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Conference to boost confidence with use of statistics in research

The use of statistics in research is one area that Fiji National University will need to look at as it moves towards being more of a research-driven organization, in line with the trend among major universities around the world, says an academic.

Assistant Professor Brian Mangum made the comments as the Pacific Conference for Statistics and Information Systems got underway today (Monday) at FNU's College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences on the University Pasifika Campus in Suva.

The week-long conference aims at educating and empowering participants with knowledge and skills in the use of statistics in research studies.

College Dean, Professor Ian Rouse said the conference will help people to better deal with statistics in their research work.

“The conference will challenge people to get over the fear of numbers,” he said.

“Data and information is everywhere and we need to know the importance of information, research and statistics in the place where we live and play.”

The conference is chaired by statistician and academic Dr Mark Griffin, Director of the Australian Agency for Statistics and Information Systems.

Other overseas facilitators at the conference include Dr Chris Barker, president and owner of Statistical Planning and Analysis Services Incorporated and Dr Lionel A Galway, both of the United States.

Dr Griffin said the conference will better equip participants with skills that will help them with research work.

“In terms of the skills that we are learning within the conference, it will help staff with the ability to conduct and collect good data and be able to analyse it with the research they hold,” he said.

Organizing committee member, Assistant Professor Brian Mangum of the College of Medicine's Department of Public Health, said the conference will be a learning opportunity.

“One of the things we are trying to do is we are trying to give staff the ability to closely engage with research centers and become involved in research progress.”

He said the conference will not only upskill staff but will also give them more confidence in using statistics with research findings.

“What we are trying to do is to give people the confidence to not be scared of numbers and to realise that data can be used for good purposes and to build their confidence and ability to engage in research,” he said.

The conference ends on Friday, 21 June.