

Intelligence and the Pākehā Child¹ D. Archer, R. S. Oppenheim, T. S. Karetu, R. St. George

This paper deals with the problem of Pākehā intelligence. The authors have developed a new test of intelligence, called the MOTIS [based on the OTIS intelligence test which was developed in the US and Australia] and are optimistic that their findings will revolutionise the processes of intelligence testing and secondary school streaming in New Zealand... the outdated OTIS suffers from an unfortunate cultural bias.

For example, Question twenty-six of Form C of the OTIS reads:

Which word makes the truest sentence? A youth is (?) wiser than his father.

1 never, 2 rarely, 3 much, 4 usually, 5 always.

The findings of our study are relatively dramatic and portentous... In brief, the MOTIS has demonstrated that the IQs of New Zealand students are not, in fact, what educators have thought them to be.

MĀORIS SCORE HIGHER

Māori students scored higher on the MOTIS test of intelligence than did their Pākehā peers... Thus the mean IQ of the Māori students tested was 102.94. The mean IQ of the Pākehā students, however, was only 67.26. Pending further testing, these figures may be provisionally accepted as the average IQs of both population groups.

These findings are, of course, rather distressing. They show the Pākehā child to be farther behind his Māori classmate than even the authors had suspected. More important, the findings justify the immediate implementation of corrective programmes to assist the handicapped Pākehā child in catching up.

The authors feel that it is necessary to view the MOTIS results in an appropriate perspective. Of course, the low performance of the Pākehā child does not, necessarily, mean that he is innately inferior; it may well be - and the authors would like to believe - that the Pākehā child has the same chance at birth to be as highly intelligent as the Māori child. If the Pākehā child's intelligence is inferior, his inferiority may be said to be cultural. In other words, the Pākehā child may be thought of as "culturally disadvantaged". This means that the Pākehā child has simply not grown up in a home as rich in cultural opportunities as the home of a Māori child. Of course, the authors feel that it would be wrong to shame the Pākehā child by telling him that his parents haven't given him the advantages given a Māori child. After all, the Pākehā's inferior intelligence is simply not his fault.

From another perspective, the MOTIS results are not without grounds for cautious optimism. The mean Pākehā IQ of 67.26 leads us to believe that the Pākehā child is at least trainable and perhaps educable as well... On the basis of the MOTIS data, the authors feel that the Pākehā child may well be best suited for curricula which do not overtax his limited resources. Shopwork, machining, home science, and perhaps even commercial courses may well be within the reach of the Pākehā child; and with adequate training, the Pākehā child could even become a rather terrific bulldozer operator.

Of course, there are drawbacks. If students are streamed on the basis of their MOTIS results, it will create an unfortunate racial stratification in the high schools. That is, the higher intelligence Māori pupils will tend to populate the highest academic levels, and the under achieving Pākehā child will tend to filter down into courses of low status. If this does occur, we must expect that the Pākehā child may come to think of himself as an inferior. He may think that Pākehās as a group, are not worth much in school, or elsewhere as well. He may not think much of himself, or expect much of himself, or aspire to achievement...

MOTIS Test

You have 1 minute to answer all 10 questions (any unanswered questions are automatically wrong). The first one is an example. Some questions have two correct answers - you must pick the best one. If you are not sure of the answer to any question, make a guess. ≈

Ex Which of the following is not a fruit?

peach apple grass lemon

1 What is a waka?

bird horse storm canoe

2 The opposite of enemy is

manu hoa toru marae

3 When you leave a cemetery, what should you do first?

have a meal tell jokes sing a song

wash your hands

4 Which one of these four words is most unlike the others?

puha pipi tuna kina

5 Where would it be bad manners to take food?

store house dining hall meeting house

whare puni

6 A fantail flying around inside your house, is a sign of what?

good luck bad luck stormy weather fine weather

7 What does whakahihi mean?

to laugh to cry to talk to skate

8 Which of the following is a name for the North Island:

Te Ika a Maui Waipounamu Maunganui Aotearoa

9 What is a haurangi?

speaker for his people man of great mana a drunk

farmer

10 What does this proverb mean? *Kia u, kia mau ki to Māoritanga*

Hold on to your Māoritanga

Māoritanga and the birds are of one wing

The Māoritanga of old is not new

Eating is the heart of Māoritanga

¹ Excerpts from article in *National Education*, July 1971, 53, No.577, pp 258-60, edited by Treaty Resource Centre. www.trc.org.nz
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