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Paper Presentation

- a. Title: *Key Factors in Enhancing the Quality of Literacy Teaching in the South Pacific*
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Key Factors in Enhancing the Quality of Literacy Teaching in the South Pacific

The paper is the outcome of the author's research into high and low achieving schools on the Pacific Islands Literacy Levels (PILL) test conducted under the auspices of the Basic Education and Literacy Support (BELS) Programme.

The BELS Programme was a major UNDP-UNESCO-AusAID-UNICEF Education for All initiative which was implemented by the Institute of Education at the University of the South Pacific from 1994 - 2001. A major component of the Project was the widespread testing of literacy and numeracy achievement at grades 4 and 6.

The author found that schools which were similar in terms of socio-economic background of pupils, resourcing and setting (i.e. urban or rural), often had widely varying achievement levels. A research project was undertaken to investigate the reasons for this differing achievement.

The results confirmed findings from other parts of the world that school leadership (the head teacher or principal) was a major factor in affecting the quality of a school. However, several other factors also contributed to the difference, confirming the author's hypothesis that literacy/language learning are affected by a multiplicity of variables.

The research has important implications for the teaching of literacy and language skills in Pacific classrooms.
