

TONGA HISTORY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (THTA)

2018 Conference

REPORT



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- Tanoa Hotel (Tonga)

Executive Summary

Education reform is a political catalyst for educational change that can often affect a teacher's practice, particularly when in-service training and development is either irregular, irrelevant, or non-existent. In light of the 2014 Tonga education reform, outcomes-based education has affected History teachers' pedagogical practices in the classroom. Curriculum and Assessment have also been impacted.

Tonga, like other education systems in the region is driven by formal assessments, and consequently, History teachers' pedagogical practices reflect this norm. Many Tongan educators have advocated for culturally responsive practices that meet the learning needs of diverse students in the classroom (Helu, 1999; Johansson Fua, 2009; Māhina, 2008; Manu'atu, 2000; Taufe'ulungaki, 2014; Thaman, 2016). Anecdotal evidence suggest a decrease in the number of students enrolled in senior History. Such concerns require the provision of ongoing and regular training and development for History teachers in order to improve the learning and success of History students in Tonga.

Though 'busyness in the classroom' is normal practice and is part of the professional expectation required from our History teachers; how can they continue to meet expectations and at the same time foster inspiration and empowerment in the transmission of historical knowledge and skills to their students? The question raised is a key focus of the 2018 conference and vision.

This report details the 2018 Tongatapu History Teachers Association (THTA) conference which was held on Thursday 17th of May at the Tanoa International Hotel in Nuku'alofa. With support from the Examination Unit and the Tonga Ministry of Education, all history teachers in Tongatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai, and 'Eua attended the one day conference which took place from 7:30 am to 4 pm.

The primary goal of the conference was to provide pedagogical and assessment support for history teachers. Four secondary schools were invited by the organising committee to deliver workshops that focused on pedagogy in junior history, and assessment at the senior history level. The conference workshops were initiated as ways to regularly support teachers' in-service professional learning and development.

History teachers from Vava'u, 'Eua, and Ha'apai were all able to attend the conference in Tongatapu, thanks to the funding support from the Tonga Ministry of Education and Training's (MET) Examinations Unit, and the commitment of its leader, 'Amelia Folaumahina. Evidence from the post conference evaluations highlighted that teachers felt empowered and inspired as a result of the collective gathering and sharing through the keynote presentations as well as the workshops.

Looking ahead to 2019, the conference participants have identified areas that require further professional learning and development and are stated in this report as recommendations. Both Dr 'Asinate Samate, the principal of Queen Salote College, as well as Ms Liuaki Fusitu'a, dean of the Tonga Institute of Education (TIOE), have advocated for the need to hold future gatherings where history teachers are able to collaborate, share, and disseminate key learning and best practice in their classrooms. In the meantime, the Tongatapu History Association will continue its monthly meetings and utilize the passion and knowledge learnt from this year's conference.

1. Introduction

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of secondary school students in Tonga, enrolled in the History subject, continues to drop, even more so as they progress through to the senior levels through forms 5 – 7. Although this is not new as it happens in all senior subjects in Tonga, the impending concern is “what can we as history teachers do about it?” As an association, “how do we ensure that the number of students that take history in forms 3 and 4 continue to take it at the senior level?” Although these questions are not directly answered in this report, they are clearly concerns for us as an association to remember and address.

In light of this, the 2018 THTA conference was developed with two short term goals in mind – first, to collectively group all our history teachers in Tonga to one place and second, to re-ignite and empower them to continue their work with our young people. However, the long-term goal was to identify where the needs were at and to develop a plan of ways that THTA could support secondary schools and the history teachers' pedagogical practices in the classroom through in-service training and development.

The collective effort of institutions to support teachers' professional learning and development was seen as the approach to take, rather than solely relying on schools themselves to do this on their own. The Tongatapu History Teachers Association, the Tongatapu Secondary Schools Principals Association (TSSPA), the Tonga Institute of Education (TIOE), the Ministry of Education's Examinations Office, and the University of the South Pacific's Institute of Education (IOE) collectively supported the conference.

2. Objective

The objective of this report is to understand the impact of the conference on participants' learning. Two questions are used to understand the objective:

- What were participants' perceptions of the conference activities?
- Explain how the workshops (and keynote presentations) inspired and empowered history teachers in Tonga.

3. The Conference

3.1 Vision

THTA's main vision is to support History teachers in the kingdom through in-service training and development that are specific to their needs.

THTA is currently under the leadership of Queen Salote College and the Tongatapu Secondary School Principals Association (TSSPA). THTA's secondary vision as an organisation is to connect with other stakeholders that are invested in the sustainability of cultural, heritage, and historical knowledge in Tonga and the wider Pacific.

3.2 Conference theme

Tuli e ngaahi mālie moe māfana hotau tala: Inspire, Empower, Transform – Lessons for History classrooms.

The conference theme title is inspired by Dr. Linitā Manu'atu's (2000) work linked to the acknowledgement, and revitalisation of Tongan cultural knowledge in teachers' pedagogical practices. In a similar fashion, this conference seeks to revitalise History as a subject and History teachers as being instrumental in the imparting of such Historical knowledge and skills to the next generation.

3.3 Faiako ma'a Tonga philosophy and RPEIPP

The ***Faiako Ma'a Tonga*** is a holistic approach that is fundamentally based on the developmental professional journey of the teacher in the Tongan context. It is a philosophy and approach aligned with the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative for and by Pacific People (RPEIPP). The conference itself was a part of the teachers' professional journey towards further understanding her/his 'teacher standards' based on the principles of fatongia, 'ataakai, taukei, and 'ulungaanga (FATU).

3.4 Conference outcomes

A key outcome from the conference is that the event itself provides impetus for ongoing and regular collaborative work and training between History teachers and other key stakeholders. The conference provided the opportunity for History teachers from Tongatapu, Vava'u, Ha'apai, and 'Eua to get together. At the end of the conference, it was the organising committee's intention that teachers leave the conference feeling inspired, empowered, and transformed. It was their hope that teachers left with new lessons and practical activities, learned from the workshops to utilise in their teaching and assessment design in their classrooms.

3.5 Conference committee

Conveners

Ms. Liuaki Fusitu'a (TIOE)

Mrs. 'Amelia Folaumahina (MET, Examination and Assessment Unit)

Organising committee

- Rev. Dr. 'Asinate Samate
- Donia Lātū (Queen Salote College)
- Peti Lolomana'ia (Tonga College)
- Dr. Poliana Fa'oliu-Havea (TIOE)
- Dr. David Fa'avae (Institute of Education, USP Tonga Campus)
- Tonga History Teachers' Association (THTA)

3.6 Conference ideas and concepts

The conference was designed to be creative, interactive, and talanoa or discussion-based. It drew upon the key concepts linked to teaching and learning (see figure 1). For example, ako (teaching and learning), mālie (inspiring, energising, and the uplifting of spirit), and māfana (inwardly warmth that is empowering) are key Tongan concepts often associated with meaningful and worthwhile learning (Manu'atu, 2000; Thaman, 2016).



Figure 1. Conference ideas and concepts

3.7 Opening and keynote address

Three main presentations were done by Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea, Dowager Lady 'Eseta Fusitu'a, and Palofesa Siosiu Lafitani at the main conference room in Tanoa Hotel. The keynote speakers are local historians and have a wealth of knowledge and expertise in Tongan language and History. All are experts in the field. The topics for keynote presentations were linked to the conference theme.

3.8 Workshops

Four breakout workshops (two concurrent, at one time) were carried out. Two after keynote speaker 1, and two after keynote speaker 2.

Table 1. Workshop times and themes

Breakout 1	1hr, 50 mins.	Workshop 1 What do the Knows and Dos in the History syllabus look like in the classroom? (Junior History)
	1hr, 50 mins.	Workshop 2 What do the Knows and Dos in the History syllabus look like in the classroom? (Senior History)
Breakout 2	1hr, 50 mins.	Workshop 3 How to develop creative assessments in Junior History?
	1hr, 50 mins.	Workshop 4 How to develop creative activities linked to preparing senior History students for their Internal Assessment (IA)?

The workshops were designed to be interactive and teachers were encouraged to actively participate and contribute.

3.9 Registration

Individuals were able to register on the day of the conference. Registration fees were at TOP \$30 per person. All registration fees were kept with the Tonga History Teachers' Association.

3.10 Conference packs

Conference packs were provided for teachers and other participants on the day. These were organised by some of the TIOE staff.

3.11 Video recording

Keynote presentations and workshops were video recorded and the idea was to eventually share these with each secondary school and other key stakeholders.

3.12 Evaluation and reporting

At the end of the conference, participants were asked to complete our evaluation forms and the data collected was used to complete our conference report. The report will be submitted to key stakeholders.

4. Survey Data

Conference evaluation data was collected from participants (n=20) using two short surveys. Survey 1 consisted of 7 items, and utilised likert scale-type items as well as open-ended questions (see appendix B). Survey 1 was designed to collect data linked to the participants' perceptions of the overall conference. Data associated with survey 1 are presented as graphs in this report. (See figures 2 – 4)

Survey 2 was designed to collect specific data associated with the senior assessment workshop conducted by the Tonga College team (see appendix C) and the Tailulu College team (see appendix D). Data associated with survey 2 are presented as graphs in figures 5 and 6.

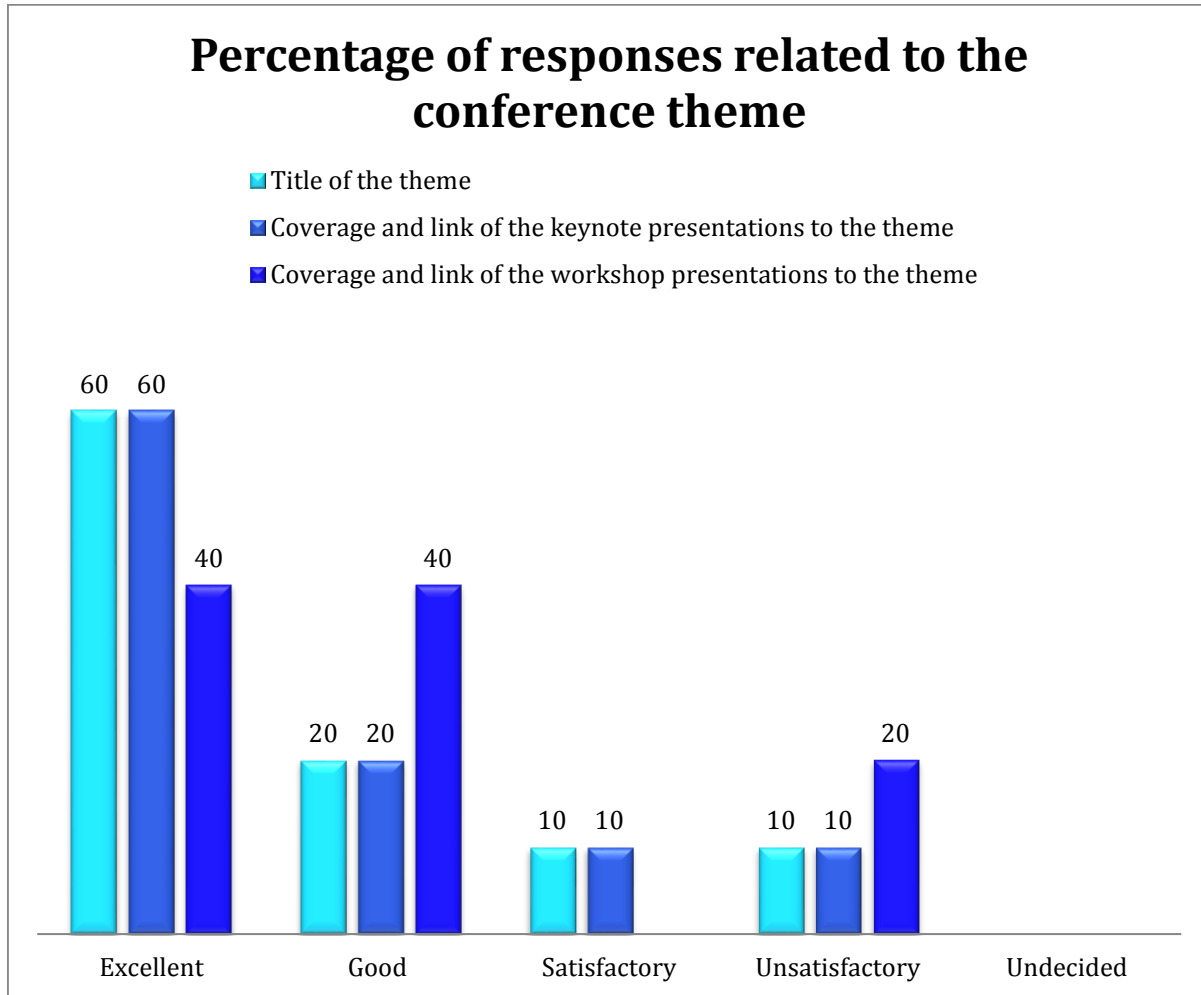


Figure 2. Overall ratings of the conference theme

Percentage of responses related to the conference presenters

■ Demonstration of expertise on the topic ■ Effective responses to questions
■ Solicitation of audience participation ■ Overall rating for presenters

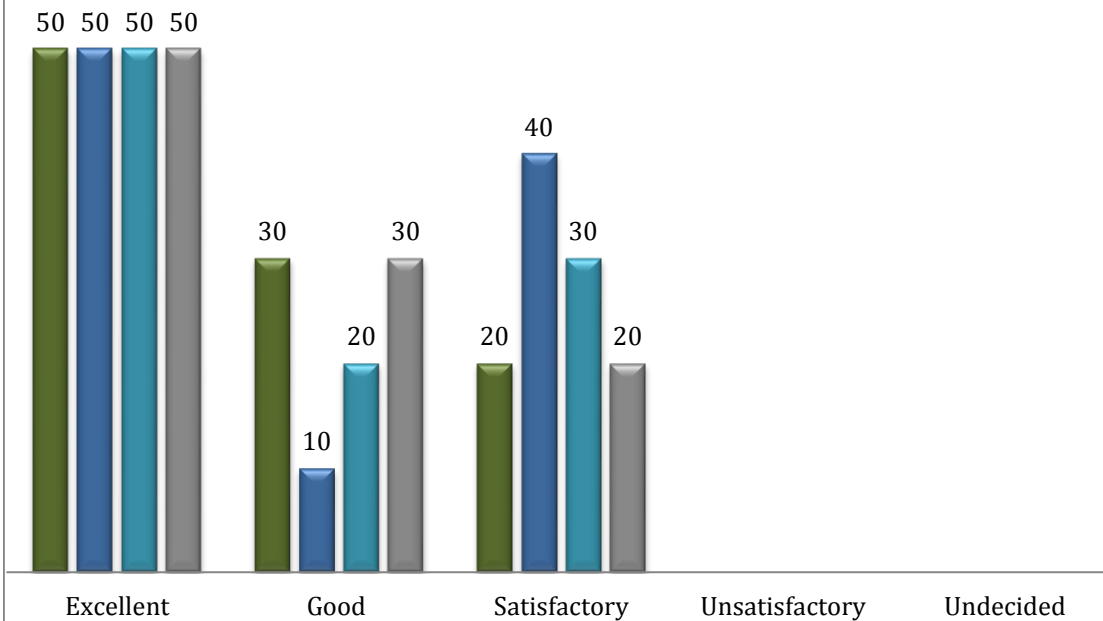


Figure 3. Overall ratings of the conference presenters

Ways to improve the conference

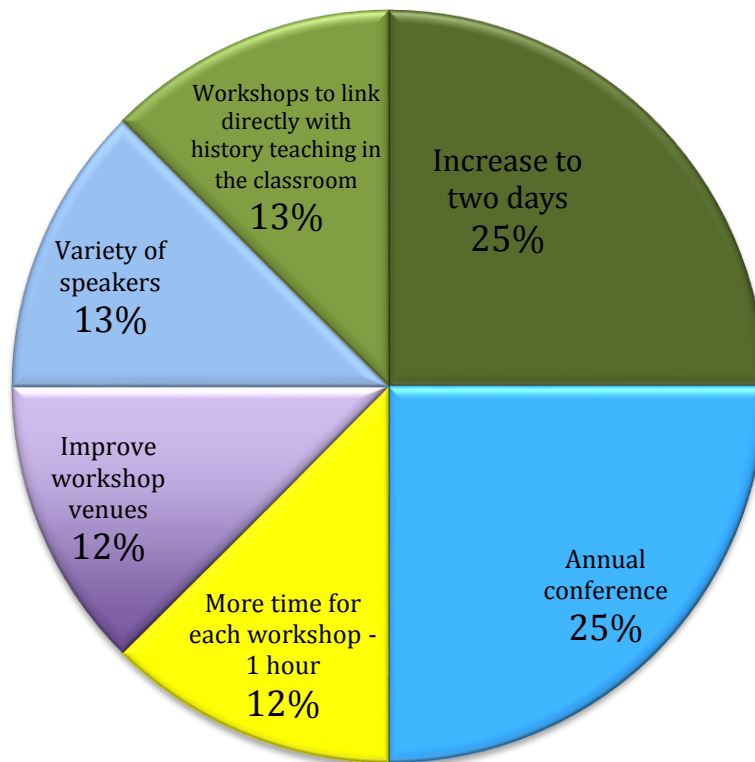


Figure 4. Ways to improve the THTA conference

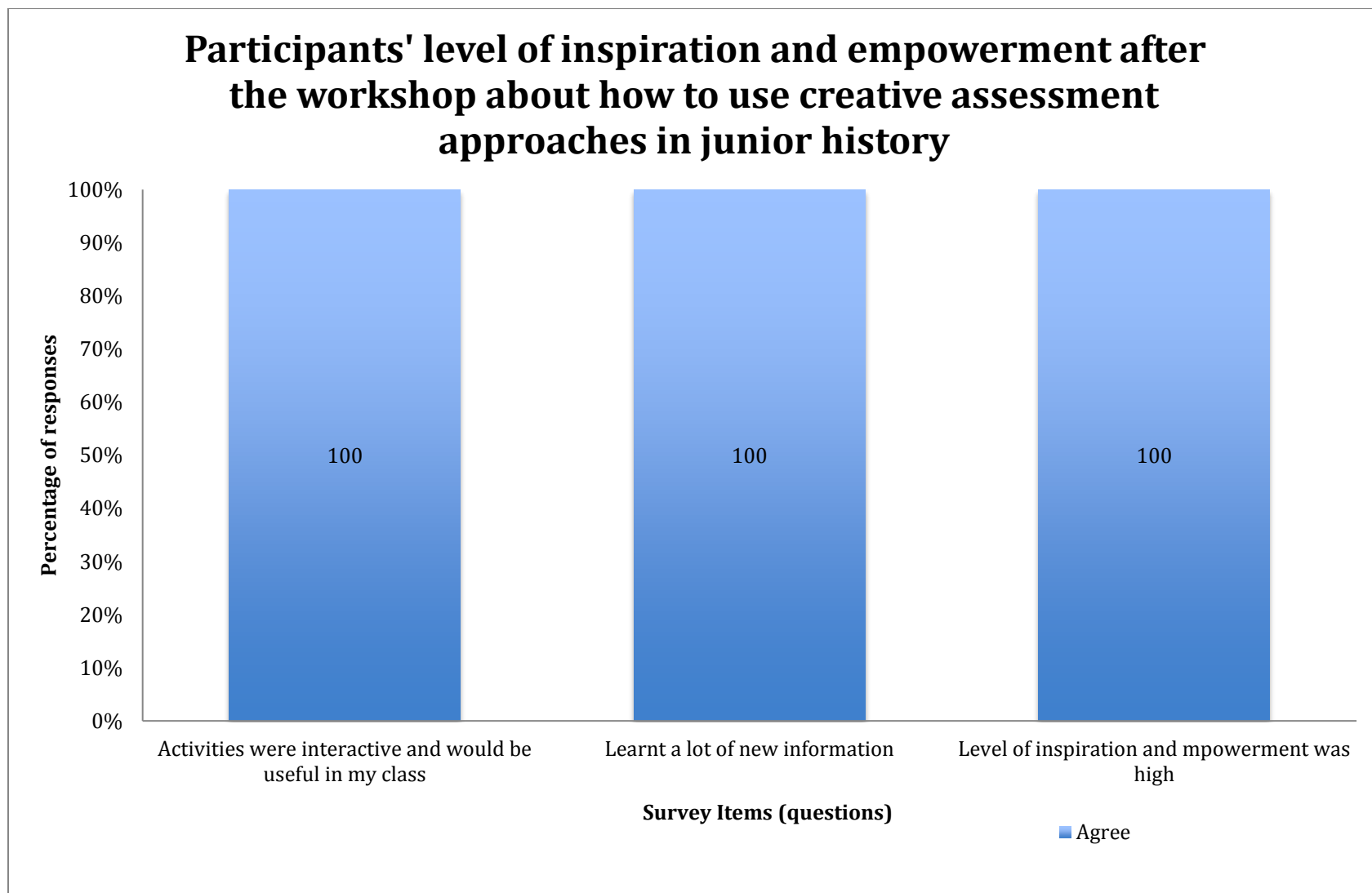


Figure 5. Participants' level of inspiration and empowerment linked to creative assessment approaches in junior History

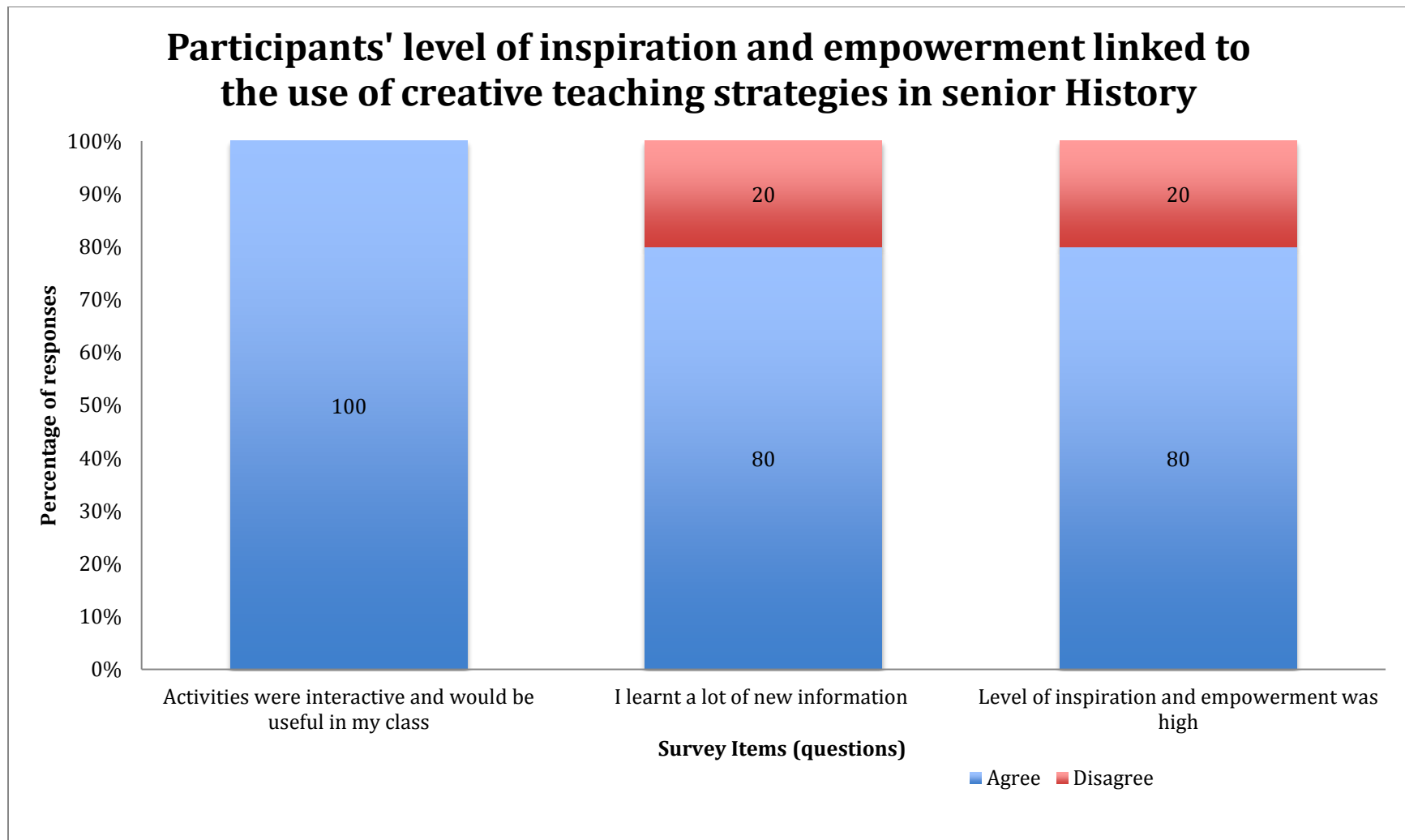


Figure 6. Participants' level of inspiration and empowerment linked to creative teaching strategies in senior History

5. Analysis and Discussion

Two questions were used to guide this report. The first focused on participants' overall perceptions of the conference activities. The second focused on understanding how the workshops (including keynote presentations) inspired and empowered history teachers in Tonga.

5.1 What were participants' perceptions of the conference activities?

The 2018 Tonga History Teachers Association (THTA) Conference was generally well received by all participants. 80% of the participants surveyed positively rated the conference theme as being excellent/good (see figure 2). The Opening presentation by Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea, and keynote presentations by the Dowager Lady 'Eseta Fusitu'a and Palofesa Siosiua Lafitani were highly rated and 80% of the participants perceived their presentations as showing some links to the conference theme. Similarly, 80% of the participants rated the four workshops positively and perceived the presentations as showing links to the conference theme. (See figure 2)

In regards to the conference presenters, 80% of the participants highly rated the presenters as having expertise in the topic they presented. 60% of the participants perceived the presenters as having the ability to effectively respond to the questions during and after their presentations, whereas 40% (satisfactory) were not entirely confident that the conference presenters were able to respond effectively to the questions from the audience (see figure 3).

Soliciting (or asking) the audience to participate is a key skill in any presentation. 70% of the surveyed participants were confident that the conference presenters were able to solicit or ask questions from the audience (combined the excellent 50%, and the good 20% ratings). 80% of the participants surveyed highly rated the presenters. (See figure 3)

To improve the conference, the participants proposed 6 main ways (see figure 4). The ways are stated below:

1. Run the conference annually (25%)
2. Increase to two days (25%)
3. Workshops to link directly with history teaching in the classroom (13%)
4. Have a variety of speakers (13%)
5. Improve workshop venues (12%)
6. Have more time for each workshop i.e., 1 hour (12%)

Although figure 2 showed that 80% of participants rated the four workshops positively, in figure 4, 13% of the participants propose that the workshops need to directly link with teaching history in the classroom. Pedagogical strategies and assessment were key areas identified by the conference organising committee as being essential focus areas for the four workshops. In future, specific direction from all history teachers in Tonga as to what types of workshops are required if they are to be of real use to the practitioners in the classroom.

5.2 Explain how the workshops inspired and empowered history teachers in Tonga.

Of the four conference workshops, only two were evaluated and the survey responses returned. Workshop 3 (as stated in the conference programme, see appendix A) by Tonga College, focused on creative approaches to assessment design in junior History. And, workshop 2 by Tailulu College, focused on creative teaching/pedagogical strategies in senior History.

5.2.1 Workshop 3

A primary focus of the 2018 THTA conference was to inspire, empower, and transform history teachers' practice. 100% of the participants surveyed felt inspired and empowered at the end of workshop 3. 100% of the participants surveyed believed that the activities during the workshop i.e., icebreaker, presenting an assessment and a marking criteria for a role play activity, were interactive and would be very useful in their junior History classrooms. 100% of all participants felt they learnt a lot of new information from workshop 3. (See figure 5)

Item 3 of survey 2 (see appendix C) required participants to respond to "In what ways were you inspired to utilise the assessment strategies from workshop 3 in your classroom practice". A school leader responded with, *"to take the principles of educational assessment learned and use them in our prep[aration] as teachers. Not only using them in your profession, but also teacher others to be converted to these effective teaching ways"*. The lecturer responded to the same question (item 3), *"I can use [the assessment strategies] in teaching the English language for eg, unit instruction – my students can role play it, and narrative – act out the story then write"*.

Item 5 of the survey 2 (see appendix C) required participants to respond to "In what ways have the assessment activities within workshop 3 empowered you and your approach to assessment". The school leader responded by saying, *"I am given additional techniques which give me confidence to use them in my teaching"*. The lecturer responded with, *"...given me more thoughts to what am I actually looking for when I'm assessing my students' learning"*. Item 6 of the survey asked, "How can you maintain your level of inspiration and empowerment from this workshop session so that you can utilise the assessment activities and make them an ongoing part of your

practice?” The same school leader responded with, *“Use them continuously not only in the classroom but in your homes and communities”*. The lecturer replied saying: *“...to share and keep in touch with other teachers...keep the association alive to bring History teachers together”*.

5.2.2 Workshop 2

In regards to workshop 2, 80% of the participants surveyed felt inspired and empowered at the end. 100% of the participants surveyed believed that the pedagogical activities during the workshop i.e., mind mapping and the three level guide, were interactive and would be useful in their senior History classrooms. 80% of all participants believed they had learnt a lot of new information from workshop 2. (See figure 6)

6. Conclusion

Overall, the conference was successful in terms of meeting its desired objective. The impact of the conference activities on History teachers’ learning was very positive. Participants were inspired and empowered from the keynote presentations as well as the workshops provided by History teachers themselves.

We must constantly be reminded to look and draw strength from what we already have, not on what others from outside have (Taufe’ulungaki, 2014; Thaman, 2016). The conference theme, ***Tuli e ngaahi mālie moe māfana hotau tala***: Inspire, Empower, Transform – Lessons for History classrooms was useful in aligning all conference-related activities. Despite initial concerns associated with the wording of the theme, the participants involved believed that it was relevant and appropriate to the Tonga History Teachers Association’s (THTA) intentions and objectives.

Evaluation data showed the conference was useful and appropriate not only for History teachers, but for other key stakeholders as well. Other Teachers Associations for other subject areas in Tonga have also seen the benefits of collectively gathering and supporting each other. The 2018 THTA conference has provided inspiration, empowerment, and a transformation in participants’ understanding of practices linked to classroom pedagogy and assessment design.

7. Recommendation

In-service training is necessary to ensure History teachers’ professional development and learning (PLD) continues. Schools do not always have the resources nor the relevant expertise to provide PLD. THTA has the potential to support History teachers.

The Faiako Ma'a Tonga Framework, particularly the FATU conceptual framework provides the teacher standards that are expected of them as practitioners. For THTA, a closer look at FATU and how it relates to History teachers' roles and responsibilities would be a beneficial activity for all.

There are certain areas of support requested by the History teachers themselves which are:

- Content mastery
- Planning and delivery skills
- Assessment expertise
- Encourage personal research
- Active and ongoing support from THTA
- Sharing and writing of more of our own Tongan History
- Sources (textbooks)
- Skills like interviewing/talanoa

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Appendices

Appendix A

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Thursday 17th May, 2018

Venue: Tanoa International Dateline Hotel, Nuku'alofa

Time	Activity	Name of presenter/s	Venue
7:30 am	Registrations – Tanoa Dateline Hotel Foyer		
8:50 am	Conference Opening – Master of Ceremony (MC)		
9 am	Opening Prayer	Rev. Dr. Feke Mafi	Main Conference room
9:20 am	Lea Talitali (Official Welcome)	Rev. Dr. ‘Asinate Samate	
9:30 am	Lea Fakaava (Opening Address)	Rev. Dr. Tevita Havea	
9:50 am	Lea Fakamālō (Word of Thanks to the opening address)	Mr. Soane Vahe	
10 am	Housekeeping	Mrs. ‘Amelia Folaumahina	
10:05-10:25 am	Official Photo & Morning Tea		
10:25 am	Introduction of Keynote Speaker 1	Mrs. ‘Amelia Folaumahina	Main Conference room
10:30 am	Keynote Address 1	Dowager Lady Fusitu’a	
11:10 am	Word of Thanks, Discussion & Response to Keynote	Mr. Paul Fonua	
11:20 am	Breakout 1 – Concurrent Workshops		
11:25-12:25 pm	Workshop 1 (Junior History)	Tonga Institute of Education (TIOE)	Foyer
	Workshop 2 (Senior History)	Tailulu College	Main Conference room
12:30 pm	Lunch		
1:10 pm	Introduction of Keynote Speaker 2	Dr. Poliana Faoliu-Havea	Main Conference room
1:15 pm	Keynote Address 2	Palofesa Siosiuā Lafitani	
1:55 pm	Word of Thanks, Discussion & Response to Keynote	Mrs. Tapukitea Rokolekutu	
2:05 pm	Tea Break		
	Breakout 2 – Concurrent Workshops		

2:15-3:15 pm	Workshop 3 (Junior History)	Tonga College	Foyer
	Workshop 4 (Senior History)	Queen Salote College	Main Conference room
3:20 pm	Lea Fakama’opo’opo (Closing Response)	Ms. Liuaki Fusitu’a	
3:40 pm	Conference Evaluation Forms		
3:50-4:00 pm	Closing Prayer	Mr. Sione Tafuna	

Keynote: 40 mins

Workshop: 1 hour

Appendix B

Tonga History Teachers' Association (THTA) 2018 Conference

Thank you for attending the 2018 Tonga History Teachers' Association Conference. Please complete this short evaluation. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

For each statement, please tick ✓ONE box only.

1. State your type of work i.e., history teacher, school leader, ministry official etc.

2. Overall, how would you rate the 2018 conference presenters?

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Undecided
Demonstration of expertise on the topic					
Effective responses to questions					
Solicitation of audience participation					
Overall rating for presenters					

3. Overall, how would you rate the conference's theme – 'Tuli e ngaahi mālie moe māfana hotau tala: Inspire, Empower, Transform – Lessons for History classrooms'?

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Undecided
Title of the theme					
Coverage and link of the keynote presentations to the theme					
Coverage and link of the workshop presentations to the theme					

4. Please rate the following aspects of the conference's organisation:

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	N/A
Registration process					
Scheduling and timing					
Workshop venues					
Facility or venue					
Parking and directions					
Lunch and refreshments					

5. Was the cost of this event a good value?

Yes	Somewhat	No

6. Was the timing of the event suitable?

Yes	Somewhat	No

7. Please use the space below to share any additional comments and/ or suggestions you may have to improve the conference

Appendix C

CREATIVE ASSESEMENT APPROACHES SESSION EVALUATION (Workshop 3)

1. State your type of work i.e., history teacher, school leader, ministry official etc.

For each statement, tick **ONE** box only.

2. Rate the strategies (creative approaches) within the workshop that **inspired** you and you will most likely use in your classroom.

	Statement	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Undecided
a	Icebreaker – used this as an approach (strategy) to settle the participants as they arrived into the workshop, as well as provide an opportunity to connect with their prior knowledge.					
b	Marking criteria – used to help teachers construct their own creative formative assessment and criteria.					
c	Group Role Play Assessment – used this as an approach (strategy) to perform and communicate information associated with the Vaelata battle as a significant historical event for Tupou I.					
d	The ‘Hook’ strategy (i.e., either a story, a question, or statistical information) was used by the workshop facilitator/s to capture the audience’s attention.					
e	At the end of the session, the strategy used by the facilitator to end the workshop left you feeling inspired.					

3. In what ways were you **inspired** to utilise the assessment strategies from the workshop in your practice.

4. Rate your feeling of **empowerment** in relation to the interactive workshop activities and its potential impact on your current and future teaching practice.

	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	I felt empowered seeing how the presenters used and utilised creative assessments in the junior history classroom.					
b	I feel empowered to use the assessment strategies implemented by the workshop facilitator/s in my junior history classroom.					
c	I felt the workshop facilitators delivered their content well.					
d	I felt the assessment activities were interactive and would be useful in my classroom.					
e	I felt the workshop's objectives/ learning outcomes were clear and appropriate.					
f	I felt the quality of the assessment activities were excellent.					
g	I felt the assessment activities were aligned to the objectives/learning outcomes.					
h	I learnt a lot of new information in this workshop.					
i	Overall, my level of empowerment in this workshop was high.					

5. In what ways have the **assessment activities** within this workshop empowered you and your approach to assessment.

6. How can you maintain your level of inspiration and empowerment from this workshop session so that you can utilise the **assessment activities** and make them an ongoing part of your practice?

7. Identify FOUR key areas of support that history teachers in Tongatapu would need and benefit from.

Appendix D

CREATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES SESSION EVALUATION (Workshop 2)

1. State your type of work i.e., history teacher, school leader, ministry official etc.

For each statement, tick ☐ ONE box only.

2. Rate the teaching strategies (creative approaches) within the workshop that **inspired** you and you will most likely use in your classroom.

	Statement	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Undecided
a	Do Now – used this as an approach (strategy) to settle the participants as they arrived into the workshop, as well as provide an opportunity to connect with their prior knowledge.					
b	Mind mapping – used this as a visual learning approach (strategy) whereby groups were able to describe the outcomes of the Paris Peace Conference and make links to the League of Nations and its significance.					
c	Three Level Guide – used this as an approach (strategy) to improve participants’ reading comprehension and the understanding the Paris Peace Conference’s significance on the League of Nations. It was also used as an approach to differentiate questions from the text for low and high ability participants.					
d	The ‘Hook’ strategy (i.e., either a story, a question, or statistical information) was used by the workshop facilitator/s to capture the audience’s attention.					
e	At the end of the session, the strategy used by the facilitator to end the workshop left you feeling inspired.					

3. In what ways were you **inspired** to utilise the teaching strategies from the workshop in your practice.

4. Rate your feeling of **empowerment** in relation to the interactive workshop activities and its potential impact on your current and future teaching practice.

	Statement	Strongly disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a	I felt empowered seeing how the presenters used and utilised the DOs and KNOWs in their history classroom.					
b	I feel empowered to use the strategies implemented by the workshop facilitators in my history classroom.					
c	I felt the workshop facilitators delivered their content well.					
d	I felt the activities were interactive and would be useful in my classroom.					
e	I felt the workshop's objectives/ learning outcomes were clear and appropriate.					
f	I felt the quality of the activities were excellent.					
g	I felt the activities were aligned to the objectives/learning outcomes.					
h	I learnt a lot of new information in this workshop.					
i	Overall, my level of empowerment in this workshop was high.					

5. In what ways have the **interactive activities** within this workshop empowered you and your teaching approach.

6. How can you maintain your level of inspiration and empowerment from this workshop session so that you can utilise the **interactive activities** in your teaching approach and make them an ongoing part of your practice?

7. Identify FOUR key areas of in-service support that history teachers in Tongatapu would need and benefit from.