi-structured interview method as the main method for data collection. It also describes in great details how the semi-structured interviews were conducted in the current study. The current research aims to explore participants' attitudes, behaviours and experiences through such method as interviews. This method attempts to obtain in-depth opinions from participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). A qualitative interview utilises open-ended questions that allow for individual variations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). Several advantages of interviews make such data collection method more appropriate in this study. First, interviews enable interaction between researcher and participants and allow researcher to understand participants' experiences and perceptions (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998a). Second, interviews allow the researcher to obtain a more accurate and clearer overall picture of an interviewee's point of view because interviewees are not constrained in a questionnaire which only offers very limited options to start (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998b).

Semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were conducted with a number of participants prior to the formal semi-structured interviews to increase the salience and relevance of interview questions (Patton, 2002). By analyzing, the responses from the informal conversations, lines of inquiry can be developed and modified to ensure that more relevant and important questions are asked in the formal interviews.

With the result that the research questions asked are:

1. How does the work you do now differ from what you did in the Pacific?
2. Are cleaning skills important or is meeting the output expected more important
3. What do you miss about work in the Pacific?
4. Do you think some workers are favoured by managers and why?
5. How much is there resistance to managerial expectations?
6. Is the work schedule demanding and is it possible to change the work schedule?
7. What problems are likely to be encountered at work?

Talanoa in Business Research

A benefit of the *talanoa* process is the opportunity given to participants to tell their story in detail providing the necessary context they feel appropriate. Sanga and Pasikale (2002) maintain the complex and contextual nature of Pacific Island businesses in New Zealand needs to be reflected in the format of the *talanoa*. Pacific Island research participants are likely to harbour a fear of being misunderstood or of being judged against a set of criteria they do not identify with. *Talanoa* gives participants the opportunity to contextualise their responses. As a consequence, *talanoa* sessions are likely to be longer in duration and may need to be conducted in the preferred language of the participant.

Talanoa is a two-way process. It is therefore important that the researcher plays an active role in the *talanoa* that takes place. Researchers must therefore be prepared to share their own experiences and stories as part of the *talanoa* philosophy of openness, sharing and mutual respect. This aspect of *talanoa* is supported by a number of authors as a necessary part of any face to face dialogue that occurs between researcher and participant (Douglas, 1985; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Seidman, 1991; Spradley, 1979).

Although the topic in which the research is based is fixed, each *talanoa* session should be treated as unique and therefore potentially having something new to contribute (Goulding, 2002). *Talanoa* as with unstructured interviews have the tendency of deviating from the topic or line of inquiry. While it is the role of the researcher to bring the discussion back in line, it is important to exercise this with some caution. Participants must be given the opportunity to contextualise their experiences. Some of their seemingly irrelevant recollections are an

integral part their story. These stories will help the researcher reach a clearer understanding of the participant's business. Gubrium and Holstein (1998) argue that storytelling is a practical means that participants use to give their account in a coherent manner. This coherence may be compromised if the participant is not given the opportunity to give their account in full.

Alienation and Pasifika cleaners

The authors of this paper conducted some 21 interviews with a range of Pasifika workers with the unstructured aim of letting them tell their own stories. To background the position of Pasifika cleaners we refer to the New Zealand Herald (26 November 2018) report on the life of a Pasifika hospital cleaner who is likely to benefit from a new government pay offer.

The mother-of-two has worked six to seven days every week for the past 19 years to put food on the table for her children, pay a mortgage and keep on top of her "ever growing" weekly bills. No longer are we talking an increase in cents but in dollars, which would be life-changing for me. It would mean I'd finally be able to have my weekends free to spend time with my family and go to church on Sundays. Hiku said she and her husband had worked shift work for nearly two decades, which meant when her children were at school he would do the drop-offs and she would do the pick-ups. We didn't see eye to eye often, most weekends when he was at home I was at work. Honestly, I haven't had a family life so this pay rise would be huge - even though my children have grown up and now have jobs of their own.

[\(https://www.yudu.co.nz/news/wage-rise-life-changing-for-low-paid-workers/43896/\)](https://www.yudu.co.nz/news/wage-rise-life-changing-for-low-paid-workers/43896/)

The point of the above quote is not to record the new pay offer but to mirror the situation of Pasifika menial workers in New Zealand who originate from extended families in villages where communal tasks are measured in outcomes not outputs and family time is paramount. The following section takes up this theme of the transition to an industrial economy.

According to Foucault (1979b) alienation arises in industrial society as a result of the disciplinary techniques of management control which reduces work to monotonous routines, allocates outputs and institutes behavioural mechanisms. Discipline is imposed by enclosure, surveillance and the creation of docile bodies. The 21 Pasifika women cleaners (referred to as P 1-21), interviewed bear testimony to Foucault's concept of alienation, by repeating themes that life is hard, pay is poor, work is long, arduous and without a sense of satisfaction. The

women originated from farming villages in Samoa, Tonga and Fiji and recalled happier times on their small farms.

P11 sums up the lifestyle change: “But now it’s really hard. Life is hard”. P12 echoed the same feelings. “Life is hard. Things are too expensive. It’s really expensive and the money is not enough to pay the rent, and food. P16 further expanded on the theme of hardships imposed by working. In response to the question are you away from your families for long hours? She answered, “12 hours a day. Coz we need the money that’s the only thing we do it for the money. Sometimes I am sitting down and I was thinking about it 12 hours a day 60 hours a week the rate \$16, I don’t want to waste my time. I think should go home and cut my lawn”. When asked, do you get more satisfaction out of cutting your lawn? She replied, “Oh yes much more”.

Most respondents referred to their families and the long hours being away from their children. P7 responded, “Yeah I got family but from the beginning of my family it’s so hard. Me and my family, we just take our kids to someone and we pay that lady for to look after them”. Another woman P 4 expanded on the problem of having to work for long hours for low pay to keep her family fed and educated. “Yeah I got three young kids so I was staying home to look after my kids and then only my husband was working. Then I was budgeting for us, my kids went to school, the primary we could manage but when they went to college, - that was the hardest time for us. So we both had to work and the idea [reason] we did it just was to cut the school fees and repay the bank. Me and my husband work to cover the school trips or whatever funds that the school wants and that was the only way. Now it’s only my grandkids to work for”.

P8 continued with theme of working for the good of the family. “It’s really hard you know coz it’s my life it’s like that. I feel sorry for the kids with the parents that they not really care but I have not been in that life. Me and my husband focus to our kids. We try to raise them the Samoan way. We always take the hard life even now they are growing up and sometimes we help them and their family. This time I can see that it’s not enough the money. The life here is so expensive”.

P2 talked about work, “We have a lot of pressure from the boss? Sometimes they come and tell you that on you have not cleaned this well. You need to go back and clean it”. A similar theme was taken up by P19, “Sometimes you got the hard life. But you can push away coz you just need the money so you stay cool and they order us to do it”. P1 contemplated on the

necessity of working, “Yeah sometimes I don’t really enjoy it but you know I just keep working. It’s really the money. Coz I can’t find any job, coz I’m too old now. I’m telling the truth that’s the only thing. It’s like I just keep this job. P1 was unusual because she carried on working in New Zealand while her family returned in Samoa. What is not unusual is that she sends her family money. Such remittances are a major source of income in Samoa. “Oh my mum she passed away more than 20 years ago. Just only my dad in Samoa. Just only myself in New Zealand. My son, he is a big boy now. Just stay there with my dad. Just only me here now.

When asked if they feel valued by the company they work for and if their company appreciates or says thank you for doing a good job, P3 replied. “Oh but we do the hard job but they never say thanks”. P15 expanded on the theme of worker appreciation, “Yeah sometimes we have a pressure. You know I have been working a long time. I start in 2005. My rate is too low, \$16.85 is my rate. If we sick, then we stay home. I don’t look forward to coming to work because of the hard work and the pressure. Sometimes I can’t wait to finish on Friday. I come for the money.

With regard to the sudden transition to work in an industrialised economy, P17 spoke about her life in Fiji before coming to work in New Zealand. “In Fiji we got the farm. I stay at home and farm. In Fiji, you know we stay at home and make the food and never work outside. Now I no happy”. P18 also took up the theme of Pasifika village life where women worked around the home. “To me it’s like when you doing your job at home you are the boss, you can do whatever you need to do it. And you really happy when you do it. When you come here [New Zealand] the boss is around and we work under someone’s control. Sometimes when she [current female boss] comes here and she shouts when we are doing our best you know inside is the hard part. It’s like I get angry you know sometimes. I can’t hold it. And I just want to walk out. Walk away from this job. Back home [Tonga] when you do your own work you do your own thing. I’m very happy and satisfying. But when you come over here its different.

P8 talked more about her boss and discipline. “She not coming every day you know. Most of the times like two days (per week). That’s the only thing when she come and check on you saying it’s dusty over here and dusty over there but we do our job. You know it’s like we do our best three people have to cover all this [indicates they a large area] and we look after the main block too. And then that’s why we try and do bit by bit our work because it’s a lot of

stuff to do but it's only three of us working. So yeah you know sometimes we get more pressure. The boss come and say there's dust on this window here and stuff, but we under pressure because we don't know which one of us the boss means, coz we maybe do the window sill yesterday and then she will come on the next day and say there is dust. So when I talk to her we already done that yesterday. I feel pressure and I say so you want us to come and stand over here and do that again when there's dust over here. So I just wipe it and wipe it all the time but the boss not satisfied".

P19 expanded on the theme of bosses and discipline. "Happier when she is not around. We have an outside manager but she hardly ever comes. But when my boss stop around here she always come and you know and it feel like sad to us. You know coz we working hard, we still doing our job. Coz we know we check and we check every day. When our boss ring us and complain, we come in early in the morning to make good, because we start at 6 in the morning. So we will be here about 5.30am or a quarter to 6am. So we try our best. But sometimes you feel like I want to go home, you know. Often I don't feel like working. The bosses you know, that's the big problem for us. But the job you know we get used to it. Some days I just wanna go home and leave the job. But I need the money".

As they all agreed that apart from the money there was nothing attractive about working. P1 said, "Money it's the only thing we always talked about, she [meaning P3] has been here like ten years and she gets the rate she's on now [the minimum pay rate]. It's like a stupid rate. Same as us, that's the other thing I was thinking about it. Because you know we try to fight and then the union come. You know we pay the union every year. But when they have a meeting nothing happens". P4 added, "It's really hard our company. It's only the government. The government understands but not the company. We work 60 hours every week. Because we need some money. They [the company] never care and the boss does not or the union. We join the union because they take the money for only eight dollars a week but they say they can't do anything".

The Pasifika workers interviewed that are employed by private cleaning companies are experiencing the alienation referred to by Foucault that occurred in Europe during the industrial revolution. People left their small farms and cottage industries to work long hours for companies in new centralized industries. They became subject to management controls aimed at producing a workforce of docile bodies. New techniques of management and

accounting fostered a production function of maximum outputs for minimum costs. What Tinker (1985) referred to as an ideology that focused on performance and profitability. The costs arising from the alienating effects of behavioural disciplining workers are socialized. Meanwhile, as expressed by the women interviewed, they look to the government for understanding, where, in fact, the socialisation of costs have to be met.

Conclusion

The aim of the paper is to show how the modern workplace uses disciplinary mechanism to quantify worker behaviour. Accounting is more than a neutral mechanism of quantification it also provides a means of surveillance and discipline. Pasifika migrants come from small island communities where outcomes were more important than outputs. It is argued that while the modern disciplinary means of generating outputs identified by Foucault are efficient they also alienate workers especially new entrants to industrial society not schooled by generations of adaptation to such structures. Often the reaction of Pasifika workers under stress is to resist by working with a sense negativity, dropping-out, or simply by expressing a sense alienation expressed in references to their workplace as “the f.....g Plaza. The ultimate challenge for society is how to emancipate workers from a sense of alienation – that is the hard question. It matters that workers are alienated but how to remedy the industrialisation of the workplace is not easily answered. But for Pasifika people being comparatively recent entrants into Foucault’s dystopia of industrialisation, the evidence of the effect of alienation exists in multiple negative social statistics. The paper has a broader reach in that ethnic minorities in other industrialised countries coming from a pre-industrial background may also share similar alienations.

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