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E Noelo I Ka 'Ike - To Search For Knowledge

Cover Page Footnote

E Noelo I Ka 'Ike was sponsored by Hawai'i Maoli, a non-profit organization affiliated with the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs. Former director, Maile Alau, was a key collaborator. We received generous project funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Introduction

According to the *Ka Huaka 'i Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment 2014*, Native Hawaiians (*Kānaka Maoli*) in the public school system have the lowest rates of timely graduation of all major ethnic groups in the state, 69.4%. Knowing that dropping out of high school increases the likelihood of unemployment, incarceration, and poverty, the authors, as librarians and educators committed to social justice, are compelled to formulate strategies and actions to address this unacceptable situation.

The current reality is unlike past times when Native Hawaiians had literacy rates higher than most other cultures. These contemporary challenges stem from systemic inequity. (See Laimana, 2011). To summarize, following the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1893, the Hawaiian language (‘ōlelo) was essentially banned from government and schools for eight decades. The Act of 1896 stated that schools had an option to use English; however, as Ka‘ano‘i Walk noted in a review of the Act, choosing Hawaiian would mean forfeiture of government funding (2007). As a result of the English preference law, the number of Hawaiian language schools dropped from 150 in 1880 to zero in 1902. Unfortunately, some of those in power saw this as part of a positive trend. The Republic’s report of 1886 remarked that while the gradual extinction of a Polynesian dialect may be regretted for sentimental reasons, it certainly was in the best interest of Native Hawaiians themselves.

Fortunately, due to the resistance of Native Hawaiians, the language did not perish. According to the Hawai‘i Department of Education (2019), since the 1978 Constitutional Convention enabling the promotion of the study of Hawaiian culture, history, and language in the public schools, there have been ongoing efforts to move beyond the toxic policy and reestablish language as an integral element of the educational system. It is during this time period and within

these efforts, some forty years after Hawaiian language was officially restored, where this discussion is situated.

This work stems from ongoing observations of Native Hawaiians, particularly youth (‘ōpio) in high school and college, exhibiting a lack of familiarity with libraries and other academic services and having difficulties navigating information resources. This is due to underdeveloped research skills in combination with challenges that emerge in navigating systems laden with inherent bias. The authors have observed numerous students (haumāna) expressing difficulty with understanding and feelings of inadequacy in attempts to find resources for class projects in digital and print formats. Sometimes these youth also demonstrate a lack of confidence and reluctance asking for help due to the likelihood of being patronized or feeling ashamed.

This article provides a qualitative overview and analysis of *E Noelo I Ka ‘Ike* (To Search for Knowledge), a project conducted in 2016-17. *E Noelo I Ka ‘Ike* was developed by the authors to counter current difficulties and disconnects by increasing understanding, research skills, and use of Hawaiian culture and language resource materials. Project activities include offering information literacy workshops and field trips (huaka‘i), to equip students with effective research skills to foster knowledge of academic resources; and introducing participants to a wide range of digital resources and newly published print materials of critical importance to increase comfort and access to Hawaiian culture and history. Elders (*kūpuna*), youth, family members (*‘ohana*), and others from historically underserved urban and rural communities (*kaiāulu*) engaged in the *E Noelo I Ka ‘Ike* project.

Through *E Noelo I Ka ‘Ike* activities, participants had opportunities to develop and demonstrate culturally-grounded information literacy skills, including essential digital literacy

skills, and increase familiarity and comfort with libraries and services in an academic setting.

While our project was developed by and for members of Native Hawaiian communities, it is not intended to be a one-size-fits-all model. As Becvar and Srinivasan (2009) prudently describe, librarians and others working in cross-cultural situations need to carefully consider context and biases, and subsequently, if proceeding, develop tools and strategies with appropriate cultural sensitivity. Specific community-based approaches are necessary for overcoming biases, including those stemming from contemporary models of organization of information. As Worth explains, “mainstream library systems reflect Western methods of sorting information, rather than Indigenous methods” (2019, para. 10). *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike* sought to disrupt this reality and foster critical conversations to encourage increased understanding, access, and use of information resources by community members.

In the following sections, the authors describe *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike* sessions, introduce the approach and resources emphasized during the project, and share conclusions - including a discussion of possible future library-based scholarly activities to support ongoing Native Hawaiian engagement, achievement, and overall well-being.

Educational Sessions

Our goal in offering educational sessions to build information literacy was to have project participants develop and demonstrate essential skills and confidence to locate and use Hawaiian resources available from a number of organizations and locations. The project involved three audiences. It set out to increase high school students' comfort and knowledge of how to access resources within digital and local libraries, and, in tandem to increase community understanding of Hawaiian resource materials available digitally, emphasizing kūpuna teachers - elders who serve as resource teachers for Hawaiian culture, language, and history; and lastly also included

members of Hawaiian Civic Clubs. The project team adopted a participant-centered approach to sessions. The strategy involved a lot of planning and preparation across curricular areas. It emphasized developing content in advance when possible (i.e., based on knowing particular needs and interests) and adapting iteratively in real time during sessions in response to participants' input. Our instructors (kumu), Dr. Kuuleilani Reyes and Kawena Komeiji, created information literacy curriculum from a Native Hawaiian perspective and taught the sessions in Hawaiian language, in Native Hawaiian charter schools, such as Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ke Ānuenue K-12 Hawaiian Language Immersion Public School and Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School.

During the course of the project, seventy-nine high school students completed a twelve-hour library research skills training program, including field trips to academic libraries, such as the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Hamilton Library, Laka me Lono Learning Center, and William Richardson Law Library, and the Hawai'i State Archives. Additionally, forty elders and one hundred and three members of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs completed a three-hour training program designed to introduce Hawaiian culture and language digital resources. A total of two-hundred and twenty-two participants engaged in information literacy training as part of *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike*.

Throughout the project, it was important to be flexible in scheduling and implementing educational activities given the lack of experience with library services and the variety of learners with different learning styles and computer skills. *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike* involved participants ranging from age nine to ninety-one. Although most adults who attended workshops had long-standing interest in the areas of genealogy and Hawaiian music, participants in all sessions indicated lack of familiarity with the wide scope of the digital resources featuring

Hawaiian culture and language introduced during training. There were many different experiences and interests represented in the groups.

Community Focus

After providing an overview of key topics and a general introduction to the content of digital collections and databases, E Noelo I Ka 'Ike community sessions offered relaxed and robust opportunities to engage in conversations (aka talk story) about resources based on participants' needs and interests. After sharing an overview of the topic and general introduction to the content of the collections, presenters tailored the content to adapt to areas of interest. Our approach aligned with Becvar and Srinivasan's (2009) notion of culturally appropriate practice where "a collaborative methodology is placed at the center of the research design" (p. 432).

As much as possible, sessions were tailored in advance and in real time based on group type and interests. Materials were translated into Hawaiian and shared based on preference/ability. Having the option to provide information and conduct sessions in Hawaiian was an important aspect of centering culture during the project. Comments from formal surveys collected at the end of sessions along with gathered informally were used to inform subsequent workshops. In all community sessions, genealogy, land, and language were popular topics. Additionally, educators were interested in curricula, and hula practitioners needed access to songs (mele). Participants consistently expressed great desire and deep appreciation for gaining knowledge and skills to locate and access culturally-significant documents available in the collections.

Here is a small sample of comments from evaluations shared by community participants representing their range of experiences upon completion of sessions conducted around O'ahu, on neighbor islands, and on the continent:

Wasn't aware of these resources.; I learned a lot about research. It will be useful for me and my 'ohana.; I will use these for my studies.; The workshop was more than what I expected. I am so glad I attended!; So much to explore. Others in my community will be interested.; What is phase two?; Thank you for coming here.; Please come back!; and of course, many said Thank you very much! (*Mahalo nui loa!*)

Student Focus

The American Library Association (ALA) defines information literacy as, “a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (2020, para. 1). Information literacy skills should be learned throughout studies. Culturally-relevant guided practice facilitates this development. As Kovalik, Yutsey, and Piazza (2013) describe:

Because librarians serve as a critical link to high-quality and relevant resources, the importance of having school librarians for grades K-12 is paramount. If students have multiple opportunities to interact with librarians throughout their elementary and middle school years, they have a higher comfort level about approaching the school librarian with research questions by the time they move into high school (p. 18).

It became evident during the project that many participants did not have experience based on previous access to a school library. This is unfortunate because, in addition to the cultural concerns discussed above, students lacked essential skills due to missed opportunities to develop information literacy during this formative educational period. With this in mind, content presented in community sessions was expanded to develop more extensive instruction for students through culturally-grounded approaches to information literacy. Activities were presented in Hawaiian language in three modules: introduction to information resources

including a Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose (CRAAP; *Kēia Manawa, Pilina, Kumu, Pololei, Mākia*) test exercise; how to find resources - searching 101; and introduction to collections and databases with Hawaiian content. Pre- and post-session assessment were conducted to ensure youth grasped key concepts to build greater understanding and skills.

As part of the extended sessions provided for high school students, youth had the opportunity to visit local libraries and develop a significant project about places (*wahi pana*), which relied on accessing digital resources introduced during training. Gaining experience with searching for and using information effectively, “help[s] students refine their critical thinking skills an important component of information literacy” (Kovalik, Yutsey, & Piazza, 2013, p. 17). As high school teacher Paul Rykken explains this should not be limited by grade level or curricular area - cultural content “can all be incorporated in a natural way. Then it becomes second nature to the students” (Wisconsin First Nations, 2019, 4:46). The significant place assignment, developed by one of our instructors, Dr. Reyes, enabled students to practice using the collections to retrieve culturally-based resources, demonstrate their skills, and share their interests. At such, it also provided opportunities to get to know youth better, and, as Panter (2010) describes, strong connections with educators [and peers] are an integral part of learning for many students. The assignment description and assessment rubric are included in Appendix 1.

Digital Resources

Before launching E Noelo I Ka 'Ike and in tandem with observing student difficulties navigating information resources, the authors observed that digital resources featuring culturally-rich content were often underutilized. This was in part due to youth, along with other community

members, being unaware of their existence. Given that digital collections and databases featuring Hawaiian content are relatively new and emerged from many sources; and that most schools do not have librarians to promote information literacy, these rich repositories have not been well integrated into community activities or curricula.

Many Native Hawaiians, including those in rural areas, those on neighbor islands and the continent, and other diaspora, do not have local options for accessing historical and cultural resources. As such, knowledge of and remote access to digital resources is critical. Additionally, students often have particular academic needs requiring extensive, varied, and searchable sources. Our project introduced Hawaiian cultural and language digital resources, which were developed over a number of years by different agencies. These resources are part of large and complex collections; each having particular design, features, and content. When the project began, there was no hub linking them together, and even guides and other documents describing their application in different contexts, such as Wendy Roylo Hee's 2012 post, "Curriculum materials are a hidden treasure in Ulukau," were severely lacking.

While it is important and exciting to see the growing number of digital collections and databases that incorporate Hawaiian content developed in recent years, if Native Hawaiians are unaware of them, and do not have training or opportunities access them, the essential purpose is missing. Table 1 provides an overview of key digital collections introduced and explored. As noted above, session activities included an overview of all these resources and were tailored to address particular interests of participants.

Table 1***Digital Collections Featuring Native Hawaiian Cultural and Language***

Name and Date Available, if known	Creator/Sponsor/Host(s)	Content Area(s)	Website
Hawai'i Alive, 2011	Bishop Museum	History, Curriculum	www.hawaiialive.org
Hawaiian Legends Index	Lillian Ching, Hawai'i State Library, University of Hawai'i Mānoa	Hawaiian legends, Polynesian legends	manoa.hawaii.edu/hawaiiancollection/legends
Hawai'i State Archives	State of Hawai'i	Government records, Maps, Photographs	ags.hawaii.gov/archives/about-us
<i>Huapala: Hawaiian Music and Hula Archives</i>	Kaiulani Kanoa-Martin	<i>Hula</i> - music, instruments, steps, chants, holidays, regions	www.huapala.org
<i>Hula Preservation Society, 2000</i>	Kumu Hula Nona K.D. Beamer, others	<i>Kūpuna</i> , Chants, Instruments, Ancient hula	hulapreservation.org
<i>Kīpuka, 2012</i>	Office of Hawaiian Affairs	GIS, land (<i>'aina</i>), place name (<i>wahi inoa</i>)	kipukadatabase.com
<i>Kulāiwi, 2014</i>	Kamehameha Schools	Videos, Language	ksdl.ksbe.edu/hawaiian_resources/kulaiwi
<i>Kumukahi</i>	Kamehameha Publishing	Culture, Videos, Games, Lessons	www.kumukahi.org

<i>Manomano</i>	KAI LOA, Inc., Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau, Laboratory Public Charter School, US Department of Education	Dictionary	https://manomano.io
<i>‘Ōiwi TV</i>	Nā‘ālehu Anthony, Keoni Lee, and Amy Kalili	Videos, Culture, Stories, Music, Entertainment	https://oiwi.tv
<i>Papakilo, 2011</i>	Office of Hawaiian Affairs	Places; Events; Documents	www.papakilodatabase.com
<i>Ulukau, the Hawaiian Electronic Library, 2005</i>	University of Hawai‘i at Hilo; Alu Like; University of Waikato; UNESCO; others	Books, Curricula, Dictionaries; Genealogy, Land claims, Music, Newspapers; Photos; Place names; Polynesian Voyaging Society; Radio archives; Religion	www.ulukau.org
<i>‘Ulu‘ulu: The Henry Ku‘ualoha Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai‘i, 2010</i>	University of Hawai‘i West Oahu; Bishop Museum; CLEAR - Center for Labor Education and Research, Hula Preservation Society; PBS: others	Moving images, Hawaiian culture	uluulu.hawaii.edu

During *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike* sessions, the project team introduced and explored additional sites featuring Native Hawaiian content when they were helpful in meeting participants' interests and needs. These include Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, which was launched in 2005 by the National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) and supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress; the Hathi Trust, which began in 2008 as a collaboration between the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (now the Big Ten Academic Alliance) and the University of California system; and Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) launched in 2013 by Harvard's Berkman Klein Center and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. A few sessions also included discussions of mobile phone applications. Additional details on digital resources and project activities were shared through Hawai'i Maoli, a non-profit organization dedicated to Hawaiian culture and traditions.

Conclusion

E Noelo I Ka 'Ike was designed and implemented to address educational disparities that have emerged over time due to systemic bias that is reflected in official statistics on Native Hawaiian educational achievement. The project facilitators observed a disconnect between students and culturally-relevant materials and prepared and offered instructional sessions and workshops to introduce digital resources across multiple collections and databases to students and community groups.

All *E Noelo I Ka 'Ike* participants noted significant learning. Activities and discussions confirmed prior lack of search and retrieval skills and, in some cases, no awareness of existence of culturally-relevant digital resources. In session evaluations, participants indicated gaining new understanding of resources and developing information literacy skills. During community sessions, 75% of participants indicated having no prior knowledge of digitized materials

available in the databases. They were simply not aware that these resources existed - and had no experience accessing the materials. At the end of the sessions, over 90% of participants were planning to incorporate the digital resources into their personal activities, studies, work, and other community responsibilities. Participants also expressed interest in sharing training details with peers and other community members to enable a ripple effect.

Survey responses as well as our project team's ongoing observation in libraries, schools, and community spaces indicate continued interest and need for increased access to libraries with culturally-relevant materials and librarians to provide information literacy instruction. For now, in an effort to address existent knowledge gaps and continue building capacity, project leaders developed plans to cast the net wider by offering more workshops as well as offer new professional development opportunities for librarians and other educators. Additional training emphasizing and extending the use of digital repositories to retrieve culturally-relevant content in educational settings focusing on deeper curriculum integration is essential. The authors and project collaborators remain committed to developing and sharing insights and scholarly activities grounded in Indigenous approaches. In the future, we will extend our efforts to connect community members with culturally-relevant content and ever-growing collections of digital resources in order to continue strengthening Native Hawaiian educational engagement, achievement, and overall well-being.

A`ohe pau ka `ike i ka halau ho`okahi - One can learn from many sources.

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Appendix 1: Wahi Pana Assignment

Student Learning Objectives: Research, create and present a slideshow on your wahi pana.

DIRECTIONS:

1. With a **partner** select your wahi pana (significant place).
2. Research your wahi pana:
 - a. Significance of wahi pana to you.
 - b. Meaning of place name
 - c. Location of place
 - d. Mo'olelo of place
 - e. Mele of place
3. Create a presentation (5-8 slides), illustrating your wahi pana, including images and citations.
4. Present your wahi pana to the class.



	Po'okela	Maika'i	???
Introduction	All requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'O___ko'u inoa. • No___mai au. • ___o'u makahiki. • 'O___ku'u wahi pana. 	Most requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'O___ko'u inoa. • No___mai au. • ___o'u makahiki. • 'O___ku'u wahi pana. 	Few requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'O___ko'u inoa. • No___mai au. • ___o'u makahiki. • 'O___ku'u wahi pana.
Content of Power Point	All requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of wahi pana to you • Meaning of wahi pana • Location of wahi pana • Mo'olelo of wahi pana • Mele of wahi pana 	Most requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of wahi pana to you • Meaning of wahi pana • Location of wahi pana • Mo'olelo of wahi pana • Mele of wahi pana 	Few requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significance of wahi pana to you • Meaning of wahi pana • Location of wahi pana • Mo'olelo of wahi pana • Mele of wahi pana
Appearance of Power Point	All requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures • Font size (at least 28) large enough to see • Attractive • Professional looking 	Most requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures • Font size (at least 28) large enough to see • Attractive Professional looking 	Few requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures • Font size (at least 28) large enough to see • Attractive Professional looking
Professionalism	All requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation • Smile • Eye Content • Voice Quality (volume, enunciation) 	Most requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation • Smile • Eye Content • Voice Quality (volume, enunciation) 	Few requirements met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation • Smile • Eye Content • Voice Quality (volume, enunciation)