



# Navigating Pacific nutrition and health at Brown Buttabean Motivation (BBM): Process evaluation and systems dynamics research at a flax-roots organization

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Brown Buttabean Motivation (BBM) is a Māori and Pacific-driven community-based organisation operating in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) and Tokoroa. It provides free community exercise bootcamps and other social and health support programs. BBM's foundational mission was to reduce, among Māori and Pacific people, the prevalence of obesity in Auckland through exercise and nutrition programs.<sup>1</sup> This study aimed to understand participants' engagement with BBM, and the meaning it has had in their lives, with a focus on nutrition. Combining Pacific Fonofale and Te Whare Tapa Wha frameworks, this was a process evaluation to understand the impact of BBM's services on the community using qualitative methods and a systems analysis to identify program sustainability and improvement. Semi-structured interviews explored the benefits and values of engagement with BBM. Followed by cognitive mapping interviews (CMI) and group model building (GMB) to identify the motivations and challenges of sustained engagement. Participants described holistic health benefits and impacts on community wellbeing. BBM responds to inequitable nutrition contexts, through its FoodShare (food bank), community kitchen, and BBM Kai (nutrition literacy). Engagement changed family nutrition patterns, and benefits included healthier spending habits, and addressing food insecurity. Social inclusiveness represented the Fonofale foundation (family) and the roof (culture) was described as ethnic cultural practices and BBM culture. Nutrition was not highlighted by BBM participants in CMI or GMB activities. However, participants suggested BBM increase nutrition initiatives to enable all members to improve their health journeys. BBM was seen as not just an exercise program but their own and their family's new way of life, that health was a journey, not a destination. Moreover, although participants mentioned nutrition and health benefits, there was an overwhelming understanding that the values of BBM, Pacific culture, and social collectivism were the drivers of engagement, motivating healthier practices. BBM could leverage existing strengths by incorporating nutrition-enabling initiatives that are achieved collectively. Opportunities for systematic intervention will be presented.

## Reference

1. Savila F, Bagg W, Swinburn B *et al.* (2022) *BMC Public Health* 22, 630.