Article

Ethnicities
2025, Vol. 0(0) 1–25

DOI: 10.1177/14687968251330888
journals.sagepub.com/home/etn

Paternalism and racism in pacific labour migration: A critical discourse analysis of the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme

Rituparna Roy
University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand

Francis L Collins
University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

Abstract

Neoliberalism and 'race' have become fundamental in the operation of migration regimes internationally. This is particularly the case in circular labour mobility schemes that involve the seasonal movement of migrants from the Global South into labour markets in the Global North in deeply racialized ways that are underpinned by neoliberal market rule. This paper explores the institutionalisation of racism in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme in Aotearoa New Zealand (hereafter, New Zealand), a circular migration programme that has been promoted as a 'best practice' 'global model.' Using discourse analysis, we identify a strong emphasis on paternalism, managerialism, and racialisation, which shape the character of Pacific-focused labour programmes. Paternalism is expressed in the positioning of New Zealand as leading Pacific countries' development and governance, and an emphasis on 'co-development' underpinned by claims of mutual beneficence. The RSE scheme is then managed through discourses and operational mechanisms that are informed by technocratic managerialism, rendering Pacific migrants able to be controlled through restricted rights and an emphasis on the maintenance of permanent circulation. Lastly, paternalism and managerialism take shape around the racialisation and stratification of RSE migrant labour as ideal workers for seasonal manual labour characterised by low wages, conditions and rights. This critical

Corresponding author:
Rituparna Roy, Te Ngira: Institute for Population Research, University of Waikato, Hillcrest, Hamilton 3240, New Zealand.
Email: ritu.roy@waikato.ac.nz

Data Availability Statement included at the end of the article

analysis reveals the deeply embedded coloniality of circular labour mobility schemes like the RSE and suggests the importance of wholesale transformation rather than a refinement of an unjust system.

Keywords
Labour mobility, migration, pacific, paternalism, neoliberalism, racism, recognised seasonal employer

The Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE) is a seasonal labour programme established in 2007 by the New Zealand Government that manages the circular migration of people to work in Aotearoa New Zealand (hereafter New Zealand) horticulture and viticulture. The scheme focuses on countries in the Pacific, including Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, although employers can apply to recruit from other countries if they can demonstrate pre-existing relationships that satisfy Immigration New Zealand. People who participate in the RSE scheme are granted visas for 7 months within an 11-month period (9 months within the 11-month period for Kiribati and Tuvalu), and many return on an annual basis for many years (Ramasamy et al., 2019). To become an RSE employer, businesses have to go through a rigorous accreditation process that involves assessment of financial status, human resource practices, commitment to recruiting New Zealand citizen/resident workers, and good workplace practices. Employer accreditation is initially for 2 years and then subsequently renewed every 3 years.

The RSE scheme is akin to a number of circular labour mobility programmes that have become commonplace in settler colonial contexts in recent decades (Gilbert, 2014). Such circular labour mobility programmes are situated within multiple layers of colonialism: they extend settler colonialism by being operationalised on Indigenous land—Māori land in the case of New Zealand—and often articulate with legacies of external colonialism, as is the case with New Zealand's role in the Pacific (Asafo and Tuiburelevu, 2021). Between the mid-19th to mid- 20th centuries, New Zealand's colonial administration sought to control and restructure Pacific economies to serve its industries with raw materials and cheap labour. Today, these historical ties sustain economic dependencies, making Pacific nations peripheral labour reserves for New Zealand's agricultural and horticultural sectors (see Mallon et al., 2012; Pickles and Coleborne, 2016; Simpson, 2023).

Circular labour mobility programmes situate migration in the optimistic language of co-development and securing the potential for "triple-wins" for migrant-sending and receiving states as well as migrants themselves. However, such claims have been shown to be dubious (Skeldon, 2010, 2012; Wickramasekara, 2011) as circular migration is associated with creating cycles of dependency and amplifying the power imbalances between sending and receiving countries on the one hand and between migrants and employers on the other. In relation to the RSE, the scheme has recently been accused of

facilitating workplace exploitation, and human rights violations and the treatment of migrant workers under the scheme has been described as 'modern-day slavery' (Human Rights Commission, 2022). These optimistic claims of circular migration are relied on the institution of strict regulations on mobility and migrant rights with the purported 'triple win' economic benefits resulting from disempowering migrants and subjecting them to substandard labour conditions. Thus, this paper argues that the arrangement is deeply racialised in regard to its operations and management of seasonal labours from the Pacific.

Despite the annual increase in the number of RSE workers in New Zealand almost every year since 2007, they are largely invisible in the public realm and public discourse about migration and its impacts. There is a substantial body of research evaluating the RSE scheme and its implications for migrants (see C. Bedford, 2013; C. Bedford et al., 2020), source communities and countries (see Bedford and Hugo, 2008; C. Bedford, 2013; C. Bedford et al., 2020) and the New Zealand labour market (see C. Bedford, 2013; Ramasamy et al., 2019; C. Bedford et al., 2020). Much less attention has been paid to the discursive and political constitution of the RSE, however, and despite its embeddedness in New Zealand's colonial relationship with Pacific countries (see Mallon et al., 2012; Pickles and Coleborne, 2016; Simpson, 2023), specific analyses of racism and colonialism in policy discourses and practices have been less forthcoming. Our research addresses this gap by critically analysing the discourses, framings and underlying assumptions of RSE policies to examine the ways in which racism and colonialism are institutionalised in this programme. Racism, the ongoing creation of racial classifications that determine the superiority and inferiority of human beings, remains a pivotal component of migration policies and experiences (Grosfoguel et al., 2014), especially highly regulated labour migration regimes (De Genova, 2023). Our specific analysis suggests that the RSE scheme is positioned within a politics of benevolence on the part of New Zealand, whereby questions of justice and rights, including in relation to racism and labour, can be set aside for a focus on sustaining the purported benefits through the continued smooth operation of this migration programme. To establish the theoretical foundations for our analysis, we first introduce scholarship on racism, neoliberalism and immigration regimes.

Neoliberalism, immigration regimes and racial politics

Our account of the discursive framing and implications of the RSE scheme is informed by critical race theory (CRT) and a well-established scholarship that has shown the intricate relationships between neoliberalism and 'race' (Davis, 2007; Goldberg, 2009; Jaskulowski and Pawlak, 2022; Kundani, 2021; Roberts and Mahtani, 2010). CRT is a framework for examining the ways race and racism intersect with other forms of social stratification and injustice. It originated in the United States during the early 1980s, initially developed by Derrick Bell (1995) and later expanded by scholars such as Richard Delgado, Jean Stefancic and Kimberlé Crenshaw. CRT asserts that racism is a routine aspect of society rather than an anomaly. Thus, racism often manifests in ways that seem ordinary, making it less visible and more challenging to address (Delgado and Stefancic, 2023). Unlike traditional civil rights, which emphasize incremental progress and reform,

CRT challenges the fundamental structures of the liberal order. This includes questioning concepts such as equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and the notion of neutral principles in constitutional law (Delgado and Stefancic, 2023).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is founded on five key tenets. First, it posits that racism is a pervasive, everyday experience for people of colour, viewing it as a systemic and institutional issue rather than an isolated individual concern. Second, the principle of interest convergence suggests that advancements in racial justice occur only when they align with the interests of those in power, meaning that progress for racially marginalised groups is often endorsed only when it benefits the dominant group as well. Third, CRT asserts that race is a socially constructed concept with tangible consequences, created and perpetuated by social and legal systems that sustain inequality. Fourth, CRT emphasises the intersectional nature of discrimination, advocating for an understanding of how various aspects of identity—such as race, gender, and class—intersect to shape individuals' experiences of both oppression and privilege. Finally, CRT values storytelling and counter-narratives that elevate the perspectives and voices of people of colour (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado and Stefancic, 2023).

Using CRT as a framework allows for a critical interrogation of how colonialism and racism are foundational to and perpetuate structural inequities in various systems, including migration programmes like the RSE scheme. CRT focuses on the systemic and structural dimensions of racism, offering tools to uncover how institutional practices reinforce racial hierarchies and privilege dominant groups. In the context of New Zealand, CRT offers a powerful lens through which to examine how Māori, Pacific, and other communities of colour are racialised within the settler-colonial matrix (Asafo and Tuiburelevu, 2021; Waitoki et al., 2024). Racialisation in this context refers to the ways in which these groups are socially constructed and assigned particular attributes that serve colonial power structures. This process is central to maintaining strategies of elimination, subjugation, exploitation, and manipulation—core mechanisms of settler colonialism. CRT has been used to examine the racialisation, oppression, and exploitation of migrants within immigration and labour mobility systems in economically advanced countries (Bonilla-Silva, 2015; García, 2017; Guo, 2015; Romero, 2008).

CRT also provides a counter-narrative to neoliberal ideologies, exposing the racialised outcomes of neoliberal policies and advocating for transformative structural reforms to address these inequities (Coates, 2023). Indeed, there is a strand of literature that examines the complex relationship between 'race' and neoliberalism. Much of this literature revealed the ideological conflicts of neoliberalism – the contradictory relationship between its political economy and cultural expectations. Concerning this, Kundani (2021) writes that while the neoliberal political economy promotes universal, free market rules, it defends Western culture's pre-eminence through a rather particularistic (i.e. Eurocentric) approach that privileges Western norms, values, and practices, embedding them as the standard against which all others are measured. Kundani (2021) further noted that it is 'race' that provides a means of categorising and managing the material boundaries between different forms of labour under neoliberalism: citizen and migrant, waged and exploitable, bearers of entitlements and bare life.

Other scholars (see Jaskulowski and Pawlak, 2022; Roberts and Mahtani, 2010) have noted that neoliberalism and 'race' have a 'co-constitutive' relationship. Neoliberalism has modified how 'race' functions and is comprehended in society (Roberts and Mahtani, 2010). For Dána-Ain Davis (2007), the modified version of 'race' and racism is "muted", which is capable of deflection, indexicality and omission. In muted racism, the politics of talking non-racially is spelled as an achievement of racial parity (Davis, 2007). In explaining how muted racism operates, Davis further noted:

> Under neoliberal racism the relevance of the raced subject, racial identity and racism is subsumed under the auspices of meritocracy. For in a neoliberal society, individuals are supposedly freed from identity and operate under the limiting assumptions that hard work will be rewarded if the game is played according to the rules. Consequently, any impediments to success are attributed to personal flaws. This attribution affirms notions of neutrality and silences claims of racialising and racism. (Davis, 2007: 350)

Bonilla-Silva further advanced this notion by demonstrating how under neoliberal conditions, 'race' is obscured by non-racial framings. As Bonilla-Silva (2015) argued, 'race' relations and racism have become more sophisticated and "subtle" but still as effective as explicitly racist and exclusionary at maintaining the status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 2015: 1362). New racial ideologies frequently work through ostensibly non-racial, political and economic liberal framings (i.e., individualism, meritocracy, equality, freedom, and choice) (Bonilla-Silva, 2015). Inequality and discriminatory outcomes are often rationalised through what are considered to be natural tendencies or market dynamics. In other words, racial terminologies are replaced by neoliberal market logic while still reproducing inequitable outcomes for different racial groups.

Immigration and labour mobility programmes in Anglophone, economically advanced countries are shaped by neoliberal rationalities, which inevitably produce racialized bodies (Bauder, 2008; Jaskulowski and Pawlak, 2022; Simpson, 2023). The neoliberal managerial approach is particularly apparent in the ways in which immigrants are classified into different categories based on their economic values (Bauder, 2008; Roy et al., 2021). This includes systems such as the point-based skilled migrant category, high-skilled migrants who gain direct residency, and low-skilled migrants on a circular labour mobility scheme with no pathways to residency. For Lehman et al. (2016), under neoliberalism, immigration policies should be considered part of the wider apparatus designed to extract life forces according to market principles of efficiency and competitiveness. Such extraction leads to "an erasure of immigrants as social and moral agents; they are recast as primarily economic agents or commodities whose main purpose is to benefit the economy" (Lehman et al., 2016: 46). Commodified and hierarchically categorised immigrants are then audited, surveilled, and inspected to sort out the desirable from the undesirable (Lehman et al., 2016). In accordance with the degree of desirability, different categories of people are granted various types of entitlements and legal rights - while some are denied access to citizenship and left with little autonomy (Jaskulowski and Pawlak, 2022). The concept of citizenship, therefore, is rearticulated as associated with

the neoliberal criteria which allows mobile individuals who possess human capital or expertise to be highly valued and can exercise citizenship claims in diverse locations. Meanwhile, individuals who do not have such tradable competence or potential become devalued and thus vulnerable to exclusionary practices (Ong, 2006).

Aside from being shaped by market logic, we contend that neoliberal immigration regimes are also paternalistic and promote a more directive, supervisory approach to managing migrants who are deemed vulnerable and/or from socio-economically disadvantaged countries. 'Neoliberalism' and 'paternalism' are terms that are seldom used together. Neoliberalism is more often conceptualised as a reversal of the paternalist welfare state (McCluskey, 2003; Soss et al., 2011; Wacquant, 2009). However, scholars (see Howard-Wagner, 2017; Mead, 1997; Soss et al., 2011) showed that these two sets of logic and practices also converge to promote a shared disciplinary project – disciplining the poor, marginalised and Indigenous peoples. With neoliberal-paternalistic framings, the poor and historically marginalised are assumed to lack the competence needed to manage their own affairs and, therefore, should be told what is best for them. Hence, the government should step into the fatherly role of supervising and disciplining the marginalised for their 'best' interest.

In Aotearoa, the exploration of neoliberal paternalism is predominantly focused on welfare policy and practices (Howard-Wagner et al., 2018). For instance, previous studies (Howard-Wagner et al., 2018; Lawn and Prentice, 2015; Ware et al., 2017) have illustrated how neoliberal tools are employed to govern the lives of Indigenous peoples. Within the realm of neoliberalism, social welfare programs operate in conjunction with paternalistic conditionality, including measures like conditional cash transfers, which serve to regulate individual behaviour. Notably, despite extensive examination within the context of welfare, the concept of neoliberal paternalism remains largely unexplored in immigration and labour mobility programs specific to Aotearoa.

We argue that an amalgamation of neoliberal market rationalities (i.e., industry labour demand determines the number of entries) and racial paternalism (i.e., socio-economically disadvantaged source countries are directed toward 'development' by paternal, coloniser destination countries) influences labour mobility schemes. The RSE scheme is an indicative example of such amalgamation. This labour mobility scheme is shaped around the specific labour demands of the horticulture and viticulture industries in New Zealand and their aspirations for productivity and export growth. These demands are responded to by New Zealand governments that have established a highly regulated scheme for recruiting and managing workers under the claim that such migration is premised on helping the development of Pacific countries that have been historically subject to New Zealand's (and Australia's) colonial ambitions. We develop this argument in further detail in the later sections of this paper.

Neoliberal paternalism is fundamentally intertwined with 'race' (see Howard-Wagner, 2017). It reflects how 'race' operates today "as a social structure that organizes politics and markets and as a mental structure that organises choice and action in governance" (Soss et al., 2011: 4). Paternalism is central in this regard, operating through the racial classification of groups as inferior and taking shape through neoliberal policy formations that reinforce the logic of the colonial civilising mission (Howard-Wagner, 2017).

Neoliberal market rationality and the development rhetoric of racial paternalism create a migration system in which labour is excessively commodified for racialised workers, who remain permanently temporary. Worker vulnerability is framed as a necessary "trade-off" for economic opportunity, normalising exploitation. Meanwhile, structural racism is masked as economic efficiency and development aid, enabling racial inequalities to persist unquestioned.

We assert that the neoliberal paternalism within circular migration policies engenders a form of racism that is benevolent or sympathetic. A paternalistic form of benevolence does not rely on denying, downplaying, or normalising white privilege by invoking the ideal of racial neutrality (Esposito and Romano, 2014). Rather, it operates in the name of uplifting and empowering marginalized communities and often uses "a utilitarian-like logic that condones specific instances of racial inequality in the name of the 'greater good'" (Esposito and Romano, 2014:74). The act of uplifting has colonial roots in deficit framing - narratives that frame Indigenous and non-white peoples as inferior while simultaneously constructing white identity as superior and subsequently naturalising colonial, imperialist power (Gebhard et al., 2022). It also positions the economically advanced and industrialised West as the normative standard of human progress by which all others should be measured, despite the fact that this advancement has been historically and continues to be reliant on the exploitation, extraction, and accumulation of resources from economically disadvantaged countries (Wake, 2022). Such white saviourism still exists in labour mobility and immigration regimes that are built on the promise of international 'development' (Andrews, 2021; Stead, 2021).

The literature we engaged with so far points toward one common thread: under neoliberalism, 'race' and racism have become 'subtle', or 'muted' and often mystified by the use of non-racial, economic and marketplace discourses. Yet, in relation to migration, drawing attention to the intersection of neoliberal market rule in migration managerialism and its linkages to paternalism reveals stark and highly racialized differences in the ways in which migrants are selected, controlled and included or excluded. Our analysis of the RSE scheme draws on these insights to examine how racism functions through market rationalities and managerial approaches in the framing and operation of circular migration programs.

Methodology

This paper is written as a critical analysis of state discourse and practice in relation to the RSE programme and labour migration settings in New Zealand. We do so from positionalities as a migrant woman of colour with South Asian heritage and a white man with ancestry drawing primarily from Irish immigrants to New Zealand in the 19th Century. These positionalities matter in our analysis. The first author's research focus on migration and racial justice are deeply informed by her lived experiences, including growing up in a 'post-colonial' society that continues to grapple with the effects of historical and ongoing global and regional imperialism. The second author undertakes research on inequality, racism and exploitation in labour migration in ways that seek to challenge the settler state

and are shaped by collaborations with feminist and postcolonial migration scholars in Asia and recently Māori, Pacific and racialised minority scholars in New Zealand.

While this research critically examines how racism, colonialism, and paternalism are institutionalised within the Pacific RSE scheme, it is beyond the scope of our analysis and positionalities to amplify Pacific voices or their unique experiences of colonisation and racism, although we do draw heavily on Pacific authors that speak on these issues. Our analysis seeks to highlight structural issues within the RSE scheme by undertaking a critical discourse analysis of migration policy and strategy documents. By reflecting and constructing social entities and relationships, discourse serves as a two-way mirror (Fairclough, 2013). Discourse analysis entails reading and analysing the text within its context by asking questions, including whose text is this, why is it needed, who benefits from it, and what assumptions shaped its production. As a methodology, discourse analysis is inherently activist as its final stage involves identifying new, alternative discourses that can counteract 'social wrongs' in the current, dominant discourses (Cummings et al., 2020).

Discourse analysis is widely used in scrutinising policies as it helps identify dominant, marginal, oppressive, and alternative discourses within documents (Cummings et al., 2020). It unpacks the contradictions of "lived experience and social ideals" by exploring the silence and exclusion within the policy documents (Ball, 1990:139). Uncovering a policy problem's underlying assumptions, inner bias, and hidden preoccupations is another strength of the methodology (Fairclough, 2013). Instead of uncritically accepting a policy 'problem,' discourse analysis divulges the construction of the very problem – how the 'problem' is created and given shape in the same policy proposal that is offered as the response (Bacchi, 2000; Ball, 1990). Policy documents are not developed by chance (Cummings et al., 2020). Rather, they are formed, debated, disseminated, and legitimised within complex networks of events. Documents go through a mindful process of writing and editing to state truths or to conceal, obfuscate, or embellish them (Fairclough, 2013).

For this research, policy documents were collected from several different sources, including the websites of the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Immigration New Zealand, the New Zealand Productivity Commission, and Hansard - the New Zealand Parliamentary record. Hansard records are searched using keywords including 'Pacific migration', 'Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme', 'Immigration Rebalance', and 'Immigration and Pacific Development'.

A critical step of discourse analysis is establishing the context within which the texts were produced, including the information about producers and the existing discourses about the texts (Fairclough, 2013). As authors, we identified and undertook a wider review of 75 documents to comprehend the development of both RSE and non-RSE categories within the immigration system. The review was supported by a research assistant working as part of a summer scholarship project. This initial review helped us identify and consider the socio-political and historical contexts of the origin and development of RSE and other labour mobility categories. We then narrowed our focus and included 47 RSE scheme and Pacific migration related documents (see Supplemental Material (1) for further scrutiny using discourse analysis. The coding was carried out with a blended approach, integrating the deductive construction of top-level nodes informed by

the theoretical and policy context of the study with the inductive construction of sub-nodes based on the data (see, Graebner et al., 2012; Hamilton et al., 2021). Three high-level working nodes based on policy and theoretical interests were developed (deductively). Using the three top-level nodes: (1) paternalism, (2) managerialism, and (3) racialisation, a coding tree was developed. The second step consisted of a manual review of all data to exclude irrelevant and duplicated information, assess the suitability of high-level parent nodes, and identify sub-nodes inductively. This analysis was led by the first author and the second author checked and coded approximately a third of the same texts to identify areas of potential intercoder variability and areas in need of further intercoder alignment or agreement (Campbell et al., 2013). The authors met regularly to discuss, review and reach agreements on the coding framework and extracted data under different themes. Throughout, the coding process was guided by the following questions: (1) how RSE workers were constructed within the documents, (2) how the RSE program, its objectives and outcomes are conceptualised in the policy, and (3) what underlying (taken for granted) assumptions were shaping the development of the policies. Authors paid attention to both the surface and latent meanings of the texts as it enabled unpacking the assumptions and imbued ideologies that shape the policy documents (Fairclough, 2013; Hamilton et al., 2021).

The genesis and development of the RSE scheme

The RSE scheme was launched in 2007 following a seasonal work permit pilot undertaken in the year prior. The political rationalities of 'triple-win' were in ascendency in international dialogue around migration management in the early-mid 2000s, including at the United Nations and World Bank (Gamlen, 2010). The New Zealand cabinet decision to launch the pilot program in 2006 was linked to these moves, coming only a few weeks after the UN High Level Dialogue on International Migration asserted the importance of co-development in migration programs: "the coordinated or concerted improvement of economic conditions in both areas of origin and areas of destination based on the complementarities between them" (UN 2006:1). Key players in New Zealand migration research and policy making were influential in shaping government action in relation to the RSE, which was being positioned as a way for New Zealand to be more open to Pacific migration, not least in the context of population growth in Melanesia in the absence of emigration channels (Bedford and Hugo, 2012).

The development and operation of the RSE programme have been organized around a multi-ministry collaboration between the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE, which overseas labour and immigration matters), the Ministry of Social Development (MSD, which is responsible for social security) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The collaboration of these government agencies has been seen as critical to the objective of effectively linking migration and development and assuring that the RSE is not displacing New Zealand residents or citizen workers, in particular clients of MSD who are receiving unemployment support. Over time, the RSE has come to be seen as a 'global model' for circular migration that delivers on the promise of development, relieving labour shortages and making migration more orderly and

manageable (Lewis, 2014). The RSE has grown enormously since it was first introduced, from a cap of 5000 places in 2007 to 19,000 in 2022/23. RSE workers are now undoubtedly essential to the current functioning of the horticulture and viticulture industries in New Zealand (Mase, 2023).

The RSE scheme is a very highly regulated migration program that places a premium on managing the mobility, work and lives of migrants and minimising any possibilities for migrants to stay beyond their visa expiry. There is, in this regard, no pathway to citizenship or social inclusion through the RSE programme. Like international equivalents such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program in Canada and the Australian Seasonal Worker Program, then, the RSE fixes migrant workers as permanently circular (Gilbert, 2014).

Paternalism, managerialism, and racialisation in the RSE scheme

We identified three dominant discourses from the analysis of migration policy and strategic documents related to the RSE scheme. They are (1) paternalism, (2) managerialism, and (3) racialisation. While we discuss these discourses separately, they often overlap with each other, manifesting the intricate and intersecting nature of the discourses of neoliberalism, 'race' and market rule.

Discourses of paternalism

Paternalism, denoting a sympathetic superior looking after subordinate subjects, is frequently implied in explaining the relationships between New Zealand and neighbouring Pacific countries. In descriptions of the objectives and outcomes of the RSE scheme, New Zealand is positioned as leading Pacific development and sustainability with the assumption that Pacific countries are in need of help and development. The *Guide to Becoming a Recognised Seasonal Employer (2022: 2),* for instance, notes that New Zealand is committed to "Encourage economic development, regional integration, and good governance within the Pacific, by allowing preferential access to workers who are citizens of eligible Pacific countries." Postulations such as these establish a framing of Pacific countries as underdeveloped and characterised by deficits in their ability to self-govern to ensure their own socioeconomic prosperity and well-being. Like much development policy and practice, this claim (which was recurrent in the documents we analysed) expresses a kind of paternalistic benevolence that positions New Zealand as superior and Pacific countries as inherently inferior and in need of support and guidance (Esposito and Romano, 2014) in ensuring good-governance and sustainable development for their own people; hence New Zealand has an 'obligation' of uplifting the wellbeing of Pacific countries. Paternalism is often premised on the belief that New Zealand is a model of development that the Pacific countries should follow to attain developed status, obfuscating both the settler colonial project in New Zealand and its subjugation and marginalisation of Māori as well as New Zealand's own colonial projects in the Pacific and their ongoing effects (see Mallon et al., 2012; Pickles and Coleborne, 2016).

Paternalism is also expressed through discourses of 'co-development.' From the outset, the RSE scheme is conceptualised as mutually beneficial to New Zealand and its source Pacific countries. Policy documents asserted that while New Zealand benefits from the stable, constant supply of seasonal labour for the horticulture and viticulture industries, the scheme also creates 'opportunities' for workers to access industry training and thus upskill themselves. The documents also frequently used phrases such as "friendship/partnership with the Pacific countries", "mutual benefit", and "collective ambition". RSE is described as a scheme with several 'positive impacts' on micro and macro levels for Pacific countries. Indeed, RSE impacts are conceived to be a 'triple win' for the source and destination countries as well as the migrant workers (Castles and Ozkul, 2014; Ramasamy et al., 2019). These discourses of paternalism are intended to present the RSE scheme as benevolent offering from the New Zealand state to Pacific peoples. From the standpoint of CRT framework, however, such paternalistic discourses are evidence of how structural inequities that are shaped by colonial legacies can be obscured in ways that claim to offer 'progress' for Pacific peoples but instead disproportionately benefit New Zealand economically.

While RSE scheme enthusiasts claim that it is a 'win-win' scheme for source and destination countries (see Bedford et al., 2017; Ramasamy et al., 2019), scholars have debunked such optimistic claims about seasonal circular migration programs elsewhere (e.g., Canada and Australia) (see Horgan and Liinamaa, 2017; Skeldon, 2010, 2012; Stead, 2021; Wickramasekara, 2011). It has been questioned whether circular migration plays a significant role in alleviating poverty in source countries. Circular migration is regarded as a development opportunity primarily in economic terms, ignoring wider issues of social and other dimensions (Oke, 2010; Piper, 2009; Wickramasekara, 2011). Skeldon (2012) advanced this argument by noting that while circular migration helps households expand their resource bases and acts as a safety net to some extent, a longer- rather than shorter-term circulatory movement is required to attain sustainable economic welfare for migrants and source countries. Furthermore, Wickramasekara (2011) showed that win-win claims are often exaggerated and fall short of considering the unequal bargaining power between the source and destination countries as well as employers and migrant workers. Indeed, one of the notable features of circular programs like the RSE is that migrant visas are typically tied to their employment and employers have disproportionate power in the selection of workers and renominating them for the subsequent seasonal visit (Horgan and Liinamaa, 2017), reducing the agency of workers to both develop themselves and negotiate terms of employment.

The discourses of paternalism also provide a facially neutral framing within which racialised inequality can be justified through social and legal systems that govern RSE workers (see Bonilla-Silva, 2015). Similar to its other equivalents, the RSE program has also been criticised for creating the potential for human rights violations, including workers' non-access to an adequate standard of accommodation and healthcare, lack of freedom of movement and association, long working hours, bullying and harassment (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2022). The employment agreement's short duration often hinders migrants' capacity to contribute to their homes as the re-migration process itself may involve high costs that cannot be fully recovered by migrants. Indeed,

as noted in the *RSE Impact Study: New Zealand Stream Report* (2019: 53-54): "Insufficient work at the beginning and end of the season, and downtimes during the season diminish worker earnings and savings". Furthermore, workers falling sick or being injured and not having access to New Zealand public health often restrict them from saving up and sending the money back home (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2022). One of the policy justifications for short-term employment contracts and visa entries for RSE workers is to protect Pacific countries from brain or skill drain. Another is that Pacific people want to remain in their own countries, a point made in *Pacific Climate Migration Cabinet Papers* highlighting the "need to support Pacific peoples in their expressed wish to remain in their own countries for as long as possible." While it is unclear when these wishes have been expressed and by whom, in 2023 Samoan Prime Minister Fiamē Naomi Mataʻafa offered a different view, suggesting that New Zealand should live up to their "Pacific family" rhetoric and look into a European Union-style free movement of people around the region (Neilson, 2023).

In contrast to these more open possibilities articulated by Fiamē, the constrained mobility of the RSE, framed in the view that the New Zealand Government knows what is best for the Pacific, reveals a paternalistic benevolence. As identified in this section, the RSE programme is justified through reference to New Zealand's obligations to uplift Pacific development, a framing that positions New Zealand in an authoritative position in regard to what sort of development Pacific countries can and should pursue. Relatedly, the RSE also operates through specific mechanisms – such as short-term visas, job restrictions and employer dependency – that reinforce the power imbalance between workers and employers and thus between Pacific countries and New Zealand. These justifications and operations normalise racialised inequality, that is they are indicative of the kind of systemic racism that is revealed through a CRT-informed analysis. Such paternalism also intimates the importance of managerialism and marketplace logic in the framing and operation of the RSE. We turn to these discourses in the next section.

Discourses of managerialism, technocracy and migration management

Discourses that have emerged out of an emphasis on migration management, the claim that migration ought to be 'orderly, predictable and productive' (Ghosh, 2007: 107), are also frequently expressed in RSE-related policy documents. The *Proposed Immigration Work Program to Improve Pacific Migration Policies* (2018: 5) cabinet paper, for example, stated that "Well-managed immigration is essential to our economic and social success as a country". These managerial control measures include very strict conditions on RSE visas: a maximum enforced time limit of seven or 9 months; no family sponsorship; restrictions to work in horticulture and viticulture, and only specifically on "planting, maintaining, harvesting and packing crops"; ineligibility to apply for any other kind of visa; ineligibility to appeal to the Immigration and Protection Tribunal to stay in New Zealand; and ineligibility for health, welfare and other social security benefits.

These rigid employment rights and visa conditions enable 'social quarantining' and contribute to the racialised social construction of RSE workers as needing supervision and management. Social quarantining (Horgan and Liinamaa, 2017) is one of the managerial

apparatuses in immigration management that maintains separation between temporary and seasonal workers and the general population so that there are no blurred lines between temporariness, permanence, and inclusion. For instance, accommodation arrangements for RSE workers are one way to draw the line between temporary labour migrants and those given the opportunity to reside permanently and be included in society. Purpose-built housing is seen as suitable for RSE workers as it separates them from the rest of society.

> Currently, around half of all accommodation provided by RSE employers is purpose-built. Purpose-built accommodation is preferred as it reduces demand on other accommodation types. (Cabinet paper, Increasing the cap for the RSE scheme: 6 2017/2018)

Horgan and Liinamaa (2017) showed that the combination of factors such as strict regulations, overlapping precarity of legal and employment status, limited or no pathways to residency, and restricted leisure and mobility consolidate the socio-temporal isolation of seasonal migrant workers from everyday social lives in the broader communities where their housing and workplaces are located. Social quarantine mechanisms ensure the steady, constant supply of seasonal labour without the commitment to inclusion or integration. Thus, a seasonal labour mobility arrangement such as RSE programme reflects the desire of the destination countries to bring in 'labour' but not 'people' (Wickramasekara, 2011) and does so specifically in relation to a racialised social construction of Pacific people and their value as migrants.

The emphasis on technocratic excellence is notable in the RSE policy and strategy documents as it makes several references to 'rigorous' evaluation and 'productivity analysis' processes to justify operational changes, including the administrative caps on RSE entries. Contradictory to the claims of economic development in Pacific countries, the number of RSE workers entering the profession is determined by market forces - the demand for labour in horticulture and viticulture. As noted in *Increasing the cap for the RSE scheme (2017/2018: 5)* cabinet paper:

> Each year, the industry identifies its labour needs, and these are tested against the available sources of labour to determine the number of RSE workers required by each region. This includes determining what efforts are being made by employers to recruit New Zealanders, particularly Work and Income clients.

The increase in RSE entries as a result of the demand and productivity analysis highlights the role of technocratic management in this circular labour mobility program. This also stresses that technocratic management often assumes that needs and impacts can be quantified and then managed with objective quotas. The technocratic managerialism deployed in the RSE scheme is also expressed in describing the impacts and effectiveness of the scheme. For instance, the Cabinet paper on *Increasing the Cap for the RSE Scheme* (2017/2018:17) stated: "The RSE scheme has been described by the World Bank as the "one of the most effective development interventions for which rigorous evaluations are available". The claims of 'effectiveness' are based on rigorous technocratic evaluations

that strive to ensure that RSE workers do not exceed the status of short-term through various strict regulations mentioned earlier.

Technocratic management is conventionally understood as providing rational solutions for the public by drawing on experts' specialised knowledge (Jaroszewicz and Grzymski, 2021). However, the role of technocracy in migration management is far from a neutral, depoliticised mechanism (De Jong, 2016; Jaroszewicz and Grzymski, 2021). Technocratic management helps the modern state "widen surveillance and control capacities towards foreigners" (Jaroszewicz and Grzymski, 2021: 259). It allows for the regulation of migration and borders by setting norms that can be portrayed as objectively derived (see Walters, 2011). In this case, the state exercises power not through coercion but through establishing norms to manage (self-)conduct (De Jong, 2016; McNevin et al., 2016).

The normalisation of managerialism is one of the defining characteristics of temporary migration regimes and through reference to CRT reveal linkages to the institutionalisation of racism in purportedly commonsense arrangements (Guo, 2015; Romero, 2008). CRT asserts that institutional racism is sustained through race-neutral justifications that obscure their discriminatory effects (see Bonilla-Silva, 2015; Delgado and Stefancic, 2023). Managerialism is one such race-neutral justification, playing a key role in making racialised precarity which is produced and maintained through the RSE scheme appear natural and necessary. Managerialism operates by justifying the interventions of different actors and institutions through a set of practices and discourses about what migration is and how it ought to be managed (Gieger and Pécoud, 2010). Managerialism is naturalised through the justification of 'risk' management. The discourses of 'immigration risk' and 'migrants as problem/liability' are persistent in RSE policy documents. Portraying migrants as a threat to economic wellbeing and national identity, and in need of supervision and isolation from society, helps normalizing migration management and border control (Sönnichsen, 2020). Subsequently, routinised migration management becomes necessary to minimise the risks temporary outsiders pose to permanent insiders. Accommodating seasonal migrant workers in purpose-built accommodation, for instance, is rationalised as a strategy for avoiding stress on the housing market and infrastructure for the rest of society. Such discourse helps to normalise the idea that temporary migrants, especially RSE workers, should be managed and controlled separately and as a result, precluded from other dimensions of societal inclusion in a way that mirrors their exclusion from residence and citizenship. As we note in the analysis of the final section below, these arrangements are all fundamentally reliant on the racialisation of RSE workers.

Discourses of racialisation and the stratification of labour

As noted earlier, CRT draws attention to the ways in which race is socially constructed with consequent tangible effects for the position of people in societies (see Bonilla-Silva, 2015). This pattern is very apparent in Anglophone industrialised countries where immigration policies play a critical role in racialising people and labour, shaping how migrants are situated within the labour market and valorising notions of 'race' differences (Anderson, 2013; Carter et al., 1996). Once racialised, migrant workers find themselves

allocated to particular areas of the labour market and confined to particular positions as workers (Anderson, 2013; Collins and Bayliss, 2020). Moreover, through immigration policies, migrants are ranked into hierarchies built around their presumed suitability for assimilating into society, in which some are regarded as more likely to 'fit in' than others (Carter et al., 1996; Webb, 2015). This is also the case in the RSE scheme, which, as we noted earlier, has regulations that have a social quarantining (Horgan and Liinamaa, 2017) effect on the lives of Pacific workers.

Pacific migrant workers entering New Zealand through the RSE scheme are frequently described by RSE employers in positive but limiting ways as reliable, consistent, enthusiastic, and dependable labour (2019 RSE Survey: 18). According to the RSE Survey 2019, "Official RSEs' rated their new Pacific workers significantly higher than they did their new workers from other sources", including Working Holiday Visa holders, domestic workers from Work and Income, and the local community. Further, the Cabinet paper, Increasing the cap for the RSE scheme (2017/2018: 1) noted: "An increase in the number of RSE workers will provide a reliable source of labour to fill expected shortages in the 2017/18 horticulture and viticulture season". Table 1 shows how the Pacific workers are racialized and constructed as more 'enthusiastic', 'dependable', 'productive' and 'suitable' compared to other categories of workers. The attribution of such traits to RSE workers carries positive connotations in relation to their desirability for certain kinds of work but is also clearly articulated through racial stereotyping and labour market segmentation. In such assertions, RSE workers are implicitly compared to other sources of labour, perhaps most notably domestic sources via the Ministry of Social Development, who RSE employers frequently describe as unwilling to work (see Gibson and McKenzie, 2014; Enoka, 2019; Faleolo, 2019; Salanoa, 2020). RSE workers are also distinguished from other temporary migrants who occupy similar spaces – including working holiday visa holders (overwhelmingly from Western countries) and international students (mainly from Asian countries) who are also present in horticulture and viticulture seasonal work. In contrast to RSE workers, working holidaymakers and international students are granted the ability to change employers, work in other occupations and apply for other visas, amongst other freedoms.

Ascribing certain qualities contributes to constructing a prototype of a 'good' worker and/or migrant. Subsequently, a targeted vulnerable group with lower labour market power and autonomy is conceptualised by employers as 'good' workers over local alternatives (see Mackenzie and Forde, 2009). The 'goodness' of RSE workers could also infer compliance with an exploitative system that is more restrictive than any other part of the New Zealand migration regime. As Enoka (2029: iv) puts it, "these seeming positive discourses can be understood as positive to those promoting capitalism and seeking cheap labour, but as positioning Pacific temporary workers as dehumanised commodities in ways that may contribute to undermining their human rights and long-term best interests". It could be argued, a person's willingness to work hard, follow management instructions, and work longer hours when needed constitutes this 'goodness' which, in turn, reproduces exploitative and vulnerable conditions for migrant workers.

Our analysis identifies that RSE and other workers in horticulture and viticulture are socially constructed in racialised ways. Documents that discuss workers draw on the value

Table 1. Employers Describe RSE and Other Categories of Workers and Their Desirability.

Construction	RSE employers' description of pacific RSE and other categories of workers	Source
"Enthusiasm" "Dependability" "Productivity"	*"98% rated them positively for their enthusiasm compared with 10% of new workers sourced from Work and Income. Ninety-six percent rated them positively for their dependability compared with eight percent of workers from Work and Income, and 94% rated them positively for their productivity compared with nine percent of new workers from Work and Income*	*RSE Survey 2019: 18*
"Productivity"	*Here all workers were picking bins of mandarins during the same 7 day period in 2011. We see that the RSE workers are vastly more productive: they picked an average of 54% more fruit per day than New Zealand contract labour, and 82% more than backpackers and working holiday-makers*	*Gibson and McKenzie, 2014*
"Reliability" "RSE workers provide a reliable, productive and certain workforce"	*Because of the conditions of the RSE workers' visas and employment, TandG can be confident that the workers will be available when needed and will work the whole season. Experienced, returning RSE workers require little introduction to the tasks they perform*	*Immigration Fit for the Future: Final Report (April 2022: 43) New Zealand Productivity Commission*

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Construction	RSE employers' description of pacific RSE and other categories of workers	Source
Pacific workers are deemed "suitable" for the physically demanding tasks over the other groups	*These employers considered their Pacific and Asian workers to be suitable for different tasks – the Pacific workers were better suited to the heavier outside work on the orchard, while the Asian workers were more productive in the packhouse. To attain maximum productivity gains, these employers felt a mix labour was preferable, and none wanted to recruit solely from Asia or Pacific*	*C. Bedford (2013: 152)*
"Suitability"	*Even if New Zealand workers continue to seek employment in the seasonal industries, the question of their willingness to undertake or suitability for some roles remains. Employers who are expanding their businesses on the back of productivity gains from the RSE Policy claim that more work will become available for domestic labour in roles that are better suited for New Zealand workers*	*Department of Labour (2010: 16)*

of people across a range of social differences such as in relation to productivity, efficiency, reliability and suitability for work that consistently frame Pacific RSE workers as the most appropriate for horticulture and viticulture labour. This analysis links with Findlay et al.', (2013) assertion that the normative understanding of the characteristics associated with a 'good worker,' may lead to the determination of the suitability of a potential worker for a particular job. Such determinations often occur in an essentialist manner based on preconceptions about categories like age, gender, and 'race' rather than individual merits. This pattern was evident in RSE employers' descriptions of how the Pacific RSE migrant workers are considered more suitable for physically demanding tasks due to being significantly more physically productive[1] as opposed to other categories, such as Asian RSE workers, New Zealand's domestic workers as well as working holidaymakers (see, Gibson and McKenzie, 2014; Enoka, 2019; Faleolo, 2019; Salanoa, 2020). This social construction of Pacific RSE workers echoes wider discourses that create "an underclass pool of Brown labour subject to the whims of New Zealand's economic needs"

(Thomsen 2022: 156). 'New Zealanders' are deemed as less suitable for such physically demanding jobs (Department of Labour, 2010:16) and evaluation reports (Department of Labour, 2012) have cast doubt on the willingness of New Zealanders to undertake seasonal labour because of its conditions, wages, requisites of the task and the incentives on offer. Yet, what none of these discourses account for is the way that the RSE scheme produces racialised workers who must maintain high levels of productivity given the strict conditions under which their mobility operates.

The racialisation of RSE workers is also articulated through the partitioning of RSE policy from other aspects of migration regimes. As a multi-ministry initiative, the RSE is regularly set aside from discussions of other dimensions of the migration regime. The New Zealand Government's Immigration Rebalance Program in 2022, for example, sets RSE matters aside from its general emphasis on improving the economic productivity and wellbeing outcomes of migration for New Zealanders (Future of the skilled migrant category, October 2022). The rebalance emphasises reducing lower-skilled migrants, encouraging domestic employers to improve working conditions and reduce exploitation. According to Government discussion documents, the immigration rebalance "has been designed to make it easier to attract and hire high-skilled migrants, while supporting some sectors to transition to more productive and resilient ways of operating, instead of relying on lower-skilled migrant workers" (Future of the skilled migrant category, October 2022: 8). Such desire to attract highly skilled migrants contrasts notably with developments in the RSE scheme that appear to be directed towards more firmly embedding this highly constrained and clearly racialized form of labour migration. While an RSE scheme review is underway at the time of writing, the total cap for RSE workers was increased to a record 19,000 for the 2022/2023 year at the same time as the immigration rebalance was being initiated in late 2022; the cap was increased again the following year to 19,500 and to 20,750 in the 2024/25 year. The attempt to revamp the immigration system by excluding Pacific circular migration may further reinforce the colonial, racial tonality that underpins the management of Pacific migration. Indeed, while the RSE has been entrenched as a source of low-cost labour that is excluded from society, the immigration regime, more broadly, is pivoting towards the attraction and retention of 'high-skilled' migrants who come from other parts of the world.

Conclusion

Our critical analysis of RSE programme related policy and strategy documents has highlighted three dominant discourses: purported 'co-development,' a deep commitment to technocratic managerialism and the racialisation of Pacific people as good candidates for temporary manual labour. Firstly, while it seems clear that there are monetary benefits for migrant workers participating in the RSE program, describing the scheme as mutually and equally beneficial requires caution. New Zealand exercises significant authority in relation to the RSE. It does so within a paternalistic framing that constrains the choices available to people and governments in Pacific countries under the auspices of 'good governance' that is determined by New Zealand and is, first and foremost, beneficial to this country's horticultural and viticultural sectors. Secondly, in line with international

commitments to migration management, the RSE is characterised as a form of technocratic managerialism that centres sharply on the maintenance of *permanent* temporariness (Collins, 2012), or more accurately, permanent *circulation*, of RSE workers. Rigid regulations that epitomise notions of "regulated openness" and addressing "emigration pressures" (Ghosh, 2007) shape RSE worker mobilities and rights. The strict rules of the scheme combined with short-term circular movements tie people into dependency on RSE-generated income and seasonal livelihoods and social life, securing the supply of accessible, stable, cheap seasonal labour while limiting migration risk through the reduction of migrant rights. Lastly, our analysis has shown how claims of co-development benefits and the feasibility of managerialism are propped up by a racialisation of Pacific people as 'enthusiastic', 'productive', 'suitable', and 'dependable' and thus the ideal workforce for horticultural and viticultural industries. Notably, discursive framings of Pacific RSE workers position them as ideal for physically challenging jobs with low wages and working conditions in relation to working holiday makers, international students, and local workers, who all have more freedom in the labour market. 'Positive' discourses on worker attribution are then a form of benevolent racism that serves to justify the foundation and operation of the RSE (also see, Enoka, 2019; Simpson, 2023).

Informed by the tenets of CRT and an emphasis on the racial dimensions of neoliberalism, our analysis thus demonstrates that the RSE scheme is deeply racialised. This analysis turns attention to how uneven power relations and inequalities generated within the RSE, and arguably in the wider migration system, are underpinned by racism as a systemic, institutionalised and pervasive feature of the New Zealand state's orientation to Pacific countries and peoples. In making the arguments in this paper, we depart from a now well-established series of assessments and evaluations of the RSE, its operational efficiencies and its economic effects (see Gibson and McKenzie, 2014). While such inquiries have value in measuring the outcomes of the RSE, as part of the technocratic management of migration they have largely done so on the terms established within the scheme: development impacts, remittances, employer perceptions about worker suitability, and migration returns.

Our account is distinct from these in that we have developed a critical analysis of the discursive foundation and operation of the RSE scheme, and in doing so, we have identified a preponderance of paternalism, managerialism and racism. While evaluative accounts might suggest tweaks to improve the operation of the RSE programme, our account highlights that the RSE is part of and, in many ways, amplifies the coloniality of New Zealand's relationships with the Pacific. Transformation of the RSE programme thus needs to start with an acknowledgement that labour mobility schemes such as RSE is founded on Eurocentric frameworks. As such, Pacific cultures are frequently whitewashed and silenced, as these schemes are rooted in Western economic models that overlook the cultural values, relational approaches to community and labour, and the lived experiences of Pacific peoples. This also suggests the need for wholesale transformation in the migration system rather than entrenchment through refined managerialism. Transformation of this kind must start from a greater reckoning with the settler colonial foundation of migration policy in New Zealand (Kukutai and Rata, 2017; New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2022) and the histories and present circumstances of this

country's colonial relationships in the Pacific (Mallon et al., 2012; Pickles and Coleborne, 2016). Without that shift in orientation and a genuine focus on partnership and empowerment, the impetus towards improving the RSE will remain the refinement of an unjust system of labour extraction and management.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Evalesi Tu'inukuafe who contributed to this research through organising the data and assisting with preliminary analysis.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: Research work for this paper recieved financial support from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Endeavour Research Programme, 'Working to end Racial Oppression' (UOWX2002) and a University of Waikato Summer Scholarship.

ORCID iD

Rituparna Roy https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6710-6382

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing not applicable to this article.

Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Note

1. Gibson and McKenzie, (2014) measured 'physical' productivity based on the average kg of fruit picked by per person per day.

References

Anderson B (2013) *Us and Them? The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control*. Oxford: OUP.

Andrews K (2021) *The New Age of Empire: How Racism and Colonialism Still Rule the World*. London: Penguin.

Asafo D and Tuiburelevu L (2021) Critical race theory and the law in New Zealand. *Counterfutures* 12: 95–133.

Bacchi C (2000) Policy as discourse: what does it mean? Where does it get us? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 21(1): 45–57.

Ball SJ (1990) *Foucault and Education: Disciplines and Knowledge*. New York: Routledge.

Bauder H (2008) Neoliberalism and the economic utility of immigration: media perspectives of Germany's immigration law. *Antipode* 40(1): 55–78.

Bedford R and Hugo G (2008) *International Migration in a Sea of Islands: Challenges and Opportunities for Insular Pacific Spaces*. Hamilton, New Zealand: University of Waikato, Population Studies Center.

Bedford R, Bedford C, Wall J, et al. (2017) Managed temporary labour migration of Pacific islanders to Australia and New Zealand in the early twenty-first century. *Australian Geographer* 48(1): 37–57.

Bedford CE (2013) *Picking Winners? New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Policy and its Impacts on Employers, Pacific Workers and Their Island-Based Communities (Doctoral dissertation)*. Adelaide, Australia: University of Adelaide.

Bedford C, Bedford R and Nunns H (2020) *RSE Impact Study: Pacific Stream Report*. Wellington: Ministry of Innovation and Employment (MBIE), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Available at: https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/research-and-statistics/research-reports/recognised-seasonal-employer-rse-scheme.

Bedford R and Hugo G (2012) *Population movement in the Pacific: a perspective on future prospects*. Department of Labour, Te Tari Mahi.

Bell DA (1995) Who's afraid of critical race theory. *University of Illinois Law Review* 4(3): 823–846.

Bonilla-Silva E (2015a) The structure of racism in color-blind, "post-racial" America. *American Behavioural Scientist* 59(11): 1358–1376.

Bonilla-Silva E (2015b) More than prejudice: restatement, reflections, and new directions in critical race theory. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1(1): 73–87.

Campbell JL, Quincy C, Osserman J, et al. (2013) Coding in-depth semistructured interviews: problems of unitization and intercoder reliability and agreement. *Sociological Methods & Research* 42(3): 294–320.

Carter B, Green M and Halpern R (1996) Immigration policy and the racialization of migrant labour: the construction of national identities in the USA and Britain. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19(1): 135–157.

Castles S and Ozkul D (2014) Circular migration: triple win, or a new label for temporary migration? In: Battistella G (ed). *Global and Asian Perspectives on International Migration*. Springer. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-08317-9_2.

Coates RD (2023) Critical race theory, neoliberalism, and the illiberal university. *Journal of Critical Race and Ethnic Studies* 1(1): 53–82.

Collins FL (2012) Transnational mobilities and urban spatialities: notes from the Asia-Pacific. *Progress in Human Geography* 36(3): 316–335.

Collins FL and Bayliss T (2020) The good migrant: everyday nationalism and temporary migration management on New Zealand dairy farms. *Political Geography* 80: 102193.

Crenshaw K, Gotanda N, Peller G, et al. (eds) (1995) *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*. New York: The New Press.

Cummings S, De Haan L and Seferiadis AA (2020) How to use critical discourse analysis for policy analysis: a guideline for policymakers and other professionals. *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* 15(1): 99–108.

Davis DA (2007) Narrating the mute: racializing and racism in a neoliberal moment. *Souls* 9(4): 346–360.

De Genova N (2023) A racial theory of labour: racial capitalism from colonial slavery to post-colonial migration. *Historical Materialism* 31(3): 219–251.

De Jong S (2016) Converging logics? Managing migration and managing diversity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42(3): 341–358.

Delgado R and Stefancic J (2023) *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction (Vol. 87)*. New York: New York University press.

Department of Labour (2010) *Final Evaluation Report of the recognised seasonal employer policy (2007-2009)*. Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment document library. Available at: https://www.mbie.govt.nz/document-library/search?keywords=Final+Evaluation+Report+of+the+recognised+seasonal+employer+policy+%282007-2009%29.+++&df=&dt=&sort=desc.

Enoka AJ (2019) *Under the Gaze: A Study of the Portrayal by the New Zealand Print Media of Pacific Island Workers in the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme, 2007- 2012*. PhD thesis. Wellington: Massey University, Wellington New Zealand.

Esposito L and Romano V (2014) Benevolent racism: upholding racial inequality in the name of black empowerment. *Western Journal of Black Studies* 38(2): 69–83.

Fairclough N (2013) *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Faleolo (2019) Wellbeing perspectives, conceptualisations of work and labour mobility experiences of pasifika trans-tasman migrants in brisbane. In: Stead V and Altman J (eds) *Labour Lines and Colonial Power: Indigenous and Pacific Islander Labour Mobility in Australia*. Canberra: Australia National University Press, 185–206.

Findlay A, McCollum D, Shubin S, et al. (2013) The role of recruitment agencies in imagining and producing the 'good'migrant. *Social & Cultural Geography* 14(2): 145–167.

Gamlen A (2010) The new migration and development optimism: a review of the 2009 Human Development Report. *Global Governance* 16: 415–422.

García SJ (2017) Bridging critical race theory and migration: moving beyond assimilation theories. *Sociology Compass* 11(6): e12484.

Gebhard A, McLean S and Denis VS (eds) (2022) *White Benevolence: Racism and Colonial Violence in the Helping Professions*. Manitoba, Canada: Fernwood Publishing.

Geiger M and Pécoud A (2010) The politics of international migration management. In: *The Politics of International Migration Management*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1–20.

Ghosh B (2007) Managing migration: towards the missing regime? In: Pécoud A and de Guchteneire P (eds) *Migration without Borders: Essays on the Free Movement of People*. Paris, New York and London: UNESCO Publishing and Berghahn Books, 97–118.

Gibson J and McKenzie D (2014) The development impact of a best practice seasonal worker policy. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 96(2): 229–243.

Gilbert E (2014) The permanence of temporary labour mobility: migrant worker programs across Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. In: Vosko L, Preston V and Latham R (eds) *Liberating Temporariness: Migration, Work, and Citizenship in an Age of Insecurity*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 152–174.

Goldberg DT (2009) *The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism*. MA, USA: John Wiley and Sons.

Graebner ME, Martin JA and Roundy PT (2012) Qualitative data: cooking without a recipe. *Strategic Organisation* 10(3): 276–284.

Grosfoguel R, Oso L and Christou A (2014) 'Racism', intersectionality and migration studies: framing some theoretical reflections. *Identities: Global Studies in Power and Culture: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 22(6): 635–652.

Guo S (2015) The colour of skill: contesting a racialised regime of skill from the experience of recent immigrants in Canada. *Studies in Continuing Education* 37(3): 236–250.

Hamilton M, Kintominas A and Adamson E (2021) Childcare by migrant nannies and migrant grannies: a critical discourse analysis of new policy solutions for securing reproductive labour in Australian households. *Gender, Work and Organization* 31(4): 1290–1311.

Horgan M and Liinamaa S (2017) The social quarantining of migrant labour: everyday effects of temporary foreign worker regulation in Canada. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(5): 713–730.

Howard-Wagner D (2017) Governance of Indigenous policy in the neoliberal age: Indigenous disadvantage and the intersecting of paternalism and neoliberalism as a racial project. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41(7): 1332.

Howard-Wagner D, Bargh M and Altamirano-Jimenez I (2018) From new paternalism to new imaginings of possibilities in Australia, Canada and Aotearoa/New Zealand: Indigenous rights and recognition and the state in the neoliberal age. *The Neoliberal State, Recognition and Indigenous Rights: New Paternalism to New Imaginings*. Canberra, Australia: ANU Press.

Human Rights Commission (2022) *The RSE Scheme in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Human Rights Review*. Wellington: Human Rights Commission. https://tikatangata.org.nz/.

Jaroszewicz M and Grzymski J (2021) Technocracy revisited: the Polish security dispositif and Ukrainian migration to Poland. *Journal of Contemporary European Research* 17(2): 258–280.

Jaskulowski K and Pawlak M (2022) Middling migrants, neoliberalism and racism. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48(9): 2056–2072.

Kukutai T and Rata A (2017) From mainstream to manaaki: indigenising our approach to immigration. In: Hall D (ed) *Fair Borders? Migration Policy in the Twenty-First Century*. Wellington, New Zealand: Bridget Williams Books, 26–44.

Kundnani A (2021) The racial constitution of neoliberalism. *Race & Class* 63(1): 51–69.

Lawn J and Prentice C (2015) Introduction: neoliberal culture/the cultures of neoliberalism. *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies* 12(1): 1–29.

Lehman C, Annisette M and Agyemang G (2016) Immigration and neoliberalism: three cases and counter accounts. *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* 29(1): 43–79. DOI: 10.1108/AAAJ-09-2013-1470.

Lewis N (2014) Comparative perspective: insights from New Zealand's recognised seasonal employer scheme. *Seasonal Workers in Mediterranean Agriculture*. London, UK: Routledge, 257–263.

Mallon S, Mahina-Tuai KU and Salesa DI (2012) *Tangata o le Moana: New Zealand and the people of the Pacific*. Wellington: Te Papa Press.

Mase V (2023, February 9) *Voices of the Pacific: New Documentary Highlights Realities of Pacific Seasonal Workers*. Wellington: New Zealand Herald. https://www.nzherald.co.nz/talanoa/new-documentary-series-highlights-realities-of-pacific-seasonal-workers/ENWI55HQ65BHRFEBDJC2DGQRIM/.

McCluskey MT (2003) Efficiency and social citizenship: challenging the neoliberal attack on the welfare state. *Indiana Law Journal* 78: 783.

McNevin A, Missbach A and Mulyana D (2016) The rationalities of migration management: control and subversion in an Indonesia-based counter-smuggling campaign. *International Political Sociology* 10(3): 223–240.

Mead LM (1997) The rise of paternalism. In: Mead LM (ed) *The New Paternalism: Supervisory Approaches to Poverty*. Washington: The Brookings Institution.

Neilson M (2023) *Samoa PM calls out NZ and Australia Over 'Pacific Family', Urges EU- Style Free Movement of Labour and Travel*. Wellington: New Zealand Herald. Available at: https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/politics/samoa-pm-calls-out-nz-and-australia-over-pacific-family-urges-eu-style-free-movement-of-labour-and-travel/E2JBKV5OU5CEXJBCIRJL3GFPSM/#:~:text=Michael/Neilsonandtext=A/Pacific/leader/has/called,of/people/around/the/region.

New Zealand Productivity Commission (2022) *Immigration – Fit for the Future*. Welington: New Zealand Productivity Commission. Available at: https://www.productivity.govt.nz/publications/immigration-fit-for-the-future/.

Oke N (2010) Working transnationally: Australian unions and temporary migrant work. Social Alternatives. *Second Quarter* 29(2): 70–75.

Ong A (2006) *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Duke University Press.

Pickles K and Coleborne C (2016) In: Pickles K and Coleborne C (eds). *New Zealand's Empire*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Piper N (2009) The 'Migration–Development Nexus' revisited from a rights perspective. *Journal of Human Rights* 7(1): 282–298.

Ramasamy S, Krishnan V, Bedford R, et al. (2019) The Recognised Seasonal Employer policy: seeking the elusive triple wins for development through international migration. *Pacific Economic Bulletin* 23(3): 171–186.

Roberts DJ and Mahtani M (2010) Neoliberalizing race, racing neoliberalism: placing "race" in neoliberal discourses. *Antipode* 42(2): 248–257.

Romero M (2008) Crossing the immigration and race border: a critical race theory approach to immigration studies. *Contemporary Justice Review* 11(1): 23–37.

Roy R, Uekusa S and Karki J (2021) Multidimensional, complex and contingent: exploring international PhD students' social mobility. *Ethnicities* 21(5): 827–851.

Salanoa H (2020) *The Communicative Competence of Samoan Seasonal Workers under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme*. PhD Thesis. Wellington: Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington.

Simpson A (2023) A "Pacific reset"? locating patterns of race and colonisation in New Zealand's pacific labour, trade and aid relationships. *Te Mata Koi: Auckland University Law Review* 29: 90–122.

Skeldon R (2010) Managing migration for development: is circular migration the answer. *Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 11: 21.

Skeldon R (2012) Going round in circles: circular migration, poverty alleviation and marginality. *International Migration* 50(3): 43–60.

Sönnichsen A (2020) Migration management in the European union: between extraordinary measures and routinized risk management.

Soss J, Fording RC and Schram S (2011) *Disciplining the Poor: Neoliberal Paternalism and the Persistent Power of Race*. Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press.

Stead V (2021) Precarity's reach: intersections of history, life, and labour in the Australian horticultural industry. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 27(2): 303–320.

Thomsen (2022) My husband is Sāmoan, so talofa: the erasive racial politics of Judith Collins. In: Tecun A, Lopesi L and Sankar A (eds), *Towards a Grammar of Race in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 151–164.

United Nations (2006) *International Migration and Development. Report of the Secretary- General, United Nations General Assembly, May 2006*. New York, USA: United Nation.

Wacquant L (2009) *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Waitoki W, Tan K, Roy R, et al. (2024) A critical race analysis of Māori representation in university strategic documents in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 27(4): 538–558.

Wake BM (2022) Service or saviorism: deconstructing benevolent racism in the helping professions. In: *Developing Anti-racist Practices in the Helping Professions: Inclusive Theory, Pedagogy, and Application*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 93–110.

Walters W (2011) Foucault and Frontiers: notes on the birth of the humanitarian border. In: ByulrichbröCkling, Krasmann S and Lemke T (eds) *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*. New York: Routledge, 138.

Ware F, Breheny M and Forster M (2017) The politics of government 'support'in Aotearoa/New Zealand: reinforcing and reproducing the poor citizenship of young Māori parents. *Critical Social Policy* 37(4): 499–519.

Webb S (2015) 'It's who you know not what': migrants' encounters with regimes of skills as misrecognition. *Studies in Continuing Education* 37(3): 267–285.

Wickramasekara P (2011) *Circular Migration: A Triple Win or a Dead End. Global Union Research Network Discussion Paper, (15)*.