

ASPIRE2025

Cheaper by the carton? Pacific people and duty-free tobacco

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Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtāgo

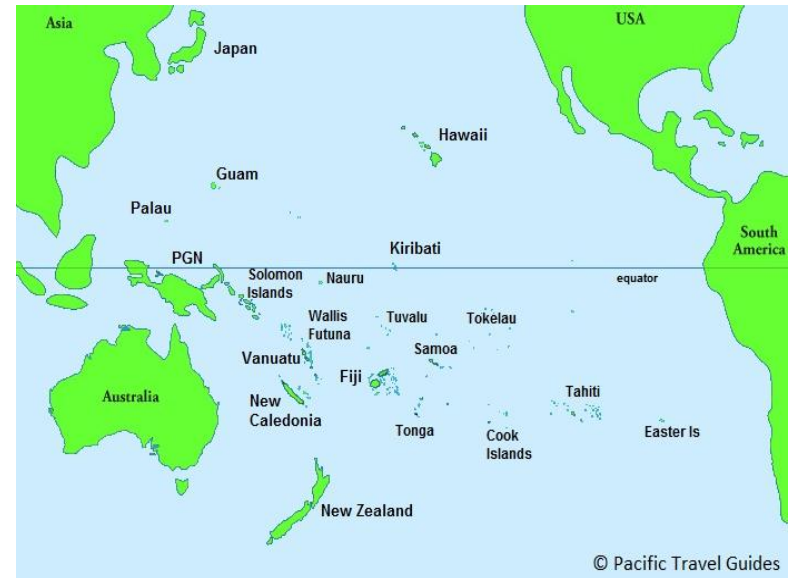
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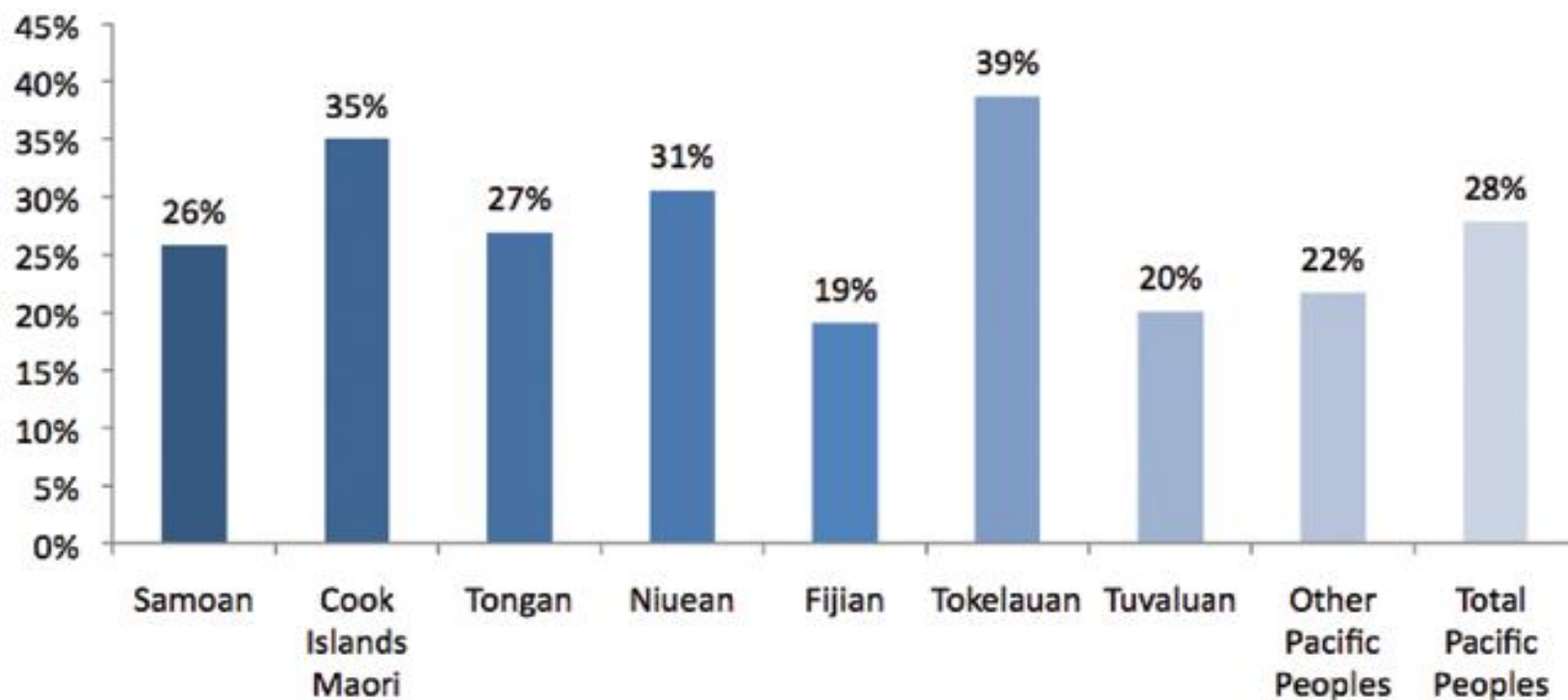
Background information

- 7% of NZ population
- Youthful population
- 60% born in NZ
- Highly urbanised
- Health inequalities



Smoking among Pacific Peoples

Figure 1: Prevalence of regular smokers by Pacific ethnic group (non age-standardised)



Source: 2006 census (data supplied by Ministry of Health)

Reference: Tuatua Tika: Straight talk about Pacific Peoples and Smoking. Pacific Tobacco Control Report 2010

Overview: The research project

Examine Pacific smokers and non-smokers usage and purchase of duty-free tobacco

- Purchase patterns of duty-free tobacco
- Key issues around duty-free tobacco amongst Pacific people
- Priority populations: Cook Islands, Samoan, Tongan, & Niuean

Methodology

- 6 focus group interviews with 15 Pacific smokers and 15 Pacific non-smokers
- Interviews conducted by Pacific researchers
- Discussions lasted 45 to 60 minutes
 - Semi-structured protocol
- Audio recorded then transcribed and interpreted using thematic analysis

Participants

- Ethnicity: 13 Samoan, 11 Cook Islands, 5 Tongan, 1 Niuean
- Smoking status: Mixture of daily and intermittent smokers with few ex-smokers (non)
- Living in Auckland & Wellington
- Aged 18 to 54 years old

Findings:

Purchase of duty-free tobacco

- Many Pacific purchase – smokers and non-smokers
- Personal use, friends, family, other travellers, strangers?
- Expectation – unconscious decision



Duty-free shop at Faleolo Airport, Western Samoa

Findings

Gifting of duty-free tobacco

- Cultural obligation – relationships
- Maintain or acquire status

P: *“...We know that cigarettes and giving them out is no good for health but .. the positive is the greeting and the relationship.. and the people who get it, the practice builds up the connection between friends and family”.*

“...easily available, easy to carry, always welcome, long-lasting, don't need to think about it, can be a last minute purchase, and are relatively cheap if purchased duty free”



Duty-free shop at Rarotonga Airport, Cook Islands

Findings

Impact on Pacific communities

- Good economic sense
- Very accessible – Niue & Cook Islands
- Negative impact on health – encourages smoking
- Only amongst travellers

*P: "...about seven people last year around Xmas, who **actually started smoking again because the people from Tonga bought all these duty-free smokes when they came for holidays.. there was so much abundance around them** at faikava...they couldn't help themselves.*



Duty-free shop at Rarotonga Airport, Cook Islands

Findings

Reactions to restrictions/ban

- Supportive – remove temptation and expectation
- Immediate vs. gradual

*P: "...It would **make a big difference if you actually couldn't buy tobacco at duty free. It wouldn't put you under the pressure to buy the gift** if you don't have that option because then your family knows that you can't... Yeah I think that would make a big difference just not having it as an option.*

What do we think needs to happen with duty-free tobacco

Research evidence shows that duty-free tobacco commonly purchased by Pacific

Duty-free tobacco part of gifting culture entrenched within Pacific communities

Opportunity to:

- Change a cultural norm for Pacific people around tobacco gifting
- Remove or mitigate the influence of tobacco in Pacific communities
 - Help reduce smoking prevalence amongst Pacific people in NZ and throughout the region

Acknowledgements



Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo

