# Leadership Responses to Giving Effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi for Māori Learners

Learning from the stories of leadership navigating the Policy to Praxis Divide to enact Ka Hikitia and realise Māori potential

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

***Masters of Educational Leadership***

at

**The University of Waikato**

by

**Ngaia Mason**

2026

THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

# Abstract

Despite research on educational leadership, a pressing question remains - to what extent does the interface between policy and praxis, impact the leadership of tumuaki (principal) and kaiako (teacher) Māori (indigenous New Zealander), to effectively create opportunities in education that see Māori advantaged and positioned to reach their potential? This research focuses on understanding how the interface between policy and praxis impacts the leadership of two tumuaki and three kaiako Māori. It seeks to determine how their leadership can effectively implement Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia, to advantage Māori in kura-auraki (mainstream schools) settings.

This small-scale research, grounded in culturally responsive methodology, establishes reflexivity which promotes power sharing relationships to weave together both indigenous and western ways of thinking. By gathering the voices of non-Māori (Pākehā first settlers/and or tauiwi later immigrants) tumuaki, kaiako Māori, ākonga Māori (Māori students), and their whānau (family) in semi-structured interviews as individuals or focus groups, the complexities and intricacies at the interface between policy and praxis begin to be revealed. Their experiences reveal deliberate acts of leadership that encompass multiple leadership positions, differentiated by their varying commitment to mahi tahi (work together through relationships of shared endeavour) and cultural recognition of spaces where mana-motuhake (self-determination) can be enacted.

The need for ākonga Māori success to be at the forefront of intention, action and policy in Aotearoa (New Zealand) underscores these findings - particularly if we are to see change that respects innate capabilities, cultural potential and mutually beneficial relationships that allow spaces for mana-motuhake. This research aims to influence educational leaders with better understandings of how to sustain and embed the values of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia into their kura so that Māori potential is realised. With these understandings, leaders can re-position themselves to more effectively influence and shape the interface between policy, practice and leadership whether they lead in kura-auraki or not.

# Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge my participants. I sincerely thank you for your contributions towards this research. I extend my heartful appreciation to you all for trusting me to share your voices and experiences. I believe that education is in a stronger place because of the contributions you all make daily.

Secondly, to my supervisors Mere Berryman and Margaret Egan, I am forever grateful for the time, patience and understanding you have given me this year. You have taught, challenged, guided, encouraged and grown me in ways I did not think possible, so thank you. This experience stretched me in ways that I know will benefit my learners, my whānau and myself

To my colleagues, thank you for your encouragement and support.

Lastly, to my whānau. Mum, I wish you were still here to read and hear all about the learning embedded in this research, but I am forever grateful for the love of learning you fostered, and the aroha (love) you shared in ensuring we knew we could pursue anything we put our minds to. To the rest of my whānau, thank you for cheering me on right to the very end. And finally, to my husband Leigh and tamariki, Isabella and Fletcher. I will forever be grateful for your grace, understanding, and aroha as you stood beside me ensuring I could complete this journey. You are my greatest supporters and very best friends. I hope that through this journey, you will see that you are capable of anything. It would not have been possible without you so thank you.

# Contents Page

# Chapter One: Introduction

## Introduction

The experiences of those in kura-auraki , differ vastly from those within kura kaupapa Māori (Māori-medium education grounded in mātauranga Māori and Māori epistemologies) settings (Berryman, 2001; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020), wherein students are supported in achieving and "succeeding because of their culture, their identity, their whakapapa (genealogy) - not despite it" (Duckworth et al., 2012, p. 12). Kura-auraki in Aotearoa are English-medium schools, governed by the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). Within kura-auraki, bilingual units or Māori-medium units can operate, however these units work within the distinctive kura-auraki, state-run structure.

Kura kaupapa Māori was a response to the emerging critical consciousness of Māori as they sought to resist the assimilation of state-run educational systems and structures (Katene, 2013; Skerrett, 2010; G. Smith, 2000). There was an increasingly awareness of the "power relations, economic disparities, and ideological persuasion's" (G. Smith, 2000, p.65) placed on them in education. In response Māori decided to design and implement their own systems so that Māori knowledge and epistemologies could advantage their educational outcomes (Bishop, et al., 2014; Skerrett, 2010; G. Smith, 2000). Ākonga Māori in kura kaupapa today, are provided opportunities to develop the skills necessary to confidently exist in both worlds while ensuring they live as Māori (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020, p. 42). This is not always the case for their counterparts in kura-auraki, with many ākonga Māori having to change how they interact to fit in or work harder to meet the academic achievement levels because the contexts for learning are culturally unfamiliar (Berryman, 2001; Bishop, 2009) and often undermining of their own culture (Berryman, 2022). Despite continued emphasis on raising Māori educational achievement in Aotearoa, disparity gaps persist between Māori and non-Māori across the sector (Berryman et al., 2016; Berryman et al., 2024). Although attempts to remedy these gaps have been made through various actions such as the three phases of the Ka Hikitia strategy and policy direction, these divides remain prevalent (Berryman et al., 2024; Bishop, 2009; Bishop & Berryman, 2007).

Furthermore, literature is clear that Māori identity is inextricably woven into ākonga Māori perceptions of self and how successful they feel in identity, culture and whānau connections (Berryman 2001; Duckworth et al., 2021; Rameka et al., 2023; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). The capacity to which this is a lived reality, shapes who they are and how they actively participate in the world around them (Berryman 2001; Rameka et al., 2003; Webber & MacFarlane, 2020). Māori learners' ability to experience and affirm their cultural identity, and achieve their academic potential, should not be contingent on whether they are educated in kura kaupapa or kura-auraki. Ākonga Māori in kura kaupapa are provided with many opportunities to grow and build upon their cultural understandings and values (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020). Therefore, further research needs to be done to support kura-auraki leaders, to create spaces where ākonga Māori can experience their innate capabilities, recognise their cultural potential and enact mana-motuhake. In Bishop's (2008) research, he outlines the need for education to create space for "*mana motuhake* (respect for specialness) ... this message means that Māori language, knowledge, culture and values are normal, valid, and legitimate" (pg. 442). Such research would help to align the experiences of ākonga Māori in kura-auraki, more closely with those in kura kaupapa. If education in Aotearoa seeks to change the narrative for ākonga Māori in kura-auraki so that their potential is seen, valued and enacted, consideration of how education across all sectors, can do better by Māori and for Māori is paramount (Bishop, 2009). Under the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori and non-Māori have shared responsibilities to work together in these spaces.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) (2009) recognised the "widespread aspirations of Māori to live and succeed in te ao Māori, in Aotearoa society and the wider world" (p. 18). Their work to develop Ka Hikitia-Accelerating Success 2013-2017 was their attempt to ensure that equitable outcomes for Māori could be achieved through partnership with whānau and a recognition by education of the unique culture, identity and language they hold (Ministry of Education, [MoE], 2013). The MoE recognised despite their efforts of the past there was a continuing need to ensure Māori could succeed as Māori in education, as attempts to deliver equitable outcomes for Māori were still missing the mark. As such, the third phase of the 2020 Māori education strategy, Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia (MoE, 2020), was created as a cross-agency response to do something different:

> The education system has underperformed for Māori learners and their whānau over an extended period. As a result, Māori learners collectively experience worse education outcomes than other New Zealand learners and are less engaged in our education system. This has significant social, cultural, health and economic impacts for whānau, hapū, iwi, Māori and New Zealand as a whole. (p.5)

This recognition was mirrored at a government level with the establishment of the Education and Training Act 2020 (E&TA 2020) which outlined the accountability held by the Board of Trustees to deliver high-quality and culturally responsive education (Education and Training Act[E&TA] 2020). This policy underscored existing disparities and encouraged education to value cultural identity and knowledge to support Māori success. (MoE, 2020). Unlike previous policies, the E&TA, 2020 explicitly recognised Te Tiriti o Waitangi at both teaching and governance levels (E&TA 2020). It is important to be clear within this thesis what is meant when the treaty is referenced due to the difference in meanings across the two texts, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi. Use of "Te Tiriti" or "Te Tiriti o Waitangi' refers to the English version that was translated into Māori. Use of the "Treaty of Waitangi" or "the Treaty" refers to the version written in English. When written as "the treaty" in lowercase, both Māori and English versions are being referred to. I will explore the significance of the treaty upon education in Chapter Two.

There is increasing global literature recognising the impact of leadership upon the changes to address inequities affecting indigenous groups (Johnson, 2014; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015; Shields, 2012). Berryman et al., (2016), Johnson, (2014) and Lopez, (2015) contend there needs to be a growing critical consciousness by leaders to become more aware of the impacts of structural and cultural issues upon people and culture. It is imperative to examine leadership theory within the scope of this research as "school leaders and teachers have an essential part to play in understanding and either perpetuating or disrupting traditional power relationships within the concept of partnership" (Berryman et al., 2018, p.6). Including the voice of Māori in research, builds cultural empowerment as they become more aware of their strengths, capabilities and cultural values (Berryman et al., 2016). Attempting to understand the leadership interface between policy and praxis and the implications of this upon leadership, this research

aspires to examine the relational and dialogic spaces between participants and researchers. In doing so, it endeavours to determine pathways that illustrate the aspirations embedded in Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia (MoE, 2020) and respond to seminal author Mason Durie's (2017) challenge to education to be a place where Māori identity is endorsed and flourishing.

## My own interest

My interest in this topic of research is a culmination of my academic, professional and personal experiences as a Māori leader in kura-auraki settings. As both a leader of learning and a parent of tamariki Māori, I am acutely aware of the efforts Māori educators often make to reclaim Māori cultural heritage in the face of an education system historically shaped by deliberate acts of assimilation that have continued to marginalise and undermine Māori identity for generations. Right through my own education and learning journey as an adult, and most recently as a Māori education leader, I have reflected and recognised the importance and responsibility these leadership roles afford me to support ākonga Māori to enact their potential in education. It is from this stance that my interest in this research was founded.

It is necessary to consider myself as both and insider and an outsider (L. Smith, 2012) within this research. An insider from my understanding of the nuances, cultural expectations and in some instances the experiences of the Māori participants within this research, as a kaiako Māori leader myself. Simultaneously, I recognise my role as an outsider as I enter the space as a researcher, separate from the experiences of the participants, holding a sense of unfamiliarity to the learning contexts that inform the experiences of the different sectors presented in this study. Acknowledging I may occupy both insider and outsider roles, this research was approached with sensitivity, reflexivity and self-reflection to ensure that my subjectivity towards this research remained authentic.

This research project aims to strengthen the discourse and deepen the understanding of how the interface between policy and praxis influences educational leadership enacted by tumuaki and kaiako Māori. Being Māori, I know the importance of honouring lived experiences to develop understanding and discern meaning. It is from this conceptual understanding that I chose a participatory methodology

to ensure that those involved were valued, honoured and had opportunities to dictate what perceptions they shared. Undertaking this research, I have endeavoured to identify how senior leadership in education can cultivate a leadership interface that brings policy into practice to foster the flourishing of innate capabilities and cultural potential of ākonga Māori. Such leadership can contribute to mana-motuhake "by challenging structural inequalities, and reclaiming and reframing Māori language, knowledge and culture" (Berryman et al., 2022, p. 4).

## Research Question

This study examines the influence of a purposive sample of Māori and non-Māori leaders, their challenges, experiences and successes in bringing about success for Māori. It asks how the school's leadership interface, between the tumuaki and kaiako Māori (and others), influences their implementation of the Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia strategy to ensure Māori learners, enjoy and achieve education success as Māori.

The following sub-questions are also asked to develop a deeper understanding and clarity around the overarching research question:

- How do the leadership actions of kaiako Māori and principals who are non-Māori support Māori succeeding as Māori in general school settings?
- What do leaders in these educational settings, whānau of ākonga Māori and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
- How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

## Thesis overview

This thesis is a compilation of six chapters. Chapter One presents the research background and contexts and poses the research questions. Chapter Two explores literature related to research already existing within this domain. This chapter also considers some shared and differing opinions to understand both global and local research about educational leadership. Chapter Three, presents the methodology used to undertake this research, including a detailed descriptions of the paradigms, research design and

methods used to ensure validity and reliability of the collected data. Ethical concerns and issues of research quality pertaining to this study are also discussed.

In Chapter Four the research findings are presented. These are qualitative in nature and presented through collaborative stories. Using these key findings, insights are discussed about how the leadership interfaces between kaiako Māori and tumuaki are working to ensure Māori learners can be more successful as Māori, in these kura-auraki settings. Finally, Chapter Five discusses these central findings in relation to relevant and existing literature. Closing this thesis is Chapter six which concludes with a summary of the significance, limitations, implications for school leaders and for future research and the final reflections of this research. My aim, in undertaking this research, is that the learnings created from this study will be relevant for others leading within these settings and that these findings might be shared and applied more widely.

# Chapter Two: Literature Review

## Introduction

This research's attempts to understand how the school's leadership interface, between tumuaki and kaiako Māori, influences implementation of the Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia strategy and the E&TA, 2020, to ensure Māori enjoy and achieve education success as Māori. Therefore, exploration of literary works contributing to the current discourses relating to creating spaces where "Māori are enjoying and experiencing education success as Māori" (MoE, 2020, p. 5) is necessary.

This literature review begins by considering the impacts of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, colonisation and the current education policy to establish the context that necessitates this research. The chapter then examines authentic and embodied leadership, to give insights into enacted leadership. Building upon these insights, it will then examine relevant literature on transformative, culturally responsive leadership and leadership change, to explain the implications of these insights for educational leaders. In doing so it will support leaders in understanding how they can respect the innate capabilities and cultural potential of Māori (MoE, 2013, 2020). The chapter will conclude by outlining the development of culturally responsive pedagogy in both national and international contexts and considering what is missing in literature. This literature review aims to develop a deeper understanding of the factors that influence the interface between policy and praxis and, in turn, shape leadership practices and their impact experiences of key stakeholders, Māori.

## Laying out the landscape

### Current predicament

Despite the numerous attempts to create policy and reform documents, such as the first two phases of Ka Hikitia, that aimed to create spaces where Māori were enjoying and succeeding in education, imbalances between achievement level and educational experiences for ākonga Māori still exist (Berryman et al., 2024). Authors such as Berryman et al., (2024), Bishop and Berryman (2007) argue these imbalances are influenced by the systemic biases that inform policy and practice. In many

instances, it is the misunderstanding of culture that creates such biases (Khalifa et al., 2016; L. Smith, 2006). Ford (2013) adds to these insights when they contend that Māori no longer accept that education positions them in a place where culture means indifference. Rather, the goal of education should ensure Māori can live as Māori (Durie, 2003). Therefore, the impacts of colonisation must be considered if leaders wish to ensure the expectations embedded in both Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia (MoE, 2020) and the E&TA 2020 (E&TA 2020), are to become practice (Berryman et al., 2024). Understanding these impacts, begins at considering the historical influences upon educations battle in creating equitable experiences for Māori in education.

## Te Tiriti o Waitangi

One of the greatest influences on Māori education experiences is how Te Tiriti has been interpreted across history. Te Tiriti is viewed by both the E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia as a foundational document to which education was required to give practical effect (E&TA 2020). Signed on February 6th, 1840, in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, the treaty was a response to the impacts of the rapid immigration of settlers to Aotearoa and the need for Māori and European to work together. Māori Rangatira (chiefs) considered Te Tiriti as a document symbolising the partnership between two nations. As per Henry Williams's translation of the Treaty of Waitangi into te reo, Māori believed the intention behind this declaration was to ensure mana ōrite (equal rights) whereby both groups shared responsibility for upholding the mana of the other (Berryman et al., 2018). They (Māori) believed they would be responsible for looking after their people, and the British responsible for settlers. Although this treaty became the founding document of Aotearoa, to this day the remains heavily contested as to how the interpretation of the Māori and English versions should be acted on (Berryman et al., 2018; Berryman, 2022b, Evans, 2020).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi outlines the context to which the Crown, iwi and Māori relationships began. Both the E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia emphasise the need to engage and build connection with iwi and whānau to ensure equitable outcomes for Māori can be achieved (E&TA 2020; MoE, 2020). It is important to reflect upon these early interactions and expectations of Māori and non-Māori as they establish the relationship from which everything was built from. Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia frame the strategy as the "ability of education agencies and education services to give practical effect to the

Kāwanatanga roles in Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (MoE, 2020, p. 8). The purpose of the E & TA, 2020 includes "establishing and regulating an education system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori-Crown relationships" (E&TA 2020, s. 9). Clearly for both the policy and Act, the presence of Te Tiriti o Waitangi indicates a desire from policy makers to ensure that Aotearoa's foundational document remains central within education.

The difference between honouring, enacting and giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi has been shaped by the interpretations of the language used across different ministry, policy and Act documents. The first phase of Ka Hikitia positioned the importance of the Treaty as "a valued relationship management tool, symbolic of our past and central to our future" (MoE, 2009, p. 9). In valuing the Treaty, it framed the response required as an honourable inward acknowledgement. The second phase of Ka Hikitia aimed to give expression to "how the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (the treaty) are applied in education" (MoE, 2013, p. 14). This language emphasised the efforts of enacted collaboration in bring about education equity for ākonga Māori to bringing about success for ākonga Māori as Māori (MoE, 2013). Differing from both these earlier depictions of intention was the third phase of Ka Hikitia which moved from simply valuing the Treaty to placing Te Tiriti o Waitangi within its guiding principles so that "we will give practical effect to Te Tiriti  Waitangi in the education system" (MoE, 2024, para.2). Supported by the establishment of the E&TA, 2020 which outlined that although honouring Te Tiriti was paramount (E&TA, 2020, s.4, s.9, s.32) educational leaders and boards also now had "responsibility to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (E&TA 2020, s.9). The language now shifted to requiring an internal and outward structural shift by governance that would ensure all Māori were experiencing equitable education (ET&A, 2020). As Jones et al., (2024) contends "the meaning, and intent of Te Tiriti cannot be manipulated. Education must reflect this legacy by teaching our true history, fostering understanding and unity" (p. 121). Such action would require a deep structural shift in both the mindsets and actions of educational leaders (Freire, 1970; Shields, 2010).

### Te Tiriti Articles

This research requires the understanding of the Te Tiriti Articles that place Te Tiriti obligations as legally binding. As explained by the E&TA, 2020:

- Kāwanatanga (honourable governance) is to be the opportunity for Māori to have a voice in all levels of governance through involvement in decision making.
- Rangatiratanga (self-determination) is the recognition of the rights of Māori to have agency, and choice in what happens in education.
- Ōritetanga (equity) is the co-designing of education with Māori, for equitable outcomes.

Acknowledgement of these Articles in legislation recognises the impact these should have upon educational action (E&TA 2020; MoE, 2020).

While Te Tiriti o Waitangi was understood by Māori as an opportunity to establish a mutual understanding of how two nations could work together, the interpretation of two different translations created two very different lived experiences (Berryman, 2022b). Te Tiriti o Waitangi therefore cannot be considered in isolation from the impacts of colonisation. These impacts of colonisation established unbalanced power relationships that impacted Māori ability to enact their cultural ways of being and altered the understanding of unity (Berryman, 2022; Rameka et al., 2023; G. Smith, 2000). These impacts continue to influence the structural and leadership practices within education in Aotearoa today (Berryman et al., 2018; Berryman, 2022; Berryman, 2022b).

## The Impact of Colonisation

The influence of colonisation upon Māori success as Māori, is evident across publications addressing educational contexts for Māori within Aotearoa (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Highfield & Webber, 2021; G. Smith, 2000; Severinson et al., 2020). Bishop and Berryman (2007) refer to it as the continuous attempts to censor actions towards equitable outcomes and relations in education. L. Smith (2006) claims these impacts of colonisation to be the continuing evidence positioning Māori as socially and economically disadvantaged through the opinions, expectations and judgments of Pākehā who misunderstand the cultural ethos of Māori. Berryman (2008) claims these impacts to be the stripping of self-determination rights and influence upon how Māori feel they can “determine one’s cultural, social, economic and political destiny” (p. 4). In terms of educational impacts, colonisation led to models and structures of education that “by design, served to disproportionally oppress Māori learners by undermining and removing their culture, beliefs, and epistemologies” (Berryman et al., 2024, p. 3).

Addressing these impacts from colonisation requires a fundamental shift in power dynamics, leadership action and pedagogy (Battiste, 2000; Berryman et al., 2017b; G. Smith, 2000). With education becoming increasingly more complex as people bring their differing perspectives, the need for the education system to create shifts in power dynamics, curriculum and pedagogy is more imperative (Battiste, 2000; Berryman et al., 2024). These changes in power dynamics, curriculum and pedagogy are necessary to address the ongoing effects of colonisation and attempt to improve outcomes for indigenous learners (Battiste, 2000; Berryman et al., 2017b; Bishop & Berryman, 2007; McCarty & Lee, 2014).

Castagno et al. (2008) cast the net wider into an international landscape. While Castagno et al., (2008) focus primarily on Native American experiences, their findings are relevant to the indigenous groups here in Aotearoa. They claim that because of colonisation, indigenous groups have had to adapt and adjust throughout time to survive (Castagno et al., 2008). This is echoed in McCarty and Lee (2014) in their request for educational leaders to "recognize the need to reclaim and revitalize what has been disrupted and displaced by colonization" (p. 103). Castagno et al. (2008) and McCarty and Lee (2014) focus on the impact of colonisation upon indigenous groups whereas Battiste (2000), Khalifa et al. (2016) and Kincheloe et al. (2016) focus on the change required for such circumstances. Despite differing perspectives, these authors share a desire to see societies that support indigenous groups to reach their full potential. To do so, requires a fundamental shift in power relationships and dynamics (Battiste, 2000; Castagno et al., 2008; Khalifa et al., 2016).

## Recognition of the need for change

Education is considered by many to serve as a means for improving society. It allows the opportunity for educators to work towards the goal of equipping new generations to become active members of a global world (Begley, 2012; Freire, 1998; Ladson & Billings, 1995; Shields et al., 2002). Ākonga within kura kaupapa schooling are often given greater opportunities to simultaneously be active members of both te ao Māori and the wider society (Berryman, 2001; Duckworth et al., 2021; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). This is not always the experience of ākonga Māori within kura-auraki settings (Berryman et al., 2018; Berryman et al., 2024; Bishop & Berryman, 2007).

In 2009, The MoE recognised the desires of Māori to live and succeed as culturally strong citizens of society. They responded through policy. Through the establishment of first iteration of Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success, the MoE emphasised a need to reshape the existing system to better engage ākonga Māori and hopefully reduce the disparity gaps (Bishop & Berryman, 2007; MoE, 2009). This first phase of Ka Hikitia was believed to be the approach necessary to change attitudes, shift practice and improve educational outcomes for ākonga Māori (MoE 2009).

With the rate of change to shift achievement levels not nearly quick enough (Berryman et al., 2016; Bishop & Berryman, 2007) the *Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success* document followed. The MoE hoped it would ensure equitable outcomes for ākonga Māori by "ensuring that all Māori students, their parents and their whānau participate in and contribute to an engaging and enjoyable educational journey that recognises and celebrates their unique identity, language and culture" (MoE, 2013, p. 12). The focus now moved to delivering a cross-sector shift through the partnership of transition from early childhood education to tertiary education (MoE, 2013). However, despite these initiatives progress and disparity levels of achievement between Māori and non-Māori were still resoundingly evident (Berryman et al., 2016; Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Office of the Auditor-General, 2013).

## Policy as a turning point

Recognising that education still was not meeting the mark for ākonga Māori the New Zealand Government responded with new policies they believed would remedy the predicament by establishing the E&TA, 2020. Differing from its predecessors, the E&TA, 2020 established mandatory accountability at both governance and teaching levels. This policy placed Te Tiriti o Waitangi at the center. This Act required schools to give effect to Te Tiriti by showing an appreciation towards cultural knowledge and identity, built upon high quality and culturally responsive educational experiences (E&TA 2020). This shift in focus indicated the beginning of an important turning point in the expectations of school leaders and Board of Trustees in honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Previous approaches to policy enabled schools to respond through relational and culturally responsive practice (Berryman, 2022). The establishment of the E&TA, 2020 reframed Te Tiriti from being simply enactment through goodwill, to now being required to give effect to Te Tiriti as a statutory obligation at governance and structural levels (Berryman, 2022; Berryman, 2022b).

Alongside this policy, was the introduction of the third phase of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia. This third phase sought to make these obligations viable by strengthening and aligning education through guiding principles that would become the core of visions and overall approaches to education (Berryman, 2022b; MoE, 2020). Supporting the Act with Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, hoped to align "vision, purpose and action within our education system to support Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori" (MoE, 2020, p. 5).

However, Berryman (2022) suggests that while this government response through policy represented a powerful opportunity for change, the way in which it is interpreted and responded to by leadership, remains varied. Berryman (2022b) contends that "while respectful relationships can address the culture of the school or centre, there is also the need to change power-relations and resource allocations that reflect the structural response of wider society" (p. 173). Not doing so, risks Māori continuing to have to advocate for the opportunities already assured to them in legislation (Berryman, 2022; Berryman, 2022b). Responding effectively to these mandated changes requires an understanding that changes must begin at governance levels and must begin with deep reflection on the intergenerational inequities imposed by colonisation (Berryman, 2022). Learning contexts where this responsibility is misplaced and reliant heavily on the goodwill and relational practice, risks limiting the transformative opportunities embedded in these reforms (Berryman, 2022b, Shields, 2012).

Exploring literature that outlines policy as an opportunity for transformative reform provides an important foundation for understanding how the leaders interpret and enact leadership, according to responsibilities under the E&TA, 2020. Despite this legislative shift being clear, Berryman (2022b) suggests that policy implementation obligations vary in response. Often, they become reliant on leaders' understanding of "power, privilege and position to promote social justice" (Berryman, 2022b, p. 174). Berryman (2022) contends that policy implementation cannot be a rigid process. Instead, she highlights that leadership decisions, whether they be within schooling or political landscapes, negotiate how Te Tiriti obligations are supported using their authority (Berryman, 2022). This distinction is central to this study as it examines the responses of how the leadership interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori,

shapes the implementation of the Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia strategy to ensure Māori enjoy and achieve education success as Māori.

## Opportunity for Transformative Change

Lopez (2015) and Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008) suggest the transformative opportunities of reform are influenced by the many differing epistemologies that make up the world views of those involved. This claim is strengthened by Horsford, Grosland and Gunn (2011) who promote that "the social and cultural contexts of today's schools are diverse in ways that require greater attention to the educational philosophies, epistemologies, and perspectives of school leaders" (p. 582). Fullan (1993) alludes to the impact of these differing epistemologies upon leadership action when contending teaching must cultivate practice beyond the mechanics of teaching. The complexities of such action captured by Freire (1998) who explains that "we must build on our intuitions and submit them to methodical and rigorous analysis so that our curiosity becomes epistemological" (p.48).

It is necessary for all stakeholders in education to consider the influence of these differences upon action in education (Fullan, 1993; Lumby, 2012; Shields, 2012). For those in Aotearoa the challenge lies within both western and Māori world perspectives colliding in educational spheres. As leaders are challenged to weave together the differing epistemological ideologies, we are cautioned of the multifaceted, complex and therefore unpredictable nature of policy reforms (Fullan, 1993). Unfortunately, many endeavours to establish policies and practice that have the cultural capabilities of indigenous groups at the forefront, have fallen short because of lack of understanding of these different worldviews (Fullan, 1993; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 2008; Lumby, 2012). Policy and praxis must therefore be designed in ways that recognise, nurture, and foster these perspectives so that outcomes for indigenous learners are equitable (Bishop, 2006; Bishop & Berryman, 2017; Fullan, 1993; Khalifa et al., 2016).

Instead of remaining inadequate in action and therefore not receiving positive outcomes, Shields (2012) encourages educational leaders to be flexible to accommodate the changing times, society and contexts they are faced with. It is generally the gap between policy and practice that hinders great change from occurring (Bishop, 2006; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Shields, 2012). Put simply, progress towards remediating these inequities in experiences, is constrained by indifference between vision, execution

and understanding (Lumby, 2012). Educational leaders need to reflect upon the inevitable change required and adjust expectations, decisions and actions accordingly (Shields, 2012). Effective implementation of policy is one way these adjustments can become practice (Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Cooper, 2009; Lumby, 2012).

The historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, combined with a myriad of attempts to create policies that are entrenched in the political and systemic structures, have continued to create inequitable learning experiences for Māori (Berryman et al., 2017b, Bishop & Berryman, 2017; L. Smith, 2006). Exploring these structural and cultural challenges, highlights the need for leadership that can effectively manage complex, and debated educational environments. However, it should be noted that it was difficult to find many examples of literature specifically focused on exploring how policy, aimed to address these impacts of colonisation, is practically implemented in praxis within Aotearoa and kura-auraki; in particular, how the interface between policy and praxis can work effectively through enacted leadership, to benefit and advantage ākonga Māori. This is not to say the arguments presented by the different authors cannot be valid for the context in Aotearoa. Quite the contrary, as many works provide examples of explicit educational experiences within Aotearoa (Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Berryman et al., 2018; Berryman & Eley, 2017; G. Smith, 2000). However, what it does suggest is the need for more research that explicitly explores the practices involved at the interface between policy and praxis. By laying out the landscape of this educational landscape, we can situate the discussion of what literature defines as effective leadership in education.

## Effective Leadership

Leadership styles and values can serve as a catalyst for positive and negative change depending on the dispositions of those in leadership (Cooper, 2009; Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Khalifa et al, 2016; Shields, 2012). Fullan (2020) describes such influence to be the way in which leaders understand, and anticipate the nuances woven into society. When exerting authority as organisational drivers, leaders should consider themselves to be “coherence makers in complex times” (Fullan, 2020, p. xi). It is no longer simply about enacting action because of the title you hold. Rather, leaders should reflect upon their

capacity to continually increase their sophistication in thinking and action, alongside balancing the organisational needs and external influences (Fullan, 2020; Bishop, 2006; Shields, et al., 2002).

When reform is placed upon education, leaders must change parameters and expectations according to situations (Fullan, 2003). In doing so, they will have greater opportunity to enrich the experiences of those involved. How leaders choose to navigate these changes, interact with people, and take action - enact their leadership - may determine or change the experiences of those within these contexts (Bishop, 2006; Fullan, 2020; Shields, et al., 2002).

## Enacted leadership that Creates Spaces

The consideration of the impact of enacted leadership upon the experiences of others, prompts reflection on the interactive nature of enacted leadership. Branson and Marra (2019) posit the idea of leadership as a relational phenomenon. “One cannot create such a holistic relational and socially influential culture without being personally relational and socially involved” (Branson & Marra, 2019, p. 85). This interrelated phenomenon Branson and Marra (2019) speak of, is echoed by Crawford (2010) who contends leadership action to be manifested in the lives of those who lead. There is a direct correlation between leadership and consciousness informed by personal experiences. Effective leadership is not simply about giving orders to those around you. It is embedded in the way leaders model leadership (Branson & Marra, 2019; Crawford, 2010). Enacted leadership that allows space for others, comes to fruition when leaders integrate and embody the attributes necessary to bring about the desired change they wish to make (Branson & Marra, 2019; Crawford, 2010; Giles & Morrison, 2010).

Katene (2013) captures a Māori perspective of these sentiments, and draws our attention to the context of Aotearoa;

> today’s leaders need the traits and capabilities of leaders throughout history: an eye for change, a steadying hand to provide both vision and reassurance that change can be mastered, a voice that articulates the will of the people and shapes it to constructive ends, and an ability to inspire by

> force of personality while making others feel empowered and use their abilities (p. 1).

Effective leadership, through the lens of te ao Māori, is enacted when a leader is attuned to the worlds of those they lead, enacts leadership that upholds the mana of all people and engages with others through reciprocal relationships (Katene, 2013). These leaders ensure the respect of innate capabilities and support Māori to see and enact their cultural potential as Māori (Averill & McRae, 2019; Katene, 2013; Skerrett, 2010). It requires of them a sense of resoluteness as they hold tight to a vision that has the needs of others at the forefront. Moreover, leaders who enact these capabilities provide opportunities for others to step up into their leadership capabilities (Katene, 2013). If leaders aspire to lead in this way, they must practice humility, establish relationships to understand the desires of others, continually reflect on contextual needs, and shape discourses in ways that equip all people, Māori and tauiwi (non-Māori), to enact their potential (Averill & McRae, 2019; Katene, 2013; Skerrett, 2010).

Contrastingly, Lumby and English (2009) offer an alternative narrative of this relational phenomenon of enacted leadership. They suggest enacted leadership is a dynamic process (Lumby, 2009). Leaders can influence action, while simultaneously being influenced *by* action. Contemporary leaders who are navigating the interface between policy and praxis, must be reflective and flexible as they seek to understand the nuances and subtleties of the spheres they influence (Lumby & English, 2009). Furthermore, values can be applied situationally and relatively to the task at hand but are not always stable. Therefore, leaders must consider how their personal values are influencing their leadership decisions (Lumby & English, 2010). The strength of this contention is echoed in the earlier proposition that leaders need to consider how the dispositions of those in leadership influence and affect change (Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Khalifa et al, 2016; Shields, 2012). In leadership, personal consciousness heavily influences the dynamic nature of interactions and therefore the extent to which policy can become praxis (Cooper, 2009; Shields, 2012). Leaders who seek to enact leadership that allows for space where others can flourish, should ensure they are continually reflecting upon their personal convictions and their relational experiences as they enact leadership (Branson & Marra, 2019; Cooper, 2009; Shields, 2012).

Giles and Morrison (2010) aptly capture this argument in their statement that “leadership is not firstly a concept, role, position or power, but a phenomenon” (p. 65). Giles and Morrison (2010) join with Katene (2013) in emphasising that enacted leadership is characterised by the dynamic interactions and relationships that involve people. They echo what is consensually portrayed across the literary works. That is; the necessity for leaders to be aware of the reciprocal and dynamic nature of leadership, ensuring their actions remain consistent with their character and are reflected in their interactions with others (Branson & Marra, 2010; Crawford, 2010; Giles & Morrison, 2010).

## Characteristics attributed to Enacted Leadership

The preceding discussion necessitates consideration of effective characteristics identified in literature as essential in supporting leaders in navigating the dynamic phenomenon of leadership. Effective leadership practice that is dynamic in nature, and effectively curated, is outlined by some authors (Begley, 2001; Branson, 2007; Duignan, 2020; George, 2003) to require Authentic Leadership. George (2003) defines Authentic Leadership as the way leaders hold genuine desire to serve the needs of those they lead, and how their hearts desire informs practice and action. Those who lead with authenticity, align their leadership style with the values and virtues they espouse from their core. These leaders ensure they “act on that awareness by practicing their values and principles” (George et al., 2007, p. 130).

Begley (2006) extends the parameters of Authentic Leadership to consider the synergy of leadership that occurs when these genuine attributes are combined with a receptiveness towards others. Through Authentic Leadership the values and orientations of others, are more likely to bring about positive social objectives as they join in (Begley, 2006). This requires leaders to make spaces for others to enact their own capabilities through authentic and mutually beneficial relationships. In doing so, those around them feel like they can voice their desires and concerns and know they will be dealt with (Begley, 2006; George, 2003; Katene, 2013). Begley (2010), Branson (2007) and Giles and Morrison (2010) contend these mutually beneficial relationships require authenticity, whereby intention is revealed by observable action. Action must not be considered in isolation but in conjunction with the leader's intentions and heart (Begley, 2006; George, 2003; Giles & Morrison, 2010). Thus, it is imperative leaders consider how

they enact Authentic Leadership and reflect upon the influence of their own values and principles (Begley, 2006; George, 2003; George et al., 2007). Through such practice, they can be better supported in navigating an interface between policy and praxis, so that respect is authentically given to the innate capabilities and cultural potential of others.

Duignan (2020) captures the complexity of this embodied leadership style, arguing that leadership is shaped by uncertain and rapidly changing contexts. This is particularly relevant to the context of Aotearoa, where educational settings are often impacted by policy and the ongoing effects of colonisation. Duignan (2020) cautions readers to recognise the complexities of these changing contexts while offering a slight reprieve from the weight of these expectations:

> Authenticity, however, is not about behaving like saints, or pious, self-righteous people, it is about ordinary everyday people who are credible, earthly, practical and, despite their human frailties, strive to be ethical, caring and conscience-driven in the real world. They don't always get it right, but they try to live their values to the best of their ability; they make mistakes, but they learn from them. (p. 38)

The necessity to consider how enacted and embodied leadership supports leaders in navigating and curating the dynamic phenomenon of leadership is further justified by Leroy et al., (2015). They draw attention to the interplay between leaders and followers founded upon a notion of authenticity. Leroy et al., (2015) argue it is imperative to consider the active role of the follower as leaders attempt to establish reciprocal relationships. There needs to be equal consideration between integrity and credibility to ascertain the trust of those whom they lead illustrated through transparency, confidence, robustness and consistency in both their actions and proclamations (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bhindi et al., 2008). Such statements emphasise the reciprocal nature of leadership in which Begley (2006) refers to as the dynamic synergy, outlined earlier.

Furthermore, where Bhindi et al., (2017) differentiate themselves from other key voices is their recognition of enacted leadership leading the way towards transformative leadership. They argue enacted leadership becomes transformative in nature as leaders weave together the attributes of authentic and embodied leadership to transform the organisation and those in it (Bhindi et al., 2017). Leaders who work in this way, carefully consider the needs of the followers, with clear purpose, vision and intellectual ideas, reflecting upon how they can bring those things together effectively.

Collectively, these literary works emphasise that when examining the interface between leadership and praxis, it is necessary to reflect upon how leadership is embodied, and how dynamic interactions shape practice (Begley, 2006; Branson & Marra, 2019; Giles & Morrison, 2010; Leroy et al., 2015). These understandings of the characteristics and practices of effective leadership provide the groundwork for considering the implications for educators. The characteristics of enacted leadership such as authentic leadership and embodied leadership highlight the dispositions required of leaders if they wish to foster equitable environments for Māori. These discussions lead to reflection upon whether authentic leadership and embodied leadership are separate from each other, or instead reflections of the same thing, differentiated by the language used to define them. Nevertheless, the literature highlights the skills and strategies leaders must exhibit to navigate their learning spaces. These understandings open the discussion for exploring the implications of these findings for leadership practice.

## Leadership Implications for Enacting Change for the Success of Ākonga Māori

Enacting leadership that brings about effective change is complex and involves various considerations. When reflecting upon how it leads to the creation of spaces wherein Māori can achieve success as Māori, research provides pivotal insights. The following section examines literature discourses that provide these insights while delving into the implications for leaders.

### Conscientisation versus Meritocracy

Freire (1970) offers the idea of conscientisation as the requirement of people to develop a critical awareness of the imbalances of structural inequity and demonstrate commitment to acting against it. From an educational perspective conscientisation supports leaders in considering people as subjects

rather than objects, as they critically reflect upon their own self, and reality to determine how they should act in response to these structural inequities (Bishop et al., 2007; Frier, 1970). In contrast, meritocratic assumptions place emphasis on success as being determined by the hard work and efforts of individuals (Allen, 2011; Young, 1958). Allen's (2011) critique of meritocracy frames success as dependent upon ability and effort and therefore equality is justified. However, such assumptions can mask the structural inequities that exist within organisations as responsibility is placed upon individuals rather than embedded organisational conditions.

## Enacting Transformative Leadership

Shields (2012) offers a definition of transformative leadership that inherently links it to social justice and the motivation of those in leadership positions. Shields (2012) posits that;

> Transformative leadership (not to be confused with transformational leadership) is a critical approach to leadership grounded in Freire's (1970) fourfold call for critical awareness or conscientization, followed by critical reflection, critical analysis, and finally for activism or critical action against the injustices of which one has become aware. (p. 11).

Those who wish to lead in a transformative manner, aspire to foster change that sees the potential of people realised, self-reflection practiced, and equitable and inclusive environments strived for (Cooper, 2009; Freire, 1970; Shields, 2012). Furthermore, Berryman et al., (2014) and Shields (2012) attest to transformative leadership requiring critical inquiry of personal beliefs, values and practices. Leaders need to undergo their own conscientisation, resistance and transformative praxis at a personal level It requires a continual attitude towards learning and growth. Leaders who adopt this position of leadership recognise that change is not contingent upon extensive resources, particular skills or aptitudes, but on a vision that places innate potential at the forefront (Shields, 2012). While Shield's (2012) provides a comprehensive model of transformative leadership, it primarily focuses on Western contexts, rather than the cultural considerations required for Aotearoa.

Berryman et al., (2014) brings this model into Aotearoa contexts. They add to this conversation in their depiction of transformative leadership being enacted when leaders understand the inappropriate uses of power and privilege, therefore seeking to challenge and change these perspectives in their own practice. When transformative leadership is enacted, there is evidence of personal accountability and promotion of social justice that seeks to enlighten society. "Transformative leaders clearly recognise the responsibility to promote social justice; therefore, this personal interest is explicitly connected to the development of knowledge" (Berryman et al., 2014, p. 44). Leaders who work in this transformative manner actively seek to work alongside others, embedding and sustaining culturally responsive and relational practice (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2010; Shields, 2012).

What is noteworthy, is that Shields (2012) echoes the earlier literary voices on Authentic Leadership (Begley, 2006; George, 2009; Giles & Morrison, 2010). It is a paramount leaders gain the trust of those they lead (Bhindi et al., 2017; George, 2009; Shields, 2012). Shield's (2012) strengthens this argument in her suggestion that transformative leaders combine authentic leadership, collaboration and reciprocal relationships, with attending to the sustainable and mutually beneficial goals of the collective. These goals must aspire for social justice and be collaborative and participatory in approach (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2012).

Furthermore Shields (2010) outlines the intricacies involved when enacting transformative leadership because of the ever-changing political, economic and social contexts of education. As argued in Shields (2010):

> Transformative leaders, who focus both on critique and promise, do more than bemoan current failures and tinker around the edges of deep and meaningful reform... they act courageously and continuously to ensure more equitable learning environments and pedagogical practices for all children (p. 584).

Transformative leadership occurs when there are a blending of moral and broad purposes of education and deconstructing or reconstructing frameworks which allow for alternative ways of thinking and knowing (Cooper, 2009, Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Shields, 2012). Leaders need to carefully and effectively balance, reconstruct and enact these different ways of thinking and knowing. By doing so they can meet the needs that mandate the deep and equitable change asked of them (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2010).

Adding to these insights is Freire (1998). Freire (1998) strengthens this commentary on transformative leadership (Shields et al., 2002; Shields, 2012) as he persists that effective leaders are aware of the ecological, social and economic influences of the contexts they find themselves in. Shields et al., (2012) builds upon Freire's (1998) insight by reminding leaders to exercise caution to ensure that policies and practice are not inhibited by the influence of the outside. At the center of interactions and directions should be the promotion of equitable and inclusive experiences for all that are grounded upon a balance of power (Cooper, 2009; Dantley & Tillman, 2010; Shields, 2012). Enabling change to occur, where the primary focus is the social needs of a group, requires one to be driven by a greater sense of moral purpose (Cooper, 2009; Dantley & Tillman 2010; Shields, 2012). Hoppe and Nadmar (2024) consider this shared understanding to be the *reframing of the system.* They call for the society to place education as the most important goal if we are to move towards a reality of sustainability and transformative action (Hoppe & Namdar, 2024). Transformative leadership can be the way forward if enacted effectively and authentically (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2010, 2012).

Considering indigenous education globally, transformative leadership supports leaders to bring about social change by disrupting the dominant discourses that focus on privilege and power (Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015; Shields, 2010). Leaders adopting a position of transformative leadership demonstrate a commitment to advocating for the inclusion of previously marginalised groups (Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015; Shields, 2010). This type of leadership is seen when “socially just leaders embed in their work philosophical beliefs and systemic practices that challenge the status quo” (Lopez, 2015, p. 174).

Transformative leadership that seeks to disrupt the power imbalances in Aotearoa, is evident in the unified voices of educational leaders' collective efforts to address and confront the systemic biases which exist resulting from colonisation (Berryman et al., 2015; Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Highfield & Webber, 2021). In the context of Aotearoa, it asks for inclusivity, where the world of the learners becomes central to the vision, goals and actions to ensure all can flourish regardless of their cultural identities (Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Dantley & Tillman, 2010). Inherently, transformative leadership within Aotearoa seeks to create paradigm shifts (Averill & McRae, 2019). It requires courageous leaders committed to working together, often in the face of political opposition, to rectify the wrongs of the past to deliver equitable experiences (Berryman et al, 2015; Cooper, 2010; Highfield & Webber, 2012; Shields, 2010).

Although there is complexity in using a transformative leadership approach for enacting change (Fullan, 1993; Shields, 2012), it is important to be aware of the contextual resistance and systemic biases that may influence change (Shields, 2012). By recognising this, leaders can become changemakers as they seek to ensure social and just change is central to the decision-making process (Cooper, 2010; Dantley & Tillman, 2010). Any changes should be made in incremental ways to ensure there is widespread support from across the organisation (Hubers, 2020). Hohepa (2013) contributes a relevant insight to this discussion by outlining that any change that seeks to foster Māori success, calls for a parallel consideration of indigenous ways to create and enact change. She advocates that effective leadership requires an understanding of the aspirations and approaches of those for whom change is being enacted. It is clear from this exploration of literature, that transformative leadership is important if leaders wish to navigate the complex social and political dimensions of education. Building on this, is the idea of culturally responsive leadership that extends these conversations by bringing the cultural identities and cultural context of learners to the forefront.

## Enacting Culturally Responsive Leadership

To enact social justice through quality leadership, leaders must also adopt culturally responsive practices that affirm and sustain the cultures of indigenous groups, rather than imposing dominant cultural norms (Horsford et al., 2011; Johnson, 2014; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015). According to Khalifa et al., (2016), culturally responsive leadership can be defined as "the ability of school leaders to create contexts and curriculum that respond effectively to the educational, social, political, and cultural needs of students"

(p. 1278). Khalifa et al., (2016) contend culturally responsive leadership to be a receptive mantle in which leaders engage in the world of those around them to promote change that serves the needs of their community. It is as much about the deliberate actions, as it is about changing those actions in response to the needs of the minorities. Moreover, their discussion highlights the intricacies that lie within this approach, including the merging of differing ideologies, as leaders make change (Khalifa et al., 2016). Leadership responsibility in this manner requires the act of crossing cultural borders as they perform cultural work (Cooper, 2009).

Johnson (2014) and Lopez (2015) introduce a different discursive framing of culturally responsive leadership as a dynamic process that connects directly with repositioning indigenous groups as agentic. Leaders who work in this way can be considered as 'multiculturalists' who endure and advocate for culturally diverse and equitable education (Johnson, 2014). On the other hand, Lopez (2015) portrays culturally responsive leadership to be the responsibility for advocating for "recognition, revitalization and community development" (p. 179) of those they lead. Thus, culturally responsive leadership is consistently positioned as a shared commitment to equitable and inclusive experiences by affirming the diverse cultural identities of the learners and their communities (Cooper, 2009; Johnson, 2014; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015).

Robinson and Gray (2019) agree in their stand that culturally responsive leadership requires leaders to recognise the holistic and context-specific nature of the work. Such sentiments point to the limitations of this approach to leadership, due to the challenges that arise when the nature of work is context specific. Leaders should consider the implications of cultural discontinuities between those leading, enacting and experiencing change (Cooper, 2010; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015;). To remedy such, Khalifa et al., (2016) and Lopez (2015) call for culturally responsive leaders to continually reflect to develop critical consciousness regarding the biases and perspectives people bring to their varying roles. This requires leaders to engage in honest conversations, to clarify their own perceptions and look for opportunities to understand different ways meaning is made (Shields et al., 2002). The responsibility of leaders is to not make assumptions as the undercurrents of ethnic tensions, differing ideologies and expectations can be treacherous (Khalifa et al., 2016; Lopez, 2015; Shields, 2002).

To broaden their scope and avoid practice that limits their ability to meet the urgent challenges and needs of society, culturally responsive leaders respond creatively to the moral and political interconnectedness (West, 1993). Such notions create parallels with Begley (2006) and George's (2003) ideas of Authentic Leadership and the creativity required to bring together one's own values and the values of those they are leading. West's (1993) interpretation of culturally responsive leadership links these ideas together, highlighting the interconnected nature of culturally responsive leadership and authentic leadership. By enacting them together, leaders can be equipped to reposition power-sharing relationships so that they can address social circumstances, and disrupt deficit theorizing, particularly when working with indigenous groups (Begley, 2006; Horsford et al., 2011; Khalifa et al., 2016; West, 1993).

By focusing on the cultural identities of learners and seeking to create equitable learning experiences for Māori, culturally responsive leaders must also navigate the broader structures that shape education. Understanding what these nuances are, and how they influence leadership and the lived realities of learners is pivotal. For Māori learners, effective leadership must respond to these constraints in ways that actively support and create safe spaces for innate capabilities, cultural potential and mana-motuhake to occur.

## Fostering spaces for Innate Capabilities, Cultural Potential and Mana-motuhake

Māori success as Māori is a complex notion that requires many considerations as outlined by past and present commentaries (Bishop & Berryman, 2007; Severinsen et al., 2020; G. Smith, 2000; L. Smith, 2006;). Duckworth et al., (2021) aptly capture this intricacy in their statement that "Māori student success represents a complex, socially constructed concept grounded in cultural identity" (p. 4).

Several authors establish Māori enacting their cultural potential as the deepening of connection to one's identity, culture and traditions (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Bishop, 2008; Highfield & Webber, 2021; Severinsen et al., 2020). Highfield and Webber (2021) capture the essence of this sentiment in their claim that language, culture and history is fundamental in developing culturally strong students and communities. Furthermore, what Highfield and Webber (2021) highlight, is the collective nature of Māori

success as Māori. These claims are also shared by Berryman and Eley (2017) who attest to the importance of Māori achievement uplifting those who have come before, and those who will follow. Berryman et al., (2022) refer to this collectivism as the "interrelationships and subtleties of Māori culture, language and identity, generated from Indigenous epistemologies" (p. 3).

The health of Indigenous knowledge and ways of being through language and action, and its influence upon Māori success is addressed across the literature (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Bishop, 2005; Bishop, 2008; Severinsen et al., 2020; G. Smith, 2000; L. Smith, 2006). Battiste (2000) maintains that indigenous knowledge is vital and integral towards understanding humanity, individually and collectively. If Māori are to be able to enact their innate capabilities, cultural potential and mana-motuhake they need to be able to live out their cultural expectations and lived experiences according to the parameters they place on themselves, not those imposed by other cultures (Battiste, 2000; Bishop et al., 2014; L. Smith, 2006). Notably, L. Smith (2006) explains how the indigenous epistemologies of indigenous communities, in this case Māori, hold an "alternative way of knowing about themselves and the environment, a way that has managed to survive the assaults of colonisation and its impacts" (p. 16). Such statements speak to the strength of Māori. The impacts of colonisation have forced indigenous groups to adapt, negotiate and reclaim ways of knowing to maintain their cultural ways and identities and pass such knowledge to future generations (Bishop et al., 2014; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; G. Smith, 2000).

The interwoven nature of Māori success is evident in Melinda Webber and Angus MacFarlane's work around the Mana Model (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020). Through this research, they determine how these definitions of success can support academic achievement for Māori. They contend there are five optimal conditions within the Mana Model that allow Māori students to be successful in their cultural identity, and thus subsequently utilise this knowledge and skills to achieve success (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020). They warn that there are moments when ākonga Māori feel they "need to make a choice between prioritizing academics (and playing down their Māori identity) or prioritizing Māori identity (and playing down their academic identity)" (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020, p. 29). Education allows ākonga Māori to flourish when it provides opportunities where they are succeeding because of their culture rather than despite of it (Duckworth et al., 2021). Policy documents such as Ka Hikitia –

Accelerating Success (MoE, 2013) echo these contentions. “The role of education is to nurture every child’s potential and to support their educational success” (MoE, 2013, p. 5). With Māori innate potential, woven into their cultural identity (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020; L. Smith, 2006) leaders within education must ensure opportunities and spaces are created so they (Māori) can enact it themselves (MoE, 2013).

Furthermore, Bishop (2008) promotes this definition of success as self-determination; wherein Māori are successful as Māori when they pursue and attain success “in relation to others” (p. 441). This collective nature of success aligns with how Māori view the world (Berryman et al., 2022; Durie, 2017; G. Smith, 2000). These opportunities are not simply about an individual's attainment of knowledge or glory, but more importantly the opportunities they are given to use their cultural knowledge and potential to positively impact the Māori community (Berryman & Eley, 2017; Bishop, 2006; Highfield & Webber, 2021; Rameka et al., 2023; G. Smith, 2000; L. Smith, 2006). When Māori are enacting their innate capabilities and cultural potential, they are demonstrating leadership, collectivism, cultural identity embedded in academic achievement and an outward responsibility to those around them (Webber & Macfarlane, 2020). Who they perceive themselves to be within their Māori identity, is woven into how they consider themselves to be flourishing. Understanding their identity as Māori allows them a sense of belonging, connection to whānau and whakapapa which in turn shapes the way in how they choose to engage in society (Berryman, 2001; Duckworth et al., 2021; Rameka et al., 2023; Webber & Macfarlane, 2020).

## Advocating for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Bishop (2008) frames culturally responsive pedagogy to be enacted when the teaching and learning relationships reflect power sharing, when learning is interactive, and when practice is founded upon a notion of connectedness. It requires a responsive pedagogy that builds upon the cultural relationships that are lived and breathed within classrooms (Berryman et al., 2018). G. Smith (2000) alluded to the importance of using culturally responsive pedagogy so that “teaching and learning settings and practices are able to connect closely and effectively with the cultural and life circumstances (socioeconomic) of Māori communities” (G. Smith, 2000). This is necessary as the transformative nature of it seeks to

mediate the social injustices created by the colonising impact of western schooling systems (Glynn et al., 2010). To address these impacts of colonisation, those in education must continually reflect upon their own practice and influences to ensure their decisions and actions are transformative by nature, both for their learners and for their organisations (Glynn et al., 2010; Khalifa et al., 2016). The role of the educational leader is to respond to these requirements and create spaces where Māori can bring together who they are and the desires of the collective in their learning spaces (Khalifa et al., 2016; Shields, 2012). It requires leaders to advocate for effective pedagogy and remain transformative in their stance, developing shared understandings across their organisation (Berryman et al., 2014).

## Chapter Summary

To determine how policy and praxis influences the leadership interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori, the literature reviewed suggests that the legacy of policy and colonisation has led to leaders navigating within a complex educational environment. This emphasises a need for transformative change in education in Aotearoa to see ākonga and kaiako Māori experiencing and enacting their innate capabilities and cultural potential.

The literature emphasises that educational leaders grounded in a vision that celebrates cultural identity create spaces to enact leadership where authenticity, and cultural responsiveness are the driving forces behind intention and actions. From these stances, leaders are more likely to create opportunities for Māori to regain space in education and flourish. Leaders who desire to enact transformative and culturally responsive leadership recognise the complexities and intricacies within their contexts and navigate these spaces with their communities. With this conceptual understanding of leadership, educational leaders can begin to understand how their leadership practice can ensure Māori are experiencing equity in education.

If education in Aotearoa aspires to deliver experiences where Māori can live out their innate capabilities and cultural potential, there needs to be “sustained and persistent efforts on the part of educational leaders” (Shields et al., 2002, p. 133). It is an enduring journey of resoluteness, advocacy and partnership between those in leadership. Ultimately this review underscores the importance of understanding

enacted leadership and its implications for affirming cultural identity. It calls for leaders to have positive discourses that speak of the potential of people. It will require a systemic renewal of education where equity, excellence and indigeneity are key drivers to the organisational changes (Severinsen et al., 2020). A gap remains in understanding how the implementation of policy to praxis supports educational experiences that are equitable and fosters collaborative spaces where Māori can enact mana- motuhake. It is this gap, that this study responds to and seeks to add to the literature discourse in existence. Further research into examining the practical strategies of leaders as they work these principles into practice, will develop greater understanding of how leaders create spaces that ensure Māori can flourish and experience equitable education.

# Chapter Three: Methodology

## Introduction

Research is a means by which humans can attempt to make sense of the phenomena that emerge from lived experiences as they examine themes and understandings found within these experiences (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop, 2005; Dunbar, 2008; Freire, 1998). Creswell (2014) defines research as an "approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). This is echoed by Tolich and Davidson (2003) who assert research at its most basic level is how meaning is created from social interactions. Within an educational context, Freire (1998) contends research and education are inextricably connected as "there is no such thing as teaching without research and research without teaching" (p. 35). For many years traditional western research frameworks have created a divide wherein indigenous groups have been 're-storied' with little regard given to the validity, legitimacy and voices of those sharing their experiences (Battiste, 2008; Berryman et al., 2013; L. Smith, 2006). It is imperative then, that researchers consider research frameworks that are participatory and are responsive to contributions of those being researched (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop, 2005; Denzin et al., 2008).

This chapter will begin by outlining the ontological and epistemological foundations of this research, explaining and justifying the methodology framework chosen to guide this research. It will then explain the quality and ethical considerations of this study to provide further rationale for the methodological approach chosen.

## Research Question

The overarching research framing this study seeks to examine the influence of Māori leaders. It explores their success and challenges as they work with non-Māori Principals to create environments where Māori can flourish. The research question asks: how does the interface, between Māori and non-Māori (Pākehā or tauiwi), influence combined bicultural actions to implement the Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia strategy? What are some of the experiences relating to Māori achieving and enjoying education as Māori?

The following sub-questions will also be asked to develop a deeper understanding and clarity around the overarching research question:

- How do leadership actions of Kaiako Māori and non-Māori principals, support Māori succeeding as Māori in Kura-Auraki settings?
- What do leaders in educational settings, whānau and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
- How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

## Adopted paradigm

Research that asserts the validity of varying world views shaped by a socially constructed set of expectations, and seeking to find meaning within interactions, falls within an interpretivist paradigm (Dean; 2018; Willis, 2007). Willis (2007) contends researchers utilising the strengths of this interpretivist paradigm, design research wherein the experiences of participants inform the thematic understandings developed. Research working within this paradigm aim to determine a way to understand and interpret the meaning embedded within human interactions (Dean; 2018; Litchman, 2006; Ma, 2016).

Central to this are the experiences of the participants and opportunities to share their experiences to ascertain how they influence the success of ākonga Māori. Adopting a participatory paradigm is necessary to ensure the research is collaborative between participants and researcher (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2014; Dean, 2018). Creswell (2016) contends those working within an anti-positivist paradigm are more likely to conduct research that is collaborative in nature and establish methodological practices that advance the values of both the researcher and participants. This research aims to empower participants by offering opportunities to share their stories. As such, an interpretivist stance towards this research is necessary (Creswell, 2016).

Moreover, the central question examines social and political influences upon leaders and learners in education. Qualitative researchers look through a wide lens, to discover patterns of inter-relationships and concepts (Brannen, 1992). As the influence of these social and political elements impact the

experiences of the participants, adopting a paradigm that provides flexibility is necessary (Creswell, 2003; Ma, 2016; Willis, 2007). The qualitative measures used in this research enable subjectivity of experiences to be validated, allowing for an interpretivist approach to the research design (Creswell, 2016, Dean, 2018; Willis, 2007). An interpretivist paradigm acknowledges the value of the qualitative data, the experiences shared and my interpretive role as researcher. In doing so, this study illustrates how individual sense making, shaped from the experiences influencing participants' worlds, can be used to better understand the discourses that speak to this research question (Ma, 2016).

## Research Design

This research question came about through conversations with other Māori leaders in education about the impacts of deliberate acts of assimilation in colonial schooling for ākonga Māori. Furthermore, consideration of Berryman et al., (2016) and Berryman et al's., (2024) contention that equity gaps persist between Māori and non-Māori learners created frustration amongst Māori colleagues. This research was instigated to develop a deeper understanding of how educational leaders, tumuaki and kaiako, can enact leadership that support ākonga Māori to realise their innate capabilities and cultural potential. By researching the experiences of both Māori leaders, tumuaki and the experiences of ākonga and whānau Māori, this inquiry aspired to provide evidence to identify how educational leaders can lead through their implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, in ways that advantage "Māori advancement by challenging structural inequalities, and reclaiming and reframing Māori language, knowledge and culture" (Berryman et al., 2022, p. 4) for their ākonga Māori.

## Methodology

Burns (2000) argues ethical principles, and conventions frame what is considered appropriate and inappropriate in societal behaviour. Berryman et al., (2013) and Bishop (2005) warn of the discord that can occur if these principles, rules and conventions differ between social groups, and in this case, differ between researcher and participants. Understanding who the participants are and what they wish to discover to bring about positive change, guides the framework of action intended in research (Belfrage & Hauf, 2017; Berryman et al., 2013). Although the research question aimed to provide evidence based on Māori world views, the inclusion of non-Māori tumuaki meant it fell outside the scope of Kaupapa

Māori research (L. Smith, 2006). Given this research captured the voices and experiences of Māori and non-Māori, Culturally Responsive Methodologies was chosen as the guiding framework as it offers an "alternative, naturalistic paradigm from which to achieve socially responsible research outcomes" (Berryman et al., 2013, p. 2) for those who have previously been silenced in research worlds (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop, 2005; Denzin et al., 2005).

## Culturally Responsive Methodologies

Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) emanates from critical theory, whereby qualitative research aspires to exhibit values of critical pedagogy that empowers participants through the creation of shared spaces (Berryman et al., 2013). Building upon critical grounded theories researchers invite participants to enter spaces with them to investigate (Belfrage & Hauf, 2017) and legitimise perspectives that may have been constrained by social iniquities (Creswell, 2014). Culturally Responsive Methodologies achieves this by establishing a framework that places whakawhaungatanga (relational connectedness grounded in kinship and shared identity) at the centre (Bishop et al., 2009; Ford, 2013b). Weaving together a schema informed by kaupapa Māori and critical theory, CRM paves a new pathway forward for researchers to honestly represent the intentions of people, and the principles of kaupapa Māori used to complement critical theories (Berryman et al., 2013; Pene et al., 2024). Culturally Responsive Methodologies enables researchers to be reflexive, innovative and flexible in their research methods to accurately and honourably weave together indigenous and western methodologies, ensuring all participants feel validated and comfortable (Berryman et al., 2013; Pene et al., 2024).

As existing research methodologies were not providing the necessary care and code of conduct required of researchers as they attempted to bring together differing worlds (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop, 1997; L. Smith, 2005), more relevant research methodologies were needed so that the voices of those being researched could be heard with greater authenticity (Berryman et al., 2013; Denzin et al., 2005; L. Smith, 2005). Validity and legitimacy were questioned in research "due to the differing values and perspectives about knowledge and learning" (Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003). In response, CRM was developed to ensure qualitative research embodied values of critical theory that empowered participants through the creation of shared space.

## Why Culturally Responsive Methodologies?

Berryman and Woller (2017) capture the essence of this methodology framework as they contend that CRM enables power-sharing relationships facilitated through respectful and mutually agentic exchanges between researchers and participants. The relationship between researcher and participant is one of power-sharing, thus creating greater authenticity regarding what information is gathered, interpreted and published; keeping the world of the participant central in each of these research aspects (Berryman & Woller, 2017; Denzin et al., 2008). Berryman et al., (2018) refer to these moments as the points of trust and respect required to understand and make meaning of relational dialogic spaces, necessary to reclaim sovereignty within academic research. This is echoed by L. Smith (2012) who challenges Māori researchers to retrieve space for Māori in the academic world to reclaim sovereignty in academic spheres;

> To convince Māori people of the value of research for Māori; second, to convince the various fragmented but powerful research communities of the need for greater involvement in research; and third, to develop approaches and ways of carrying out research that take into account, without being limited by, the legacies of previous research, and the parameters of both previous and current approach (p. 185).

Within the context of Aotearoa, this methodological framework is necessary as Māori seek to reclaim many aspects of their culture due to the impacts of colonisation (Bishop, 2005; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; L. Smith, 2006). L. Smith (2012) argues that impacts of colonisation in Aotearoa have perpetuated how knowledge of Māori has been collated, classified and depicted. Consequently, it is necessary for research methodologies to be attuned to the world of those they seek to research, to understand, fairly represent and accurately share what Māori wish to reveal in their own narratives (Bishop, 2005; L. Smith, 2012;).

The foundation of this research seeks to provide an avenue to articulate Māori ways of knowing should they arise in the kōrero. However, as it also seeks to capture the experiences of non-Māori tumuaki, it positions this project outside the scope of solely using Kaupapa Māori research (L. Smith, 2021).

Employing CRM to frame this research, will allow for the validation of cultural knowledge, while simultaneously authenticating different cultural views that may be presented from the different epistemologies and ontologies woven through the project. Culturally Responsive Methodologies is necessary to ensure Māori offerings to the research are honoured, are fairly represented and are provided with opportunities to co-create the parameters of the research. Furthermore, as an aspiring Māori researcher, I take note of L. Smith's (2012) challenge for Māori to create space in the academic circle. By choosing CRM as the framework for this research, I have endeavoured to create space for my participants and myself as a researcher, so that interpretations of both western and indigenous knowledge shared by my participants, are relational, respectful, trusted and attuned to the world from which they were shared.

# Methods

## Qualitative Research

Qualitative Research gives researcher the opportunity to understand phenomena wrapped up in the experiences of people (Ayton, 2023). Creswell (2012) describes it as a process of research where researchers can learn from their participants. At the center of qualitative research are the experiences of people. The way in which understanding is interpreted from their experiences offers a powerful insight into the complexities of life (Creswell, 2012). As this research examines the experiences of people, it is qualitative in nature therefore called for qualitative methods (Brannen, 1992; Burns, 2000).

## Semi-Structured interviews

This project will use semi-structured interviews as the dominant data collection method. Burns (2000) contends that semi-structured interview grants great flexibility to attaining information that shapes the participants' perception of reality. The rationale behind such methods is one where the world of the participant is validated, reciprocated and valued as legitimate knowledge towards answering the research questions (Burgess, 1984; Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2014; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; L. Smith, 2021). Bishop (2005) refers to the participatory nature of this approach to be connected in relationship and balanced in power, to discover existing and new knowledge in a third space. This third space suggests the way in which spiral discourse will be incorporated into the research methodology (Bishop, 2011).

The flow of these conversations may waver from the intended questions, opinions may vary but central to the discussion will be the intention to remain focused on a collaboratively constructed narrative that uses spiral discourse and promotes equality between researcher and participants (Bishop, 2011).

## Focus Groups

Cohen et al., (2017) suggest one way to attempt to create robustness in validity and reliability of data is to use focus groups to triangulate information with other forms of data. These sentiments are shared by Creswell (2016), who states the "synergy of a focus group encourages people to speak up, and ideas can expand as multiple individuals weigh in on topics" (p. 127). The benefits of such methods being that the researcher takes the role of the facilitator, therefore empowering the collective to have autonomy over both individual and shared consensus (Creswell, 2016; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Both Creswell (2016) and Rubin and Rubin (2012) caution however, that when using such methods, it is important to ensure that recording measures are appropriate and that everyone can offer their response. The ability of the researcher to read the room is imperative in such moments.

This study seeks to gain an understanding of a collective group, therefore focus groups will enable small insights into the experiences of ākonga and whānau Māori. Such representation of the wider group will offer information key to discovering answers in this study (Creswell, 2014; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Likewise, the semi-structured interviews will allow opportunities for participants to offer their experiences without predetermined expectations of the phenomena that may be conveyed to develop a more comprehensive understanding, and increased reliability of the phenomena (Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell, 2012) that lie within the narratives of the research.

## Data analysis

Data analysis processes are important in research to organise, synthesise and evaluate data related to research questions (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2014). For the purposes of this study, I elected to use an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the key analytical approach to the data obtained in the study. P. Smith et al., (2009) define IPA as a "qualitative thematic approach rooted within the philosophies of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography" (p. 1). As qualitative data is the primary

data generated within the scope of this research, an IPA approach will support me in discovering the truths embedded within the different narratives (P. Smith et al., 2009).

IPA provides the opportunity for the analysis to be embedded within the stories that have been told and to find the themes between the participants' experiences that can be used to educate and inform future practice. Moreover, IPA links closely with CRM as it offers understanding towards the experiences of marginalised communities and supports researchers to understand equity issues (Emery & Alderman, 2020).

## Collaborative stories

This research study seeks to establish spaces where lived experiences of participants are at the forefront, therefore Bishop's (1997) offer of Collaborative storying as a means for articulating knowledge will be used to present the data. Bishop (1997) states that by using Collaborative stories, the "researcher does not follow a set of 'how-tos' but rather facilitates the voice of the research participant to be heard, for others to reflect on" (p. 30). Qualitative in nature, this approach to presenting information from interviews creates a symmetrical relationship that is dialogic, based on trust, and one where personal investment and equality is promoted through conversation (Bishop, 1997).

Collaborative storytelling presents opportunities to co-construct with honour and engages those they seek to represent in their research (Bishop, 1998; Phillips et al., 2020). "Collaborative storying opens up the plays of possibilities" (Phillips et al., 2020, p. 50) wherein researchers can obtain holistic and meaningful understanding brought to life by the participants' voices. This body of study is embedded in human interest as it aspires to understand the differing experiences and perspectives of the different participant groups. The central question of this research examines the 'why', 'what' and 'how' complexities woven into the interface between policy and praxis and therefore the nuances between people. Through collaborative storytelling, this research will be better equipped to understand the intricacies of the human experience within this research question (Bishop, 1997; Phillips et al., 2020).

### Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis (TA) is an effective and flexible method used within qualitative research to identify and interpret meaning found through an exploration of the lived experiences of participants (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019; Braun et al., 2022; Swain, 2018). Reflexive in approach, TA allows researchers to actively construct themes through an interpretive and iterative process. Aligning itself with qualitative and interpretive paradigms it affords opportunity to bring to the forefront the lived experiences of those involved (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019; Braun et al., 2022). In doing so, researchers position themselves as meaning makers of the data, acknowledging the orientation, values and position they bring to the research as they interpret the data, whilst simultaneously valuing the voices behind the data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun et al., 2022). Working in this way establishes a foundation of shared meaning, a kaupapa (agenda) at the heart of this research.

Thematic analysis from the conversations will be colour coded to determine the central and common themes reflected in the experiences. These will be reviewed and refined to establish coherence and distinctiveness across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun et al., 2022; Clarke & Braun, 2014) to ascertain central themes that can be elicited from the experiences. This analytical approach allows fluidity to move between data and interpretation, deepening the understanding of the themes discovered. By using TA in this research, I can ensure the voices of the participants will remain at the forefront of investigation. Keeping their experiences at the forefront is what provides rich insights and can enhance knowledge (Burns, 2000; Clarke & Braun, 2014; Creswell, 2012) about the complexities that exist at the interface of policy and praxis for educational leaders.

## Ethical Considerations

Burns (2000) contends that “Ethical principles, rules and conventions distinguish socially acceptable behaviour from that which is considered socially unacceptable” (p. 17). Within research, these ethical problems can relate to both the interactions with participants and the rigour of the research methods and procedures (Creswell, 2014; Burgess, 1984). Creswell (2016) and Snook (2003) implore researchers to prepare for and address ethical issues particularly when qualitative methods are central to the project and different interpretations made throughout the study. When research engages with Māori

communities and seeks to bring about revitalisation and empowerment for the collective, researchers need to ensure they demonstrate cultural sensitivities towards the people involved and knowledge shared (Berryman et al., 2013). If working with indigenous groups, researchers need to balance the institutional ethical expectations while being responsive to their participant's rights and values, which can create ethical dilemmas (Berryman et al., 2003; L. Smith, 2012). To ensure these expectations were met, approval from the ethics committee, before commencing research, was sought to ensure that the intentions and practices within the framework safeguarded the well-being of all participants. This research has received ethical approval from the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Ethics Committee, approval reference FEDU013/25.

## Ensuring balance of power in ethical research

In research, people must adopt moral principles that ensure the integrity of process, interactions, and interpretations of data (Snooks, 2003). When such principles are not held, there can be an imbalance of power between researchers and participants (Creswell, 2014; Denzin et al., 2014; Snooks, 2003). The power imbalance tensions that could present between researcher and participant was mitigated through whakawhanaungatanga (building relationships) between participants and me. In some cases, these relationships predated this research because of the shared cultural identity and the reciprocal working relationship that had been established through our Kāhui ako learning community. As these participants did not work within my own educational institution, I was able to further safeguard against any ethical power imbalances. Our sense of whakawhanaungatanga ensured these relationships were maintained with integrity, respect and mana throughout the research. Berryman et al., (2013) summarise that by using CRM, fair ethical conduct can be enacted as new relational positions are created together. In doing so, researchers and their participants determine new equal and empowered positions through a line of trust and relationship.

## The Insider/Outsider Role of the Researcher

Bishop (2005) and Eletreby (2013) describe the insider/outsider role as the deep self-awareness that raises the self-consciousness of researchers. Bishop (1998) argues that there is space for such a position in research so long as the encounters between participant and researcher establishes power-sharing relationships. L. Smith (2012) encourages researchers to consider where they take on the role of insider,

and where they take on the role of outsider so that indigenous people can see accurate representations of their experiences in research. In doing so, researchers can ensure that they "authentically translate participants' experiences" (Eletreby, 2013, p. 325), considering their experiences as an insider/outsider. Acknowledging that I may transverse areas in this research where I can be situated in the role of an insider and that of an outsider, it is pivotal I consider these perspectives when undertaking and interpreting this research. This self-reflexive process is both crucial to my chosen methodology framework CRM, and the accurate interpretation of my participant's experiences.

## Issues of quality

Validity and reliability have long served as benchmarks for trustworthiness in research (Davidson & Tolich, 2003). Burns (2000) likens reliability to the dependability, consistency, predictability, and accuracy of research methods and data, highlighting it as intricate and complex in research. Both are necessary to ensure research practices remain robust and provide accurate representations of whatever is being researched (Creswell, 2014). However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) offer a contrasting notion towards issues of quality in research as they assert that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are constructs that should frame qualitative research. Although the terminology changes, the sentiments of quality remain calling for research to be reputable and trustworthy (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Berryman et al., (2013) outline these issues of validity and reliability in CRM by imploring researchers to consider the quality of relationships between participants and researcher as "trustworthiness is tied to obligations of reciprocity" (p. 19). As stated above, this sense of trustworthiness was established through whakawhanaungatanga . Each participant was offered an opportunity to meet kanohi-ki-te-kanohi (face-to-face) before the semi-structured interviews to ensure they had an opportunity to ask more questions and just get an overall sense of where this kaupapa was heading. Likewise, within the focus group this trust was established by meeting kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, and within an environment that was comfortable for them. Moreover, as there was a shared collaboration between researchers and participants in the different conversations participants were given the opportunity to read over research information. This

process ensured that what was contributed, captured the essence of what participants hoped to share, maintaining the integrity of their messages.

## Procedure for recruiting participants

Tumuaki and kaiako Māori, with whom the researcher already had a relationship and sense of whakawhanaungatanga with, due to other leadership roles they held within their Kāhui Ako, were approached and asked to consider if they felt they could support this research by sharing their experiences. From there, two of three non-Māori tumuaki and three Māori kaiako agreed to be a part of this research. The two tumuaki participants had a range of experiences of principalship that varied from three years to 30 years and represented different levels of schooling, one from primary education level and the other, representing secondary schooling experiences. Each of the principals led schools in which Māori were represented in a multi-cultural auraki setting, with student numbers ranging from 500 students to 1000 students. Both principals had kaiako Māori working below them to support them in their work towards creating success for ākonga Māori in kura-auraki settings. The kaiako Māori participants were from a different level of education; primary, intermediate and secondary settings. All three kaiako hold various leadership positions within their school that aim to support ākonga Māori. Each of these kaiako Māori have different experiences ranging from classroom teaching, head of department and senior leadership team experience.

In addition to the individual participants, focus group discussions were also conducted to gain a greater understanding of collective experiences across the kura. Participants for these focus groups were identified by both the tumuaki and kaiako Māori as members of the school communities who held important whakaaro ideas) that would add to this research study. These participants were provided with an invitation letter (appendix E, G & H) to outline the research questions and explain their expectations of them if they chose to participate. Upon accepting their invitation to be a part of this research, these participants formed the two focus groups in the study, one focus group represented whānau Māori, with the other representing ākonga Māori.

To ensure anonymity, all participants were given pseudonyms.

## Informed consent

Burns (2000) posits that informed consent is the most fundamental principle involved in research and "participants must understand the nature and the purpose of the research and must consent to participate without coercion" (p. 18). To ensure this principle of research was upheld, all participants were provided with participant information letters (appendix A, C, K & L), which outlined their ability to withdraw and participate as collaborators. Likewise, before beginning any of the interviews or focus groups, participants were given the opportunity to sign their consent (appendix D, F & I).

The need for participants to agree to participate is a shared consensus across many literary works as "consent indicates trust and the assumption is that the trust will not only be reciprocated but constantly negotiated- a dynamic relationship rather than a static decision" (L. Smith, 2012, p. 137). As some of the participants were under the age of 16, it was necessary to ensure their parents signed consent on their behalf (appendix F). However, as the framework of this study aspired to ensure all participants felt valued throughout the process, these students were given the opportunity to sign an assent form (appendix J) to indicate that they did indeed feel informed and willing to offer their whakaaro towards the project. Cohen et al., (2017) elaborate on this need to be flexible in attaining informed consent to ensure the experience is fair and continuously negotiated. For the younger population of this research, having a consent form signed by parents ensures ethical obligations are adhered to, while the assent forms allow for moral obligations towards the mana of the participants to be held to account (Cohen et al, 2017; L. Smith, 2012).

## Positioning the research

Recognising the privilege I hold as a Māori educator, with leadership aspirations, I acknowledge the responsibilities such positions afford me to attempt to bring about the success of ākonga Māori. As a Māori researcher conducting this study, I recognise and empathise with the impacts of colonisation on Aotearoa that is now perpetuated through the ways in which indigenous knowledge has been collected, classified and then represented back to the West (L. Smith, 2012). Although the easy journey would be to resist exploring the themes embedded in this research question, and retrench to the margins, I also recognise the call for Māori to reclaim this space of research to be one of resistance and hope (L. Smith,

2012). As someone who works in education, I acknowledge the different views and voices many have encountered and used to make sense of the world. As a researcher who can take on the role as both an insider and outsider within this research, I acknowledge the sensitivities required of myself to be reflexive and to ensure I authentically share the experiences of my participants.

## Chapter Summary

Through the exploration of different research paradigms and culturally responsive methodologies, this chapter outlines the research framework, designed to ensure this research maintains integrity, validity, and reliability. By employing a qualitative approach, embedded in culturally responsive methodologies, the differing epistemologies and ontologies of the participants and researcher will have space to converge, in ways that bring life to the data gathered. Moreover, with different ideologies represented in the experiences of the participants, the requirement comes for both mixed paradigms and a qualitative approach towards data collection to meet the complexity of needs within the research. The semi-structured interviews to create collaborative stories, facilitate an extensive examination of different lived experiences that can be used to inform this research. Likewise, utilizing focus groups allows the research to gain key insights into the collective experience of Māori in education. "Sharing knowledge is also a long-term commitment" (L. Smith, 2012, p. 16). Therefore, I recognise this research study is only one piece of bringing about success for ākonga Māori and kaiako Māori in kura-auraki settings. However, I am determined to establish "excellent research which can lead to improved policy, practice and individual outcomes for Māori people" (Walker et al., 2006) and to demonstrate authentic leadership by helping to raise up the voices of those around me who have sat marginalised in education. The next chapter will present the qualitative findings gathered from this research as collaborative stories.

# Chapter Four: Findings

## Introduction

This research sought to understand how beliefs and practices shaped the leadership experiences of different groups. These groups held varying perspectives about Māori learners and were working at the interface of policy and practice. Through their stories and sense making, we are given insight into how their enactments of leadership have impacted on them and contributed to the shaping of the interface between policy and praxis for Māori learners in their kura.

The findings are presented in two sections. The first section provides an overview of the participants. The second section presents the collaborative stories that were developed from their experiences. Understood together, the evidence aims to provide insight to the interface between policy and praxis for these leaders and its potential influence upon supporting ākonga Māori. Through the experiences of the schools' implementation of the Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia strategy, readers can begin to see the increasingly positive influence that combined bicultural actions can have upon Māori learners.

## Section One - The participants

The four groups include two tumuaki Pākehā, three kaiako Māori, and small groups of ākonga and whānau Māori. These focus groups involve a small representation of the ākonga and whānau Māori populations in two of the kura. Participants have all had different experiences, journeys and insights involving education therefore, by examining and comparing the experiences of them all, a richer picture emerges from which to understand the interface between policy and praxis for ākonga Māori being enacted in these schools.

## Section Two - Collaborative stories

The experiences shaping these stories exemplify the experiences of these participants. These stories are co-constructed representations of the participants' experiences, making visible key ideas, challenges and shifts that emerged through the research conversations. Subheadings and brief interpretive commentary

are used to reveal the emerging themes within each of the stories. Common themes are then considered across all stories.

## Primary Education Collaborative Story

### Relational Leadership and the Question of Structural Enactment

The first collaborative story brings together the experiences of a tumuaki Pākehā, a kaiako Māori and ākonga and whānau Māori within a primary kura-auraki. This story provides an opportunity to consider how leadership responded to the expectations of the E&TA 2020 and the third phase of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, and the implications of this upon Māori to experiencing educational success.

#### The Principal's Role in Leading Policy to Practice

Violet is a very experienced tumuaki pākehā of a large, multicultural urban kura, in which 32% of ākonga identify as Māori (MoE, 2025). Posters, artwork and emblems in her space clearly reflect Violet's stance towards education as one where ākonga, kaiako and whānau can see themselves in their environment. Violet shared:

> [I hope] that *the environment reflects the tangata whenua… where do people see themselves when they walk around your school? So, I make sure that the art reflects it, the signage, the foyer is all saying who we are and what we're about.*

For Violet, her role as tumuaki was more than just a job. It was a deep sense of social connection and responsibility to her community. Violet explained:

> *This community is part of me and I'm part of the community…it's very much a part of where my heart is... [I am] Listening, looking, making changes, being proactive about ensuring that Māori are first and foremost, and forefront...*

Violet's decision making in leadership was driven from a position of reflection and advocacy. She shared a willingness to honour Te Tiriti, not because she had to, but because she wanted to. Violet was committed and resolute towards enacting policy to praxis:

> *I'm not doing it because I have to, I'm doing it because I believe Māori are the tangata whenua of our country and therefore, that's what we need to do. That's our moral guideline… I always do my best for Māori to work with Māori… You can't understand someone else's culture, but you can do your best [to understand]. That's crossing the bridge.*

These leadership intentions were experienced most directly at the level of kaiako Māori working in this kura. Their capacity to lead and advocate was shaped by the influence and support of the power dynamics in these leadership relationships. Working closely alongside Violet in senior leadership was Amīria, an experienced kaiako Māori and seasoned senior leader. Ensuring ākonga could see the value of being Māori was paramount to Amīria:

> *[It's] letting Māori express themselves in a way that celebrates who they are, wherever they are on their journey of understanding what it means to be Māori.*

While Violet held power through her position within governance structures, particularly around the interpretation and enactment of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, the relationship she shared with Amīria was one that functioned as a reciprocal alliance. Amīria noticed the positive implications of this:

> *I honestly feel that as a Māori it's harder to say some of the things that [Violet] will say as a non-Māori. Having an ally makes it easier to do things…I hadn't really experienced that before. ...To me that's the real big support, that she's there and she says, 'yip we can do it.*

Despite formally answering to her tumuaki, in practice Amīria's relationship with Violet, unfolded as a

collaborative conversation bound by trust and a shared purpose. Amīria explained:

> *She [Violet] wants to do the right thing for Māori… she wants my feedback; she wants to know if we're not doing something as well as we could be... That is because of the relationship we have…*

### Prioritising Māori through Authentic Relational Leadership

It was evident that authenticity in priorities and leadership enactment by Violet was pivotal in helping Amīria feel valued and engaged in leadership action. Amīria shared:

> *What the principal does has a huge impact on you where you see the value in being Māori. If the principal doesn't walk the talk or put other things as a priority, then it's not really that important and then that means the whole school seems that way...Violet has shown me at the school, that people have to fight for the things that are important to them and that you can't say 'let someone else fight it' because that's what [has been] done in the past.*

This helped Amīria develop respect, trust and therefore responsibility in joining with Violet in the social justice vision of their kura. Mutually beneficial collaboration, that would foster positive experiences for Māori, was at the centre of their decision making. Amīria explained:

> *I feel it's collective, that 90% of all decisions are collectively made. Having a voice [and] hearing everyone's voice is important… As well as giving voice to those who maybe can't always say what they want to say because they don't have the confidence to do it... We work together when we want to get something done… It's a collaborative process.*

### Mana-Motuhake as Relational Identity and Strengths Base Practice

As Amīria reflected on her role within this leadership relationship she gave a sense that her potential as a leader was intricately interwoven with her very being. Amīria shared:

> *When I go to lead, what underpins everything I do is manaaki (to care for). I feel that it is innately who I am... [I] feel the responsibility of being an advocate for Māori… Probably in this role more than I ever have before in my life, there is more of a weight on me... I want to help the next Māori person to feel comfortable in themselves.*

These leadership and pedagogical priorities extended from the immediate kura environment to shaping experiences of whānau. Valuing and espousing that Māori was important resonated in the kōrero shared with whānau. For whānau members, Rahera and Rosa, collectively they believed this intentional prioritising of Māori values and things would support their aspirations for their tamariki. Rahera, a mother of one of the ākonga Māori in this kura, explained:

> *We just want them to walk confidently in the world, you know, whatever world they're in. It's about knowing who they are and being very, very strong with their culture.*

Considering ākonga Māori holistically was also important to this group of whānau. Both Violet and Amīria reflected on how they could best ensure their ākonga Māori could have experiences that met the aspirations of whānau. Violet believed it required intentional action to build upon the cultural advantage and innate capabilities her ākonga Māori had. Violet explained:

> *[It is] taking any Māori student, respecting their culture, their reo, the tikanga, and valuing their success as Māori, as well as success in this world, we're in today... encouraging orators. Tamariki who can stand up and be proud, can speak for themselves and for others…. Being proud of who they are in their skills.*

For Amīria, it meant considering how they could create space where Māori potential is valued. She explained:

> *The success of Māori is using the strengths of Māori with how we assess Māori students or how we teach through a Māori lens… When they feel strong in themselves, that means*

*they are being successful as Māori… So always looking for ways that our Māori students can express themselves and bring themselves [to their learning].*

With these adult perspectives framing the broader context of how the values of *Ka Hikitia, Ka Hāpaitia* were advantaging ākonga Māori in this kura, the kōrero shifted to the voices of some of these tamariki. The insights offered by ākonga Māori grounded the kōrero in the lived realities of how these ākonga were impacted by such actions.

### The Impacts of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

At first ākonga Hemi, Hine, Tane and Thalia, sat quietly. Slowly they gained confidence and began to reveal their experiences. One of the greatest ways ākonga believed they were positively impacted by these intentional acts to prioritise things Māori was through the development of personal connections to culture. Thalia shared:

*[I think] knowing your pepeha off by heart [is important].*

As the group of ākonga continued to recount their experiences their emphasis on relationships, high expectations and skilled expertise emerged as a consistent view. Hemi offered the following insight:

*We've got Whaea P. She's the kapa haka teacher… we would be terrible at kapa haka if she wasn't there.*

The role of kaiako Māori and the cultural skills they brought supported these ākonga in feeling like they could engage successfully in their learning experiences. Hine shared:

*Having those people… we wouldn't be able to do anything without Whaea P.*

For this group of ākonga, connections and power-sharing relationships with kaiako Māori were greatly valued and important to them. Tane's contributions to the kōrero captured this collective understanding:

> *They help us because they help keep us straight... It's not a bad strict… if you slip up it's not just 'that's ok', so that way for next time we know.*

Moving outward from the experiences of this group of ākonga Māori, kōrero with whānau highlight the positive impacts that connections with kaiako Māori had on both whānau and tamariki. Whānau valued these high expectations and reciprocal power-sharing relationships, recognising them as invitation towards Mahi tahi. Rahera explained:

> *I think at the end of the day it comes down to teachers really knowing our kids. It's really important for them to know them... It's recognising their strengths and just giving them that sort of careful nudge towards doing those activities... If they know them then they can cater to them right so they can look at what they need academically and socially and let us know as well, so we're working together.*

Reflecting specifically on the impact of kaiako Māori in their kura, whānau emphasised reservations about the experiences of their tamariki without these kaiako Māori. Rahera shared:

> *If some of those kaiako weren't there or Amīria wasn't there, I think there would be a lot that Hine wouldn't be a part of... She [Amīria] has a real understanding about Māori education as well... and what works for Māori... She's willing to listen. I find her really approachable and she acts on things quite quickly.*

### The Impacts of Deliberate Acts of Leadership

An active presence in the kura was important to Violet and informed her intentional relational actions. Violet explained:

> *It's day-to-day interactions. It is being visible. Being there morning and afternoon. When people come into the office, I'll go out and say hello, just to make sure that they know that they're not just meeting a brick wall.*

These mutually beneficial relationships with Māori were important to Violet. She believed it helped her hold a greater presence towards things Māori. As Violet reflected on how she enacts this vision as a leader, she explained that her carefully considered and intentional recruitment was one way she could do this. Violet shared:

> *Having front-facing Māori teachers and leaders' helps because there is a gap... It's really about who you employ, how you treat people. I, [practice] positive discrimination, I employ Māori staff. They still need of course, to be qualified, but things Māori and being Māori helps their employment opportunity [at our school], because that's what our children need as models…It's absolutely deliberate to have a Māori leader that is bringing it to the fore.*

While the deliberate decision to recruit Māori staff strengthened the cultural capability within the kura, it did not solely establish the enactment of Te Tiriti. Rather, the enactment of Te Tiriti in this context as anticipated by Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, was contingent upon how well Māori and non-Māori kaiako shared responsibility, rather than relying solely on the skills of the kaiako Māori.

This desire for Mahi tahi alongside Māori, was not isolated to the classroom walls. Violet believed it was paramount to connect with the wider school community so they could also support her. These aspirations were not always easy for Violet. At times she had to rely upon her Māori staff to support her in culturally grounded decision-making, acknowledging their connections with mana whenua (group who hold power associated with land territory) and relationships within the kura. For Violet, leaning on them with respect and integrity was pivotal:

> *We aren't always successful at having a kaumatua that is here for us. Our people are getting old and are past being those leaders... Luckily, for us, we have a staff member who is [Mana Whenua]. She has always been our leader and our go between… We really have to listen to her and get her to help us.*

This insight shared by Violet, highlights the tensions at the interface of policy and praxis when bicultural

intent can become too dependent on Māori skill and soften the implementation of Ka Hikitia, unless leadership takes on that implementation responsibility personally. The deliberate decision to strengthen bicultural capability through intentional recruitment to build Mahi tahi and relationship with Māori resonated in the experiences of others within the kura. For Amīria it determined what was valued by leadership. Amīria shared:

> *She [Violet] will hire them because they're Māori, rather than not because they are Māori. So that gives it even more importance to me… In every area of the school there are Māori… To me that tells me that's important to Violet.*

The impact of these intentional decisions towards Mahi tahi and strengthening cultural capability was not an attempt by leadership to insert Māori as a surrogate for quality teaching pedagogy. Rather, it was experienced as an opportunity to increase the presence of Māori voice, cultural knowledge and relational skills through the presence of qualified Māori staff. The positive impacts of this deliberate leadership act, filtered down to the experiences of whānau. Rahera explained:

> *There's been some good recruitment .... There are more Māori teachers at the kura, there's more Māori teachers collectively working together. I think you've got somebody in leadership who is driving a lot of it... I remember when we first started, they did a review and I did say there weren't a lot of Māori things happening in the kura, that it felt tokenistic at best. That has certainly improved since we've been there… the change is positive.*

When whānau felt they were being heard, it encouraged them more to build connections with leadership. Rosa explained:

> *I guess there's always avenues to give feedback… And then I feel we could approach someone like Amīria on any day and tell her how we feel if we wanted to.*

These experiences of ākonga and whānau returned the focus to leadership, emphasising how deliberate decisions at leadership level shape the realities of Māori in this kura and gave them a sense of belonging and ownership. This opportunity for feedback and reflection was equally as important to Violet. She believed that through feedback, opportunities for continual learning arose. Violet explained:

> *I'm Ngāti Pākehā [Tangata Tiriti], therefore, I must consult... [it is] believing in it and not saying, 'oh no that's too difficult'.*

Violet acknowledged that part of her leadership enactment to align policy and praxis required ownership and responsibility by her as the leader of the kura, and as Tangata Tiriti. In this sense, responsibility did not end simply at consultation and feedback but extended to consider the exercise of leadership authority to give space to those commitments in practice. As leader of the kura, Violet believed it required a sound philosophy. She explained:

> *Being very strong, that the tangata lead the practice. In my leadership, it's always thinking, how does this look for us as a school if we value you Māori first? ... being really proactive about ensuring that Māori are first and foremost, and forefront.*

For Amīria there was an internal responsibility and sense of purpose when enacting leadership that aligned policy to praxis towards positively impacting Māori. Amīria explained:

> *[We need to think] how are we as leaders modelling that we value te ao Māori?... I think it's as leaders being out there in the community and showing people through our actions that we value Māori culture... It's looking at what we are doing for our Māori kaiako to develop them into leadership? So how do we offer them the opportunities.*

Enacting leadership that ensured implementation of the E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia was evident in practice, needed to start from the top. Amīria believed it was non-negotiable for both Māori and non-Māori leaders in education. She explained:

*It shouldn't really matter how many kaiako Māori, or tamariki Māori that you have in a school, if you're enacting Te Tiriti.*

The experiences within this collaborative story emphasise both the strengths and limitations relational leadership in fostering trust, collaboration, Mahi tahi and the endeavour to build cultural capacity in the kura through bicultural recruitment to prioritise Māori. These relational leadership practices established conditions in which Māori felt like they are flourishing in tangible ways, shaping how obligations for enacting commitments were evident in everyday practice. While relational leadership supported the enactment of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia within this kura, this story also illustrates that relationships cannot exclusively act as the only mechanism to implement policy as this risks softening the impacts of policy. Reliance on leadership that relies heavily on the goodwill and the expertise of a few risks generating the same conditions that required the legislative mandates. Rather, this collaborative story draws attention to considering how these conditions can be sustained beyond individuals. It highlights the importance of leadership responsibility at the level of governance, wherein their authority can be used to mandate and give effect to Te Tiriti and Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia through structural enactment and collective accountability. In doing so, this story offers opportunity to consider how the strengths of these relational conditions can shape governance-level enactment and work alongside structural implementation of policy to ensure sustainability of policy implementation.

## Intermediate Education Collaborative Story

### Advocacy in the Absence of Leadership Enactment

Anahera, a kaiako Māori in senior leadership within an intermediate kura-auraki, sat tall and proud to be Māori, as she shared her experiences and insights into how the interface between the policy of *Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia* and her praxis, influences leadership in her context. Her experiences stand confidently on their own, due to her tumuaki having other commitments at the time.

### Leading with Self-Determination and Agency

Anahera believed education needed to create opportunities where being Māori was valued, and where non-Māori could engage with the strengths, knowledge and identity of Māori, in ways that enriched the learning experiences of all ākonga. She shared:

> *It is our responsibility as educators to provide experiences and contexts where being Māori is truly valued and seen as a superpower.*

It was clear she wanted leaders to be continually reflective and show boldness in their action. For Anahera, the implication of this upon leaders was to have:

> *A deep desire to make changes for Māori. To do something different and be creative and brave and have courage to think differently.*

When considering why she held such a sense of agency towards leading positive changes for Māori, it was evident that for her, there was a deep connection between whakapapa and leadership enactment. Anahera explained:

> *I've always felt that I might stand here, but I'm standing in front of all my tupuna. The leader I am today is because of all the people before me… I can do it, because I've got them behind me.' It actually drives me to do better.*

Anahera's understanding of this connection, formed her challenge to educational leaders:

> *They [Māori] need to have their culture, have their language, have their experiences embedded in how they learn ... If you don't allow them to have their culture, have themselves seen within the fabric of what you do within a kura… There's a huge component missing for them as Māori, which I believe would enhance their experience in an educational setting.*

Anahera emphasised understanding the impacts of colonisation as essential if they were to act as Tiriti partners. She argued without this awareness, the kura risked limiting Māori rangatiratanga (self-determination) and perpetuating inequitable conditions rather than promoting ōritetanga (equitable outcomes) for their Māori learners.:

> *I think there's actually a lack of understanding about the treaty... It's not fully understanding or embracing Te Tiriti… first and foremost we should be doing right by our Māori students, our Māori whānau.*

Reflecting on how these understandings could grow in her kura, Anahera shared:

> *It starts with being very strategic with what we're doing, being strategic with who we recruit, what sort of opportunities we give for professional development and for leadership within our school... and supporting teachers to grow their knowledge in order to support their students.*

### Balances of Leadership Power

It was evident, that Anahera recognised the importance of growing her staff in this knowledge, and recruiting staff who could support that vision. She believed it required intentional and deliberate decision making from the top. However, division of priorities and strategic alignment between leadership appeared to result in Anahera feeling like she had to be the advocate on her own for initiatives she believed would make a difference for Māori learners. Anahera's advocacy did not surface as a leadership preference. Rather it was a deliberate act in response to leadership absence where power required to enact commitment to policy was concentrated elsewhere. When she advocated alone, the integrity of the policy actions was still being compromised and stalled as her ability to enact this role was constrained by leadership decisions that restricted her from exercising rangatiratanga and undermined ōritetanga in leadership practice. This reflects the misuse of leadership power whereby responsibility for Māori advocacy was upheld, but access to the resourcing necessary to enact it, were withheld. Anahera explained:

*An example of having to advocate for myself is requesting to do Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori (Language learning course). My principal would only sign me off to do this after I said I would not use the non-contact days to attend the full day components. Instead, I stayed at school and the funding we received for this went somewhere else...I have had to advocate for myself and for Māori initiatives in our kura…*

This role of advocacy was not without tensions in attempting to balance the complexities of the relational and professional demands of her role. Anahera reflects on her experiences:

*Getting them [the tumuaki] on board is probably one of the most important things. You can only do that through evidence or through research, sharing with them how it's worked elsewhere... Bearing in mind I still need to be supportive of those people that are above me, I have to support their decisions ultimately.*

The presence of a hierarchical power structure within school wide priorities was expressed as a growing frustration for Anahera. She was becoming more aware of the impacts of leadership perspectives and priorities, undermining her own access to professional learning and resources that could potentially influence ākonga Māori in positive ways. Anahera shared:

*I get a sense these things are not valued as much by the principal....*
*Staff are not encouraged to do PLD for themselves even if they see Māori as a need. The DP and I have asked to attend Māori Achievement Collaboration regularly, but we were told only the principal would attend. We also asked to attend a Niho Taniwha workshop and a Russell Bishop workshop, and this was declined.*

Reflecting upon these experiences, Anahera summarised the debilitating influence of one's embodiment of values upon another's ability to act:

*The blockage is that person that's above you, that's non-Māori that doesn't trust that process that you're trying to explain to them…. Even though some of it might be your own lived experience, they still don't trust it... It's a struggle for all who are trying to advocate for improving outcomes for Māori students... Not everyone is on the same waka…*

### Leadership qualities that build Mahi tahi (relationships of shared endeavour) for ākonga

Anahera believed that to support those around her in leadership as well as the ākonga Māori she worked with, she needed to carefully consider how she could effectively enact leadership. Anahera explained:

*I like to be an authentic leader; you know lead through that whanaungatanga. Manaakitanga (practice of care and compassion) is important to me... It's how I've grown as a leader. I believe [that] we've got to do it collectively… being approachable and having humility and integrity in leadership is really important… I want to lead through my actions and through my connections with people. How I leave a space.*

Authenticity and relational encounters were pivotal to Anahera as she attempted to create a safe space for others. She offered the following insight:

*I do think that it's a style of leadership that encourages people to come in and be their best selves... I get a lot of people through my office with a lot of concerns… They feel it's a safe space... There's always that understanding that it's a space for people to feel supported and that they're going to be heard.*

Building others up so they feel supported was also important to Anahera. Leadership enacted in this way, gave her a sense of purpose and intention to clear space for others, particularly her fellow Māori colleagues. Anahera captured these sentiments powerfully when she explained:

*I do it with others. It's about just being there to support others either with what they're currently doing or to support their growth, to become leaders... Māori don't often put themselves forward for leadership. You have to encourage them, have to tap them on the*

*shoulder, or you have to show them [they] can actually do this.*

This reflection on her experience, encouraged Anahera to consider how this could be best done within her kura. Anahera believed that by showing that you are prioritising and valuing te ao Māori in an authentic manner. She believed that:

> *It is the reciprocal nature of this kaupapa that ensures it works…Trust is important... It is about authenticity and credibility.*

Anahera framed leadership responsibility for enacting Te Tiriti as intentional actions to build *Mahi Tahi (*working as one with shared purpose) between Māori and non-Māori at governance level:

> "It starts with us as senior leaders, but also with our board. We've got some great board members and a real mix of cultures... We're lucky"

Extending the kōrero to consider the long-term ramifications of her expectations and experiences, Anahera reflected deeply on how the leadership could ensure Māori focussed policy could be enacted in practice. Anahera shared:

> *I believe this [enacting policy to praxis] comes down to their desire for understanding, having ngākau Māori (a culturally grounded disposition towards things Māori) and whakaaro Māori (Māori thinking and perspectives). It can be done but only when there is a genuine commitment to ongoing whakawhaunaungatanga, deep listening, and a willingness to be guided by Māori voices and tikanga. These leaders don't just consult - they co-construct. They centre mana ōrite (equity of power), uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi in practice, and continuously reflect on their own cultural positioning to ensure Māori achieving success as Māori is not a slogan, but a lived reality.*

Anahera's experiences emphasise how the positioning and priority of leadership power shaped Māori

advocacy, opportunities to enact rangatiratanga and relational practices within the kura. Underscoring these themes is the consideration of the role of advocacy as a response to the placement of leadership power, stalling the impact of policy intention and creating environments whereby advocacy was necessary to ensure mana-motuhake in the absence of kāwanatanga (governing authority) by leaders above her.

## Secondary Education Collaborative Story

### Negotiating Spaces: Leadership at the Interface of Kāwanatanga and Practice

This final collaborative story brings together the lived experiences of a tumuaki Pākehā, a kaiako Māori and ākonga Māori to explore the extent to which leadership at the interface of kāwanatanga, through positions of advocacy and deliberate leadership acts, shape the experiences of those within a secondary kura-auraki.

#### Leadership as an Ally

Wendy, a newly appointed tumuaki Pākehā of a large multicultural secondary school with 17% of current ākonga identifying as Māori (MoE, 2025b), sat prepared with considered responses to the questions. As we began our kōrero, Wendy was quick to introduce her vision for education:

> *I think we need to deliver more on proactively providing suitable contexts or ways for Māori to succeed as Māori.*

Wendy acknowledged her position as a Pākehā leader and understood that although she could never fully understand the trauma involved for Māori, her role as an educational leader needed to be one as an ally. As such, she was firm in advocating for ongoing critical reflection on her biases and assumptions. Wendy explained:

> *[I consider myself] an ally of Māori…I can never truly understand what it is to be Māori. I can never truly understand the trauma that colonisation has done and still has on our whānau... [But] I can be an ally in that I try to constantly consider my thoughts all the time*

*and consider my leadership around what I'm doing... Have I thought it through? Is this best for Māori students?*

Wendy's acknowledgement that she could not understand the impacts of trauma was not an attempt to avoid leadership responsibility. It was the ethical basis by which she positioned herself as an ally. This relational positioning framed how Wendy perceived responsibility for giving effect to Te Tirti and enabled her to use her leadership authority to reduce the conditions where Māori were forced to advocate for policy mandates. Wendy believed this leadership practice of critical reflection and advocacy were pivotal to actively enacting her Te Tiriti obligations and commitments, not just carry them. In line with Anahera, she believed it needed to be embedded into the thought processes, and decision making of those in senior leadership. Wendy shared:

*I'm reflecting on it all the time. Board level down to me, then to the senior leadership team and filtering down... Is this best for our Māori community? Is it equitable?*

Wendy understood her role as a partner to Tiriti. She believed she needed to intentionally place rangatiratanga and ōritetanga at the forefront of her decision making through strategic conversations with her Board of Trustees (kāwanatanga). Reflective in nature Wendy explained:

*If we're true to our Te Tiriti partnership and co governance, then I've got to prioritise what is going to be best for Māori students... [I need to be] an advocate with the board saying we must have this happen… It's making sure that the decisions you have are based on what's best for Māori.*

This placement of rangatiratanga and ōritetanga was not a symbolic act by Wendy. Rather it was her acknowledgement of the authority and power held by her as tumuaki, and the responsibility required of her to give effect to Te Tiriti by reflecting the legal expectations of the E&TA 2020, as mandatory not voluntary. In doing so, Wendy was attempting to strengthen the conditions in her kura to give effect to Te Tiriti, whereby the Board could enact kāwanatanga so that Māori could enact mana-motuhake. These

leadership intentions were experienced differently at the level of kaiako Māori working in the kura. Aroha, a kaiako Māori who works as a Te Reo Māori Curriculum Leader within the kura, offered her perspective of how she (Aroha) experienced Wendy's enactment of Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations as mandated through the E&TA 2020. Aroha stated that:

> *Wendy gets involved… She just makes me feel a little bit more normal. Actions speak louder than their words for me. She is actioning some things and she's trying.*

Aroha's example indicates how relational leadership at the tumuaki and kaiako interface was acting as a mechanism to ensure the enactment of Te Tiriti obligations were being acted upon through leadership encounters and authority.

### The Impacts of Deliberate Acts of Leadership

Unlike the experiences of Anahera, where decision making at the level of kāwanatanga remained largely not spoken about, Aroha makes visible the influence decision-making at governance level was having on shaping how Te Tiriti obligations were being interpreted and enacted. It is at this level that Wendy and Aroha recognised opportunities to promote or constrain rangatiratanga and whereby ōritetanga is ultimately put into effect. Aroha explained:

> *Their [governance and principal] decisions impact us hugely…It's whether we go ahead with it or not basically. Sometimes they don't know… what decisions they're making for us, how big those [decisions] impact us...*

Aroha reflected upon how these circumstances could change for herself and Māori in her kura. She emphasised the importance of representation of Māori in leadership:

> *They're trying to understand, they really are. They're taking courses themselves to up-skill themselves and to try to know what it's like... We need someone up there representing us making decisions at that level, alongside the principal and everyone else.*

Wendy believed that providing opportunities to upskill her staff in understanding their role as partners of Te Tiriti was the response required to better represent Māori at the leadership level. She made intentional decisions to prioritise this learning for her staff. Despite Wendy's best efforts, these attempts were not always met with shared openness or welcome. Wendy explained:

> *We had some of the Poutama Pounamu team come in and talk to our staff and led a 3-hour PD around colonisation and impact now for our learners. Some of the staff didn't like that, but it was powerful and they needed to be accosted in their thinking.*

Some staff didn't attend the PD, while others left the learning opportunity part way through. Wendy reflected on what deliberate leadership response these actions required of her:

> *I needed to meet with each one individually and try and understand why they left, or why they didn't come and understand it from their point of view but reassert why we had it and see [if] we could come to the middle.*

Wendy believed prioritising Māori language, culture and identity could help her develop a positive learning environment that would support her ākonga Māori. She believed it would demonstrate to her staff where her resolute intentions were focused. However, the operational structures of the kura created tensions that were difficult to overcome. Wendy explained:

> *We, played with trialled, offering the carving program. It was really hard to do that successfully in a secondary context because of our timetable... I want to try that again, but we need to try and prioritise getting it [carving] in the timetable.*

While Wendy's endeavour to prioritise whakairo (Māori carving) emphasises a commitment to valuing Māori knowledge, the operational structures hindering it from successful implementation, illustrate the challenges placed upon Māori-led practices when they continue to be dependent on existing

organisational structures. These tensions draw attention to how leadership decisions shape the space in which Māori can enact learning on their own terms.

### Allowing space for Leading with Mana-Motuhake

While Aroha framed these operational constraints as an opportunity for creativity and innovation, her experiences reveal how enactment of mana-motuhake was ultimately dependent on leadership decisions that supported her to exercise rangatiratanga. Often this began by having to negotiate space within the constraints. Aroha was determined to find ways to deliver learning opportunities that would engage ākonga Māori but was ultimately confined to do so within the organisational systems of her kura. Aroha explained:

> *Te Ao Haka is going to be a subject at our kura next year… It's university entry credits… I'm really excited for what that is going to bring for our Māori students in terms of raising their achievement levels… [it means] there's a pathway for our kids to go into higher learning, to university.*

The importance of being able to enact mana-motuhake through her leadership and pedagogical practice was important for Aroha. Although the extent to which Aroha could enact this mana-motuhake was shaped by the leadership decisions at governance level, she felt it was important to draw from her cultural and relational skills to assert her authority in practice:

> *We're trying our best as kaiako to provide an authentic sort of space for our kids. Try to be someone who looks like them and try to be someone who's familiar to them...We just get on with it, mahia te mahi, for the betterment of everybody...*

Aroha alluded to the complexities that lay within attempting to be an advocate, be relational and be a teacher all at the same time:

> *We wear so many different pōtae…even I get confused. We have to be so many different people, but they [the students] know that we'll go to bat for them.*

Such sentiments were not without careful consideration by Wendy. She recognised the demands upon kaiako Māori in her kura as they support her in attempting to bring the Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia into praxis. Wendy articulated the following:

> *The first thing that Māori teachers will say is they feel torn and too often overworked… or [that] Senior Leadership use them for knowledge or [to help] bridge a gap. It's really hard and [I think] they feel used and abused… It's really important we start to consider how they are feeling.*

Wendy's reflection draws attention to the importance of considering the impact of policy priorities when their enactment relies heavily upon kaiako Māori. Next, the insights offered by ākonga Māori ground the kōrero into the lived realities of how these ākonga are impacted by such actions.

### Holding High Expectations

Abby, Moana, Te Ariki and Kōwhai were eager to contribute their experiences towards the kōrero. As the tamariki began to kōrero they quickly connected with the insights offered by Aroha, their kaiako. One of the greatest ways ākonga believed they were positively impacted by Aroha was through the sense of whakawhaungatanga and power-sharing relationships, they shared with this teacher. Abby explained the relational sensibilities shared by Aroha that she felt helped her to thrive:

> *Her wairua (spiritual essence of a person). Kāore e whakamā. She's [Aroha] not shy... Knowing that she's there to help us and that we can go to her, but also that she's not going to let us slide on stuff that we do.*

Moana added her experience to what Aroha had shared, highlighting the importance of connection for these ākonga Māori:

> *She's [Aroha] very supportive. She connects with her students personally."*

Kōwhai echoed these sentiments by noting that she felt understood more clearly, extending her consideration to all kaiako Māori she interacted with:

> *They [kaiako Māori] just seem to understand it more than other teachers would and support you more.*

For Te Ariki, what resonated with him was also to a wider group of teachers:

> *They always acknowledge you for your efforts…You might not notice that you've done well, but they [kaiako] always acknowledge it. They show you that they actually care for your learning and not just their job, they're not just doing it for the money. They're also doing it for you... They push you to your very limit. They don't just say, 'oh yea, that's good enough'. They make you do it to the best of your ability…[they] make you want to do better.*

Allowing ākonga Māori to see their potential was important to Aroha:

> *Instead of them going over to careers and going on to do horticulture and all of that… we want our kids to go to whare wānanga (place of higher learning) ... I think having our own Mana-Motuhake over who we are in the kura [is important].*

These students agreed with Aroha about needing to hold high expectations of themselves. They understood the importance of being future and potential focused. This collective understanding was captured strongly by Te Ariki:

> *I feel like what would look successful is sustaining, a suitable lifestyle… Having enough money... to try and accomplish my goals. Math and English are [important] because they always open more gateways or careers that you want to potentially do in the future... Most people think that getting high grades is what makes you successful, but it's more like the knowledge you hold.*

Offering a wider reflection towards this kōrero, Abby emphasised a more holistic consideration of how she felt engaged and was successful in her kura:

> *Learning how to be a social person [is important], you will be able to get more out there and that can also lead to more opportunities in life… and being able to recognise what a good friend is and how to build healthy relationships.*

For this group of learners, their sense of success was intricately woven into needing to be both academically successful and have cultural aspirations of wellbeing for the future. Connecting Wendy's kōrero with what ākonga had shared, she explained her own understanding of what it looked like when her Māori students' cultural advantage is recognised and their innate capabilities unleashed. Wendy shared:

> *Māori are succeeding in an environment and or context where they feel they are being acknowledged as Māori and that context is allowing them to be Māori…they should be able to bring out their culture and experience of being Māori to a piece of work and therefore have a more equitable experience about being proud of who they are.*

While Wendy's experience was founded upon her recognition that she was an outsider to Māori culture but with responsibilities to enact the legislative mandates on leaders by the E&TA, 2020, Aroha offered a differing experience. An experience founded upon the understanding the complexities of education and being Māori within that system. Aroha challenged those in leadership to make space for Māori to enact rangatiratanga and work in collaboration with Māori more effectively. Aroha insisted:

> *If nothing changes, we're still going to get the same results… [We need to] be bold. Be brave, give us space, now is the time…We're not just jumping in a waka from Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa, paddling from Rangiātea to New Zealand here, we're actually trying to come up with a plan.*

This collaborative story highlights how through the operation of kāwanatanga to exercise authority, leadership power shaped whether Māori were required to advocate or negotiate space where they could enact mana-motuhake, and whether high expectations for ākonga Māori were supported. Furthermore, these experiences emphasise how policy was used to guide and transform as the expectation by leadership was that everyone was a part of the solution in ensuring ākonga Māori could flourish within this kura.

# Chapter summary

These collaborative stories identify a complex journey for educational leaders as they navigate the interface between policy and praxis for ākonga Māori. The experiences shared reveal deliberate acts of leadership that encompass three very different leadership positions. These leadership enactments are differentiated by the extent to which each of the principals prioritised collaborative spaces where mana-motuhake could be enacted with and for Māori at all levels of the school and involving and spreading the responsibility amongst all staff. When expectations and space were not provided by leaders, the opportunities for agency and leadership responsibilities to be assumed by other staff members was limited. This stalled and softened the impacts of what E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia intended. The perspectives of the ākonga and whānau in this study, offer a grounded view of their realities as ākonga and whānau Māori and can pave the way for others like them. Their perspectives (ākonga and whānau Māori) reveal the necessity for leaders to actively understand te reo Māori themselves then affirm these beliefs by creating spaces where Māori language, culture and identity are prioritised and they lead this process in collaboration with others.

When examining these stories against the expectations of statutory obligations to give effect to Te Tiriti through the implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia, Wendy's experiences demonstrate the clearest example of leadership that strives to give effect to Te Tiriti under the E&TA, 2020. By working with her Governance and Māori lead teacher, Wendy was taking greater responsibility for creating conditions necessary to ensure ākonga Māori were supported and their potential was able to be extended as Māori.

Her deliberate acts of deep reflection through a process of conscientisation, commitment to using her governance authority to shape the experiences of ākonga Māori in her kura, and her prioritisation of professional development that aimed to support her entire staff, illustrated that she expected these obligations were everybody's responsibilities. By positioning mandated expectations at governance-level in decision making, responsibility for these obligations were owned instead of abrogated to others. This fostered conditions where Māori were not required to advocate on their own, as commitments were embedded and responsibilities were for all, therefore utilising policy secured in structural governance to be transformative in nature.

In contrast, the tumuaki in the Intermediate context withheld authority by interpreting these obligations transactionally. This meant that the kaiako Māori leader was often required to advocate within conditions that constrained her agency or power to enact. Different again was the response illustrated by the primary tumuaki. Evidenced within this response was leadership grounded in goodwill and caring relationships. However, responsibility for the implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia remained an endeavour shared amongst an increasing group of recently employed Māori staff rather than being intentionally exercised at governance levels and becoming the responsibility of all staff.

Ultimately these responses illustrate that while all leaders worked within the same externally mandated policy and schooling requirements, how they responded differed according to their understanding and interpretations of their governance authority. The 2020 policy reforms shifted Te Tiriti from enactment through goodwill to legal obligations to give effect. Reflection upon these findings provides an opportunity to consider how educational leadership can be enacted so that principals are supported to create spaces where “Māori are enjoying and achieving education success as Māori as they develop the skills to participate in te ao Māori, Aotearoa and the wider world” (MoE, 2020, p. 5).

# Chapter Five: Discussion

## Introduction

The experiences of Māori within kura-auraki schooling have historically differed vastly from the experiences of those within kura kaupapa settings. G. Smith (2000) considers this is because of the differing awareness, expectations and use of power relations that form the critical consciousness of people. In this regard, the literature (as explained in Chapter Two) is clear there is a strong connection between how Māori feel that their identity is perceived as of value within kura-auraki and the influence of experiences that shape those understandings. Attempting to understand how and why these influences impact Māori in kura-auraki must begin with listening to the voices of those who shape them; kaiako and ākonga Māori their whānau and the school leaders. In attempting to answer my research questions these are the contexts in which I have worked.

## Main research question: The interface, between tumuaki and kaiako Māori, in terms of influencing implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia

This research sought to examine the extent to which the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori impacts policy and praxis as they worked together to see ākonga Māori advantaged and positioned to reach their potential. It aimed to determine how leadership can improve educational outcomes for Māori through the effective implementation of Ha Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia. The findings of this study presented three different collaborative stories, providing an opportunity to hear from leaders and Māori. These stories shed light upon key leadership responses shaping the interface of policy and praxis in schooling, for and with Māori learners. Findings reveal three different leadership responses by the tumuaki in each of the schools (primary, intermediate and secondary), to the mandated expectations of delivering equitable educational experiences for ākonga Māori that would see ākonga Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori (MoE, 2020). This change begins with whether the tumuaki, informed by external policies, leads the school to achieve these and demonstrates clear expectation across all levels and systems within the school, about how they will do this. Taken in order of presentation, the first response illustrated one where the tumuaki largely withheld power yet expected

the Māori senior leader to make this happen. The second response revealed that while the tumuaki demonstrated goodwill and well-established reciprocal relationships across the kura the responsibility to implement Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia was dependent on kaiako Māori rather than being placed upon governance structures and being the expected responsibility of all. The third response recognised the responsibility of mandated policy expectations, and exercised leadership at the level of governance and throughout all structures and systems in the school. In this response we begin to see the difference between leadership responses that simply honour their obligations to The Treaty of Waitangi, as discussed in chapter 2, and those who truly attempt to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and their obligations under the E&TA, 2020.

The following discussion addresses the main research question. It begins by examining how the different interpretations of statutory obligations may well have influenced the exercising of leadership authority at the interface of tumuaki and kaiako Māori, and how this shaped the implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia. While all leaders worked within the same legislative framework, they varied in their responses. This was probably due to their own critical awareness and therefore their responsibility to contribute more equitably to the social reality facing Māori and why this Act and policy expectation have been placed on schools. The discussion concludes by considering how only one tumuaki, through processes of reflection and action, was able to recognise and challenge oppressive power structures and begin to implement Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia in a more meaningful way. Through this discussion, I illustrate how leadership determines whether the mandated expectations of policy are stalled, softened, or given opportunity to transform practice in kura-auraki settings and subsequently whether ākonga Māori were able to experience enjoyment and educational success as Māori.

## Honouring, Enacting or Giving Effect

Given the themes and experiences found in the collaborative stories, it is necessary to consider leaders obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi since the E&TA, 2020 was launched. This refers to how leaders interpret and therefore practice their obligations in their daily decision making, their relationships and interactions with teachers including Māori teachers, with learners and with whānau. In Table 1 below, the three different responses identified in Chapter Two, and as found in Ministry documents, policies and the Act

are reiterated. I discuss these within contexts revealed in the findings, that risked stalling policy change, tried to soften change, or supported the emergence of transformative school reform.

**Table 1: Leadership interpretation and responses to Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

| Descriptor | Definitions from policy documents | Leadership implications |
|---|---|---|
| Honouring<br>(risk of stalling any change process due to lack of clarity and unfulfilled intentions) | To give respect and act with integrity through an allegiance of one's moral principles. | • Intentions are often difficult to observe in practice and dependent upon personal interpretations of principles.Values based decision-making such as meritocracy is often at play.<br>• Mana-motuhake is often constrained and seldom negotiated.<br>• Leadership withholds power. |
| Enacting<br>(a softer approach, often lacking in criticality to spread and embed policy reform) | Formal recognition of the need to make things happen through the establishment of relationships and beginning changes in structures that seek to establish alignment with the moral principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. | • Commitments begin to be incorporated into policy.<br>• Outward expression of Te Tiriti principles established through relational leadership collaborations.<br>• Prioritises relational embedding of frameworks rather than recognising or supporting Te Tiriti obligations into praxis.<br>• Spaces for mana-motuhake and Māori agency are supported but reliant on Māori personnel availability rather than everyone contributing.<br>• Leadership grounded in goodwill and relationships. |
| Giving Effect<br>(understands the critical need to spread, embed and ensure transformative change for social justice) | Putting Te Tiriti into practical effect through operationalising and implementing new systems and structures at kāwanatanga levels through a process of personal conscientisation and restructuring to take everyone along. | • Practical application of intentions to give effect to Te Tiriti.<br>• Kāwanatanga decision-making and Tiriti principles applied in praxis across the school.<br>• Deep levels of conscientisation illustrated in the leadership discourses and practices. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Equitable educational experiences for ākonga Māori across the school by Māori and non-Māori.<br>• Disrupting the current education system by changing the hearts and minds of all in the school and into their home community.<br>• Mana-motuhake secured safely through shared structural authority to give practical effect to Te Tiriti. |

As shown in Table 1, the findings suggest that leadership responses to Te Tiriti o Waitangi varied according to how the tumuaki interpreted and demonstrated their responsibilities to put Te Tiriti into effect. While at the time it was the mandated responsibility of the Board to give effect to Te Tiriti this begins by the tumuaki keeping the Board abreast of all the new legal and policy requirements.

It appeared that tumuaki who become stalled in their implementation of the Ka Hikitia policies might well be stuck in an outdated position of believing we were still just needing to be Treaty honouring. Other tumuaki who were following the "enacting Te Tiriti" pathway may well have established changes in a few of their policies, but they were still heavily reliant on Māori personnel coming in to do the work related to Māori policies. This interpretation softens the impact of change on non-Māori staff within the kura who may incorrectly believe that they don't have a role. This may well be the belief of many non-Māori tumuaki, who still believe their role is to clear the path for Māori to do this work and to do this in positive relational ways. Tumuaki, demonstrating leadership that gave effect to Te Tiriti, illustrated practical changes and outcomes. These tumuaki aspired to transform the experiences of their ākonga Māori by mobilising their structural authority so that practical application of the intentions of Te Tiriti o Waitangi could be seen outwardly. Leadership that seeks to give effect to Te Tiriti must respond from a position of disrupting the education system so that hearts and minds are changed and therefore equitable experiences are the outcome (Berryman et al., 2024). Changing hearts and minds of people who are deeply invested in the racialised discourses woven into the fabric of society in Aotearoa is a challenging space to work in. It requires courage. Understanding the power of operationalising and implementing at kāwanatanga, will have greater capability of disrupting the disparities and shifting

imbalances in privileges that ākonga Māori (Berryman, 2022) and other Indigenous learners (Khalifa et al., 2016) currently experience across the education systems in which they seek to learn.

### Impacts of Coupling an Act Together with a Policy

The coupling of the E&TA, 2020 with the third phase of the Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia policy should have marked the clear turning point of this policy in Aotearoa's educational landscape. It indicated a clear redirection for education at government level to move from being a partner and honouring the Treaty of Waitangi with goodwill and relational attempts of supporting ākonga Māori, to legally and structurally giving effect to these requirements at the level of leadership and governance (Berryman, 2022). The establishment of the E&TA, 2020 made implementation a necessity rather than option. It offered opportunities to combine the strengths of the whole school and its home communities. Now, it required the tumuaki and governance to take responsibility and have paramount objectives to ensure that Māori attain their highest possible standard in educational achievement by ensuring equitable responses and outcomes for Māori (see E&TA, 2020, section 127).

Understanding this political shift in educational policy in Aotearoa is essential when examining these research findings. Together, the Act and Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia made visible how leadership interpretation influences the consciousness of others, and therefore the interface between tumuaki, the governance and kaiako (Māori and non-Māori). To ensure Section 127 was implemented effectively and correctly requires a conscious awareness of educators to the disparities the system has caused to the rights of learners and to the differences the system and they could and should be making. Therefore, this responsibility required of them to embed these beliefs and understandings at governance and structural levels so that they were able to be incorporated across the schools' staff and systems. In these contexts, the need for advocacy was reduced as the conditions established across the organisation created an environment that was culturally responsive, relational for both Māori and non-Māori so that they could begin to learn from each other.

Policy in the context of this research offers the opportunity to consider it (policy) as a lever for change (Berryman, 2022). Working together, the Act and the third phase of Ka Hikitia established a mandate that could be stalled, softened or worked effectively depending on the dispositions towards social justice

of those in leadership. It moved policy beyond a willingness to honour and enact, to a level of embedding at kāwanatanga to give effect to Te Tiriti. While some leaders acknowledged this shift and moved with it, others did not. This may have been partly due to the current coalition government that then sought to change Te Tiriti and its influence through this Act and then in 2026 with the Education Training and Amendment Act 2025 (MoE, 2025c) did just that.

## Three Leadership Responses at the Interface of Policy and Praxis

Leaders hold the responsibility to acknowledge the inadequacy of actions in the past and must advocate for education to progress in new directions that will meet the expectations and requirements of all people (Shields, 2012). With many Māori in kura-auraki experiencing racist and inequitable experiences to that of their peers in kura kaupapa (Duckworth et al., 2021; Webber & MacFarlane, 2020), examining how leaders respond to this responsibility is integral to understanding the interface of policy and praxis in Aotearoa. This discussion interprets the findings as three different responses to the mandated expectations to give effect to Te Tiriti through the implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, and the E&TA, 2020. In the findings chapter these responses are exemplified in the collaborative stories through experiences of deliberate leadership acts. However, the following discussion reflects and examines how these deliberate leadership acts were shaped by leadership authority, determining whether policy responsibilities and obligations were either stalled, softened, or beginning to be embedded structurally and begin to be put into practical effect with all staff.

### Leadership One: The Withholding of Power

#### Key Characteristics

One of the major findings of this research was a leadership response where statutory responsibilities towards Te Tiriti were framed as optional rather than structural. Positioned from a stance of honouring te Tiriti, responses to legislative requirements were stalled as they were interpreted as obligations that could be acknowledged intrapersonally at the discretion of personal morals but did not necessarily need to be acted upon through governance responsibility. Despite acknowledgement from leaders that there was an aspiration to create experiences for ākonga Māori where they felt valued, engaged and successful, kāwanatanga was often absent from initiating priorities for change or embedding them into

practice. In this response, authority remained concentrated at leadership, creating conditions that required Māori to advocate for policy guarantees with little power or agency. Leadership characterised in this way illustrated how power-withheld influences the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori as they work in different ways to introduce Māori-related policies into practice. This leadership response demonstrates how personal consciousness can stall leadership attempts to meet the responsibilities of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia and the E&TA, 2020 at governing and structural levels because they are perhaps less of a priority.

### The Role of Power, Positioning and Policy

Although Māori were offered opportunities to participate in policy priorities for Māori learners the confines by which they could do this were decided by the tumuaki. Therefore, creating spaces for mana-motuhake, that respected the innate capabilities and cultural potential of ākonga Māori and their whānau, through mutually beneficial relationships remained vulnerable. Leadership that operates from such a position does not redistribute authority but instead carefully manages it. As a result, kaiako Māori within kura such as these must negotiate within the constraints placed upon them. The impact of positioning of power in this way is that the responsibility for maintaining momentum for Māori-related policy obligations falls upon Māori staff, despite them not having full governing authority for decision making. The consequence is a sense of frustration felt by Māori staff as they negotiate what they can and cannot do, despite knowing what they should be allowed to do.

The impacts of abrogating responsibility but still determining how authority can be enacted by others, raises consideration of how power placement, policy and enacted leadership work in harmony or discord to create conditions that require Māori to advocate for policy promises. The E&TA, 2020 was clear. It outlined that the "purpose of this Act includes establishing and regulating an education system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori-Crown relationships" (E&TA, 2020, s. 9). The aspiration was for Māori and non-Māori to exist equitably in educational settings. Central to this responsibility was relationships that fostered positive experiences for Māori (Berryman, 2022; MoE, 2020b). This use of power illustrated in this leadership response, demonstrates that when power is withheld, and, in the absence of kāwanatanga, advocacy is required, it falls on Māori, to try to ensure policy obligations are in place. When leaders fail to champion practices and initiatives that will support these policy aspirations,

kaiako Māori become disheartened. They feel ill-equipped to lead in ways that they knew will best support Māori. Often, a sense of distrust is created at what is being espoused as priorities and not given opportunities to be enacted. Interpreting these experiences alongside the policy and praxis interface, suggests that when power is not positioned according to policy, effective implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia is compromised.

The extent to which Māori leaders in this research were enabled to enact or constrained to enact by their leader's enactment of espoused values suggests that the power remains located within leadership practice, instead of being shared or distributed when needed. In this response the ability for kaiako Māori to give effect themselves, ultimately remained contingent on the leadership enactment of their tumuaki. This finding demonstrates that when leadership responds by withholding power, it can undermine both the integrity of the policy implementation and the personal actions and beliefs of leaders who aspire to meet the policy expectations.

### The Role of Critical Consciousness

This leadership response was shaped by their critical consciousness and thus their understandings of what was required of them. While their intention may not have been to be exclusive, the absence of this deep process of conscientisation influenced how governance authority was then able to either perpetuate or disrupt the inequity issues that have plagued intergenerationally, the educational experiences for Māori. This resulted in governance structures remaining unchanged, despite shifts in the requirements of educational policy. Leaders must fully engage in a process of conscientisation if they are to ensure their personal biases do not impact on their professional authority responsibilities (Freire, 1998b). Furthermore, if educators and leaders are to truly understand the impacts of colonisation, then they must undergo a deep transformative shift and awakening of their critical consciousness (Berryman, 2022; Freire, 1970, Khalifa et al., 2016). This response illustrates that this deep level and integral process towards transformative understandings and change usually does not happen on its own; it may require specific professional support. Without such support we risk ongoing leadership enactment through a meritocratic lens (see chapter Two), where the outcomes are owned individually rather than also being embedded structurally.

### The Role of Advocacy in Negotiating Space

The expectations imposed on Māori to have agency but then consequently their being forced to operate within constrained and negotiated spaces means they may become culturally and structurally insecure or they become disillusioned and might leave. When mana-motuhake is woven into the fabric of decision making through a mahi tahi *with* kaiako Māori, they can enact positions of agency, changing their status built upon deficit theorising and "take responsibility for transforming their own conditions" (Berryman et al., 2013, p. 10). In this leadership response, these conditions for mana-motuhake remained contingent on advocacy rather than structurally guaranteed through the leadership decisions of governance. The intent of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia was a statutory declaration that Māori were no longer required to advocate and fight for these conditions on their own (Berryman, 2022; MoE, 2020; MoE, 2020). However, the placement of power within leadership contexts such as these, meant that Māori success as Māori was not necessarily guaranteed but instead was still at the discretion of the leadership. As discussed, this frustration was particularly relevant for one of the sub questions that focused on how kaiako Māori experienced spaces of leadership (See the Intermediate Collaborative Story).

### Consequences of Leadership that Withholds Authority

Within this response, authority is neither overtly resisted nor actively exercised. Rather it remains silently retained establishing conditions where Māori are still the ones required to advocate for policy commitments. Collaborative spaces where mana-motuhake existed had to be negotiated instead of being secured through structural integrity. Instead, this response, exemplifies the existing gap between policy and praxis whereby the moral positioning remains stalled without structural shift (Berryman, 2022; Fullan, 1993). This would suggest that leadership enactment positioned in this response is not working at the interface between policy and praxis as envisioned by the establishment of both the ETA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia.

## Leadership Two: Grounded in Goodwill and Relationships

### Key Characteristics

The second leadership response that emerged from the findings reveals an approach embedded in relational goodwill and values-driven commitment to Te Tiriti. In this response, leadership authority was not withheld. Instead, leadership illustrated genuine allyship to Māori through reciprocal relationships,

fostering a culture of warmth and respect towards te ao Māori, and a shared desire to work collectively with kaiako Māori. Relational conditions within this response were remarkably stronger than those within the previous leadership response. Consequently, many working and learning within this kura felt a strong sense of trust and affirmation of their identity as Māori. However, despite these relational conditions, responsibility for Māori related policy mandates remained distributed amongst Māori instead of being fully embedded at the level of governance. This means that obligations to give effect to Te Tiriti were interpreted by leaders such as these as a shared effort of moral obligations to Māori, by Māori rather than being anchored in the structural fabric of the kura and being implemented by all. Despite the best intentions of leadership, this response meant enactment of the policy and Act expectations relied heavily upon the personnel, presence and commitment of Māori staff. This left the structural embedding of giving effect to Te Tiriti fragmented. At the leadership interface this response illustrates a softened approach to responsibility through goodwill and relational leadership.

### Relational Leadership

This leadership response illustrates leadership that intentionally aspires to model a relational commitment to Māori. Leaders who recognise and value te ao Māori is of great importance can began the process of establishing relationships that align with ensuring ākonga Māori can achieve success as Māori (MoE, 2009). These mutually beneficial relationships are necessary to establish a greater sense of collective agency and establish shared visions across organisations (Fullan, 1993; Shields, 2012). In many cases, this mahi tahi gives Māori a sense of purpose to be change agents themselves and therefore opportunities for self-determination (Battiste, 2000; G. Smith, 2000). Such actions position Māori as key contributors to the shared purpose and collective responsibility.

Balancing these relationships requires skills and precision to navigate the complexities involved in bringing Māori-related policies into praxis. Enacting leadership from this position requires intentional decisions and actions that foster, extend and safeguard these mutually beneficial relationships to build trust and accountability (Khalifa et al., 2016). Leaders who wish to make impactful change advocate for culturally responsive leadership and create environments where dynamic processes support communities to enact their cultural potential by fostering mutually beneficial relationships (Johnson,

2014; Lopez, 2015). The MoE (2013) articulates the importance of these relationships grounded in mahi tahi:

> A productive partnership in education means a two-way relationship leading to and generating shared action, outcomes and solutions. Productive partnerships are based on mutual respect, understanding and shared aspirations. They are formed by acknowledging, understanding and celebrating similarities and differences (p. 18)

Leadership embodied in this way establishes conditions that do not constrain those working within it. This response emphasises Branson and Marra's (2019) contention that leadership is a relational phenomenon. Educational leaders must ensure relationships demonstrate a heart for people, leading authentically to ensure what is espoused matches what is enacted (Begley, 2006; George, 2003; Giles & Morrison, 2010). Leadership grounded in relationships and shaped by authenticity is important as it makes visible the cultural affirmation that is asked of in the Act (E&TA 2020). The importance of these relationships was particularly important for the sub questions that asked how leaders believed Māori were experiencing success as Māori. As evidenced in the experiences of the Primary Collaborative story, cultural affirmation was considered a significant influence upon how Māori experienced success.

### The Limits of Relational Leadership

However, despite these relational strengths and honourable, goodwill, responsibility for enacting the expectations embedded in Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia, and the E&TA, 2020, remain largely situated as a shared responsibility at the classroom level rather than also being interpreted as leader driven responsibility. Although relational leadership is important when working cross culturally, culturally responsive leadership literature warns that relational practice alone does not effectively and fairly redistribute the power necessary for impact for equity and change (Khalifa et al., 2016; Shields, 2010). Leadership enacted in this way, risks not translating these expectations properly into the organisational structure (Shields, 2012), therefore not becoming the responsibility for all teachers and staff. In this regards Fullan (1993) and Lopez (2015) highlight the implications of such a response, as they contend that although everyone has a responsibility to be a part of the collective change, it is the role of the leader to recognise the volatile character of change and exert their authority accordingly. It cannot be

relied upon by a small few to enact transformative change that addresses social, political and societal inequities (Shields, 2010). By dispersing responsibility across some staff who share cultural connection with the group change is directed for, instead of also embedding what policy asks for at governance, opportunities can be hindered (Horsford et al., 2011).

### The Role of Consciousness in Embedding Policy

To give effect to Te Tiriti demands more than a relational response. The Act, and phase three of Ka Hikitia, expect leaders to exercise authority that embeds the aspiration of Māori experiencing equitable outcomes and enjoying education (Berryman, 2022; MoE, 2020b). Within this leadership response, relational and embodied leadership at times operate as a protective cushion against the challenging conversations that may be required and the paramount discomfort and fragility that often follows. In doing so, this response draws parallels with Liera's (2020) description of 'the culture of niceness.' Emphasising relational leadership as the driving force towards policy obligations that risks creating a 'culture of niceness' over the need for hard conversations required to alter societal inequalities. If school leaders are to embed transformative visions and practice within their kura, they need to be willing to move beyond this 'culture of niceness' by embedding these statutory obligations through governance (Liera, 2020; Shields, 2012).

The relational leadership response demonstrates a higher level of intentionality informed by relational awareness and consciousness. However, as it reflects a softened and partially embedded approach to policy, it illustrates how the deep levels of critical consciousness required to make transformative change are still not fully realised (Freire, 1998b; Shields, 2012). The implications of this for Māori agency are complex. Even though collective agency was encouraged, the full extent of governance authority to embed these legislative expectations had not been realised fully. Consequently, this agency by Māori was recognised through positive relationships but ultimately dependent on the continuing goodwill of others instead of being obtained through the enactment of Section 127 of the Act. With the structural embedding appearing only in part risks aligning with Young's (1958) idea of meritocracy where collective efforts would be sufficient in securing equitable outcomes.

Freire (1970) argues that reliable transformation in organisations requires deep critical awakening and awareness through conscientisation. Leaders must become acutely aware of the influence of power, and inequities rather than their personal bias. Similarly, culturally responsive literature emphasises that although there is a need to position indigenous learners as agentic learners and leaders, it must be sustained and supported by leadership authority from above (Berryman et al., 2014; Khalifa et al., 2016). The security that comes from governance authority is necessary to complete the translation of the intentions behind giving effect to Te Tiriti, into embedded practice within kura (Fullan, 1993; Shields, 2012).

### Where does this response sit with policy?

When examining this response within the parameters of the 2020 reforms, this leadership demonstrates how relational leadership grounded upon goodwill is not sufficient alone to fulfil the legislative obligations of giving effect to Te Tiriti. Yes, mahi tahi relationships are essential as they foster collaborative spaces in which Māori can enact mana-motuhake (Johnson, 2014; MoE, 2013). However, without utilising the strength offered by anchoring these decisions at governance levels, spaces where mana-motuhake could be enacted remain reliant on the goodwill of those in the kura. This response illustrates that the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori and therefore the implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia remain contingent upon the varying degrees of the consciousness of people and is therefore softened or again vulnerable to change because leaders' interpretations and possibilities for transformative change (Shields, 2012).

## Leadership Three: Mobilisation of Authority to Give Effect to Te Tiriti

### Key Characteristics

The third leadership response emerging reveals an approach that deliberately used governance authority to give effect to Te Tiriti and the legislative obligations of the E&TA, 2020. Mandated responsibilities were not abrogated to others nor were they reliant on relationships that may go unfulfilled. Instead, these statutory obligations were interpreted as responsibilities that needed to be embedded at kāwanatanga level and in decision-making throughout the school. This leadership demonstrates a commitment to processes of conscientisation to ensure that decision-making would shape the experiences of ākonga Māori positively and is prepared to seek external professional support to learn

about this. This leadership response can be characterised by deliberate decisions to prioritise professional development that supports all staff in understanding these legislative obligations for themselves and uses authoritative power to ensure this happens. At the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori, this leadership response used their role and responsibility to align policy and praxis, especially when there were clear signs of resistance.

### Decision-making at Kāwanatanga Level

This response gives insight into enacted leadership that understands their responsibility to give effect to Te Tiriti and situates these within kāwanatanga priorities. Difficult conversations, targeted professional development and deep reflective practice can help to ensure that the implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia can be strengthened. Leaders such as these foster conditions so that Māori are not required to advocate for experiences that have been assured to them through the E&TA 2020 (E&TA 2020), but that these can be led across the schools' systems and by all.

Both Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia and the E&TA, 2020 outline that these actions and decisions must begin at the level of tumuaki and Board of Trustees so that there is a coherent and deliberate response (E&TA 2020). By placing responsibilities for giving effect to Te Tiriti intentionally at kāwanatanga levels, leadership such as this can illustrate how implementation of policy can be shifted from relational enactment to structurally embedded practice. In doing so, it illustrates how leaders can align the aspirational intentions of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia to see ākonga Māori enjoying education, with governance accountability and into their schools' teaching and learning.

The importance of such practice is explained by West (1993). He contends that effective leaders are ones who become critics and artists, carefully considering the "politics of difference to cast their nets widely, flex their muscles broadly, and thereby refuse to limit their visions, analysis and praxis to their particular terrains" (p. 40). In this context, flexing of muscles is evident in how authoritative power is mobilised to disrupt the status quo of Māori disparities across the organisation and spread the vision of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia. This is necessary if education in Aotearoa desires to respond effectively to the mandated changes that attempt to remedy the systems' perpetuation of intergenerational disparities for Māori. Action must begin at kāwanatanga levels and be driven by those in leadership (Berryman, 2022).

Anchoring Te Tiriti within strategic planning and governance priorities shaping the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori so that advocacy is not required for negotiating these conditions by Māori alone. Leaders who respond in this way foster environments where Māori can enact mana-motuhake safely within clearly defined expectations that these are the responsibilities of all staff. The importance of spaces where mana-motuhake could be enacted without constraint was particularly important for one of the sub questions that explored how leadership actions supported Māori to succeed as Māori (See the Secondary Collaborative Story).

### The Role of Consciousness and Professional Development

It is clear to see that when leadership is grounded in a deep level of critical historical and social consciousness the effective implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia is more likely to follow. This deep level of conscientisation supports leaders to understand that Te Tiriti obligations are policy mandated and they are socially just. This then requires their full commitment and use of power to ensure as many as possible within the kura also share in these understandings. Leaders such as these understand that policy obligations are not just an obligation, but instead they are an ethical responsibility.

This acknowledgement of the ethical accountability reflects the movement required by leaders who seek to work transformatively rather than transactionally (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2012). Leadership action and thinking positioned in this way illustrates how conscientisation can be used and mobilised to disrupt inequitable experiences (Freire, 1970; Shields, 2012). Leading spaces where dynamic views of culture and success are fluid and encompass diverse and multiple identities requires bridging and cross-cultural understanding (Bishop, 2006; Kincheloe et al., 2012; Lopez, 2015). When these expectations are not understood and embedded, deliberate actions to prioritise Māori becomes rhetoric (Shields, 2010) and likely to reinforce the status quo of disparities. By reflecting deeply upon the role of personal consciousness, leaders can illustrate how to balance these cross-cultural expectations more effectively.

If educational leaders truly seek to prioritise collaborative spaces where mana-motuhake can be enacted, they require a deep undoing and challenging of their biases (Berryman, 2022; Shields et al., 2002; G. Smith, 2000). Choosing to prioritise professional development that support staff in beginning this journey, signals leaders working within this leadership response understand that giving effect to Te

Tiriti requires levels of discomfort to move forward (Berryman, 2022; Liara, 2020). Leadership enacted through engagement with relevant professional development, indicates that responsibility towards these statutory obligations also requires ongoing interrogation of leadership practice, not just relational conditions.

Leaders who work in this way, reflect a position of humility as they lead by example, seeking to establish structural accountability within their organisation by disrupting the system wide inequities that societies face (Shields, 2012). This critical reorientation of not only leaders but all, is more likely to ensure structural change and integrity as the responsibility is placed on all staff (Fullan, 2020). In the context of Aotearoa this repositioning, through a process of professional development that educates about the challenges Māori face, is more likely to see kura effectively implementing the aspirations of the E&TA, 2020, through Ka Hikitia-Ka Hāpaitia.

### Importance of this Leadership Response on the policy interface

Leaders who wish to ensure they activate their governance authority must do so in a way that effectively shapes how Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia is implemented in practice so collaborative spaces that foster opportunities for Māori to enact mana-motuhake are the outcome. Instead of relying on Māori to drive and sustain the expectations of policy on their own, this response ensures expectations are clear through professional development, conversations and learning priorities focussing on Māori, that responsibilities fall upon all. This established a greater consistency of expectations across the kura as experiences were less dependent upon the individual perceptions of people (West, 1993). As such, giving effect to Te Tiriti was anchored in structural integrity and therefore this strengthened the conditions in which respect for the innate capabilities, cultural potential and spaces for mana-motuhake aligned.

Underscoring this leadership response are actions attributed to transformative leadership. Cooper (2009) and Shields' (2012) both contend that transformative leaders attempt to challenge, undo and analyse the structural and societal constraints placed upon them. Transformative leaders intend to establish organisational culture that cultivates one of transformation for the diverse cultures in which they serve, by reflecting on their own experiences, judgements and practices to ensure they do not hinder the vision and culture they seek to create (Cooper, 2009; Lopez, 2015). This requires leaders to

confront inequities and dismantle entrenched assumptions to bring about decision-making and actions that will make a difference for these marginalised populations (Cooper, 2010; Lopez, 2015). G. Smith (2000) brings these sentiments to the forefront of education in Aotearoa when he contends that leadership committed to social justice must gracefully balance the necessity to address the needs of the learners while simultaneously respecting the complex organisational culture dynamics.

### The Impact of this Leadership Response upon the Interface

The impact of this leadership response demonstrates how the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori can operate as a location to also embed structural expectations rather than just negotiate relationships. The difference between this leadership response and the previous two lies in how these statutory obligations were interpreted and therefore enacted. This understanding is pivotal in examining how the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori navigates the implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia. This leadership response does not soften the statutory obligations at the center of the Act and Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia. Instead, it gives opportunity for transformative change that begins to see Māori experiencing success as Māori in kura-auraki strengthened by kāwanatanga accountability.

### Chapter Summary

What is revealed in this discussion is leadership that encompasses multiple positions, differentiated by critical consciousness and subsequently their varying commitment to mahi tahi and cultural recognition of spaces where mana-motuhake are enacted. The leadership responses differed in their interpretation of whether they honour, enact or give effect to Te Tiriti. Such interpretations inform their deliberate acts of leadership, and therefore whether implementation of Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, is stalled, softened or given opportunity to be transformative. These responses shaped the way in which Māori were supported to succeed and achieve success as Māori or not. Accentuating these experiences through leadership responses, is the process of conscientisation, wherein leaders actively attempt to change awareness of their own, and others social consciousness (Freire, 1970). This suggests that the changing of awareness and social consciousness is pivotal in shaping the interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori as they work to effectively implemented Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia so that Māori experience success as Māori in kura-auraki.

# Chapter Six: Conclusion

## Introduction

This chapter discusses how despite the best intentions of leaders, leadership responses may continue to perpetuate the intergenerational status quo of disparities for Māori, unless leaders chose to be both challenged and courageous. This chapter begins by examining the influence of power upon leadership to reveal the implications of this research for others. It then provides a focus on Leadership Three if we are to see the transformative change for Māori. After sharing the limitations and future pathways for research, this chapter closes by offering some concluding reflections.

## Power-relations for Māori Agency and Mana-motuhake through Kāwanatanga

Underscoring each of the leadership responses revealed in this research is the influence of the positioning of power and the interpretation of statutory responsibilities upon the creation of collaborative spaces where mana-motuhake can be enacted without constraint. If leaders seek to be effective in implementing Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia, while working alongside Māori, they must reflect deeply and be consciously aware of both the impact of their power relations and the interpretation of their statutory responsibilities.

### Power Positioning Shapes Conditions

Power must address the impacts of colonisation and shape conditions positively so that ākonga Māori can thrive as Māori. This requires addressing historical disparities so that Māori are active participants in their learning and leading (Berryman, 2022). This requires the repositioning of power so that indigenous knowledge and ways of being is retracted from the margins and placed in the center. When Māori and non-Māori are learning from each other (Berryman et al., 2017; Denzin et al., 2007), policy and praxis will have greater opportunities to align, and teaching and learning is more likely to have positive influence on the engagement and outcomes of ākonga Māori (MoE, 2013). Positioning power in this way, creates the opportunity and capacity for Māori (and non-Māori) to safely enact the agency that both literature and policy specifies as mandated responsibilities (Berryman, 2022; MoE, 2020). Indigenous learners across the globe have faced the same experiences as Māori. Therefore, these implications are not isolated to the shores of Aotearoa. Leaders across the globe must endeavour to

position power in ways that ensure the validity of knowledge, exercising of culture and experiences of success, can benefit all. As Battiste (2000) explains, “domination and oppression cannot be altered without the dominated and the dominators confronting the knowledge and thought processes that frame their thinking, their complacency, and their resistance” (p.xxiv).

Understanding how this domination and oppression perpetuate the intergenerational status quo of Māori disparities requires conscientisation (Freire, 1970). Leaders who undergo such process will be more likely to position power so that it does not resist or constrain what is necessary for this transformative change.

### Influence of Advocacy upon Māori Agency that sees Māori achieving success as Māori

Māori feel successful as Māori when they sense that power is positioned in ways that see them hear them and value them (Webber & MacFarlane, 2020). These conditions are necessary for ensuring that Māori have opportunities to transform their own conditions (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop, 2009). Māori agency within this study was not only shaped by the positive relationships grounded in mahi tahi but also by the extent to which kāwanatanga authority fostered conditions that supported advocacy by Māori.

Advocacy communicates how power is positioned within kura. Where these conditions are withheld or softened, spaces where Māori experience success as Māori require negotiation and advocacy for what policy promises. In contrast, when kāwanatanga exercises authority across organisations, Māori can freely enact mana-motuhake without justification and the burden of advocacy. Being able to enact mana-motuhake is important for Māori as a response to the impacts of colonisation (G. Smith, 2000). There is a fine line that distinguishes whether Māori are burdened with advocacy or supported to enact mana-motuhake (Bishop, 2009). As both Freire (1970) and Shields (2012) suggest, leadership that truly seeks to be transformative in nature must critically engage with structural power to take away these conditions that create the need to advocate.

## Implications

### Structural Enactment necessary for Statutory Responsibilities

The 2020 education reforms repositioned Te Tiriti obligations from moral goodwill to statutory expectations. When these statutory responsibilities are enacted from governance levels, the implementation of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia aligns much more closely with the goal to successfully create spaces that respect the innate capabilities and cultural potential of Māori (MoE, 2013). Leaders who are willing to disrupt the status quo by structurally embedding Te Tiriti, will have a greater chance of securing equitable outcomes for their students who are disadvantaged (Khalifa et al., 2016; Shields, 2012).

### Relational Leadership is not sufficient on its own

This research illustrates that while relational leadership is important to gain the trust and develop positive organisational culture (Begley, 2012; Branson & Marra, 2019), it is not sufficient alone to effectively implement Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia. Relationships grounded in mahi tahi are important in changing the outcomes for their students who are disadvantaged (Dantley & Tillman, 2010), but they must be supported by the intentional governance-level action. Relational goodwill alone has not worked in the past (Berryman, 2022b) and it is not working in this research. Leaders must position themselves as transformative leaders who will intentionally use their authority to ensure Te Tiriti obligations are embedded in their strategic decisions, professional learning opportunities and organisational culture (Berryman et al., 2014; Shields, 2012).

### Implications for Kāwanatanga and Board of Trustees

This research also carries implications for governance bodies in kura. Both the E&TA, 2020 and the Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia implore educational sectors across Aotearoa to deliver programmes that are inclusive, equitable and accessible for ākonga Māori (MoE, 2024). Boards are explicitly responsible for ensuring this happens. Kāwanatanga must prioritise embedding these mandated responsibilities within the organisational structure through resourcing decisions, professional development foci and deliberate leadership actions. Board of Trustees who give effect to Te Tiriti in this way, ensure they exhibit a position that is committed to a “vision, purpose and action within our education system to support Māori enjoying and achieving education success as Māori” (MoE, 2020, p. 5). This will make sure the aspirations of both the E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia- Ka Hapaitia are not stalled or softened but instead given opportunity to create transformative shifts that society needs.

### Implications for the policy-praxis interface

To give effect to Te Tiriti leaders must hold a consistent stance towards social justice and transformative enactment of policy (Shields, 2012). Policy and curriculum can change rapidly over time. Therefore, those in leadership need to remain resolute to a vision (Fullan, 1993), in this case that sees Māori thriving as Māori despite the changing directives currently being thrown at them. Leaders need to critically consider how they can shape the policy to praxis interface to disrupt and address the inequities Māori communities have faced historically. This research shows leaders must shape the interface between policy and praxis in ways that remove conditions that constrain Māori (Berryman, 2022b; Shields, 2012). When leadership practice honours Māori through opportunities where they can live freely as Māori (Durie, 2003), it brings to life the principles of Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia whereby all Māori, are truly flourishing, and they are more likely to be doing this on their own terms.

## Learning from the Leadership Stories

Leadership One depicts leadership where honouring Te Tiriti may be central to interaction and deliberate leadership decisions but ultimately, still perpetuates the conditions where Māori are required to challenge the system on their own if Māori identity is to be endorsed and flourish (Durie, 2017). This advocacy is not always without frustration. Leadership enacted in this way creates a disconnect between what is espoused as important commitments within an organisation, and enacted leadership practices. As a result, the dynamics of the relationships become a pivotal space in which these tensions are felt and often unable to be negotiated. Relational dynamics and moral consciousness determine the parameters of safety for Māori to enact leadership connected to their identities.

Leadership Two demonstrates an interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori that creates excitement amongst the collective by establishing strong mutually beneficial relationships. Determined to both honour and enact Te Tiriti, this leadership understands that disruption of the system needs to happen for Māori to be able to enjoy and engage in education (MoE, 2020). However, relying so heavily upon Māori it risks softening and restricting the impact of change. Literature is clear that while relational leadership can be attributed to benefiting organisational culture, it must be done in conjunction with a change in structural power-relations (Berryman, 2022b; Shields, 2012). Leaders who aim to foster transformative change that improves outcomes for Māori, must be determined to have all pieces of the

puzzle working together, not just some of the pieces. Although well intentioned this leadership ultimately does not make the shift that addresses the intergenerational disparities that exist in Aotearoa (Berryman, 2022b). This shift requires structural assurances not simply relational ones.

Leadership Three depicts leadership that is has the capability to begin to make the transformative shifts in education required (Shields, 2010). This leader understands their responsibility to give effect to Te Tiriti goes beyond simply honouring and enacting it. These leaders recognise the necessity to "develop their own critical consciousness before they attempt to impart this knowledge or affect the work of those they train as educational leaders" (Khalifa et al., 2016, p. 1285). They illustrate the skill required by educational leaders to navigate the tensions that exist when leading cross culturally in Aotearoa. Leadership that gives practical effect to Te Tiriti by implementing frameworks and decision-making at kāwanatanga level, through a process of personal and structural conscientisation, creates opportunity for transformative change. Leadership such as this can make the shifts and disrupt the current educational disparities and experiences Māori face.

LimitationsThis study presents limitations that need to be acknowledged. While I have tried to use a participatory approach to ensure the voices of the participants and their knowledge is honoured appropriately, the presentation of findings through collaborative stories only captures a small portion of the larger kōrero. Additionally, the sample size is of a relatively small scale considering how many kura in Aotearoa would be impacted by this research question.

Nevertheless, building upon research that predates this study, this research adds valuable commentary and understandings necessary to develop richer insights towards the area of policy, practice and educational leadership. To enhance the rigor and strengthen these understandings, this study would benefit from further repetition of the research and replication of it on a much larger scale.

## Looking Forward: New Pathways for Future Research

Looking to the past, it is clear to see research that has been completed in Aotearoa to consider how education can create experiences and opportunities to advantage ākonga Māori. However, there is less research that examines how the leadership interface between tumuaki and kaiako Māori and non-Māori

works to provide opportunities to enact the innate capabilities, cultural potential and therefore mana-motuhake of Māori. It is therefore crucial that more research is done to examine how these leadership relationships can work more effectively for ākonga Māori and for *all*.

Beyond the questions asked in this study there are further opportunities for research. Examination of the impacts of professional development upon support leaders in understanding their mandated responsibilities would be a worthwhile inquiry. Considering how mahi tahi with outside organisations can bolster and strengthen existing leadership in kura-auraki contexts would also be worthy of research. What is evident from undertaking this line of research is the need to further investigate into the challenges faced by kura-auraki leaders to support the education system in its entirety, to bring to life the principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia. In doing so, education will benefit from ākonga who are enacting their innate capabilities, cultural potential, and their enactment of mana-motuhake.

Existing research places significant attention on how learning environments can support ākonga Māori, and on the qualities of effective educational leadership.

## Concluding Reflections

History in Aotearoa, as evidenced by the impacts of colonisation, has shown us that leadership power is not neutral (Berryman 2022; G. Smith, 2000). The findings from this thesis would argue that leadership power has the capability to determine whether Te Tiriti is softened, stalled or used to give structural authority. Section 127 of the E&TA 2020 demands educators to give effect to Te Tiriti (E&TA 2020). This requires a conscious awareness of the disparities the system has caused, an awareness of the rights of learners, and an understanding by leaders of what they (leaders) can be doing to make difference. This will take learning and a concerted effort by all. Efforts are a worthy even more so if we consider the political voices of the present that claim giving effect to Te Tiriti is no longer important. Leaders who acknowledge these things are likely to be giving effect to Te Tiriti and implementing Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia more effectively. Leaders who are not aware or who think reforms such as this are not a priority, may fall short of the expectations outlined by policy and legislative reforms (E&TA 2020; MoE, 2020). Berryman (2022) states leaders need to understand “the personal and professional responsibility to use power, privilege and position to promote social justice and enlightenment for the benefit of society as a

whole" (p. 174). It is not simply enough to use one's leadership authority to make competing or misaligned decisions.

If we are to see schools giving effect to Te Tiriti as it was intended by the E&TA, 2020 and Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia, it requires hard and courageous conversations. It requires actions that change the minds, hearts and desires of all educators. Leadership that can begin to make the shifts that ākonga Māori deserve, and education in Aotearoa needs in today's climate, demands courage and bravery. In the words of Moana Jackson:

> Being courageous or being brave is just the deep breath you take before you start something difficult. And I have no doubt that there are enough of our people, and there is an increasing number of others, who have that courage and are willing to act on it. So that gives me hope. (as cited in Watea Team, 2025, para.13)

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Participant Invitation Letter

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.
**Participant role: _____** (Principal or Kaiako Māori)
Tēna koe _____ (name of research participant).

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna koutou katoa
Ko Putauaki te maunga
Ko Ōhinemataroa te awa
Ko Mātaatua tōku waka
Ko Ngāti Hokopu te hapu
Ko Ngāti Awa te iwi
No Whakatane ahau
Ko Morrinsville tōku kainga ināianei
Ko Ngaia tāku ingoa.
Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēna koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

My name is Ngaia Mason and I am a postgraduate student studying a Master's in educational leadership through Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato (The University of Waikato). I am also a lead teacher within a primary school in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton), and an Across School Leader for my Kāhui Ako. As a kaiako Māori, I am passionate about pursuing education experiences that support ākonga Māori and their whānau in successfully engaging in learning opportunities that see them flourish in cultural identity. This year, I am privileged to have received a study award to complete a research thesis to complete my Master's program. My passion for ākonga Māori, and like-minded kaiako leading in kura, has developed a curiosity to use this opportunity to explore leadership actions and intentions that influence ākonga Māori succeeding as Māori in their kura. My academic endeavours have supported me to recognise the importance of both kaiako Māori and school Principals in this narrative. Through this research I endeavour to provide evidence to identify how senior leaders in education can lead through their implementation of Ka Hikitia, in ways that advantage Māori, through sharing their lived experiences.

You were identified, through previous whakawhanaungatanga opportunities as an educational leader who is effectively leading change that seeks to enable success for ākonga Māori. I am keen to hear your whakaaro (thoughts) and experiences more in depth and would like to invite you to take part in this study. Attached to this letter of invitation is a participant information sheet outlining the details of the research and a research consent form. If you are satisfied with the details of participation after reading through the information sheet provided, and you are willing to participate as outlined, I invite you to contact me via email or phone. At that point, we can organise a time to meet face to face to discuss the research further and organise times for further meetings. Thank you for considering this invitation. If you have any queries regarding this research after reading through the attached participation information sheet, then please reach out via email and we can discuss these further. I look forward to hearing from you.

If required my supervisor can be contacted at:

Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Ngā mihi nui,
Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz

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## Appendix B: Kaiako Māori Information Sheet

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Outlined below is the description of the research project in which you have been invited to participate. The main research question being asked is 'how does the school's leadership interface, between Māori and tauiwi, influence combined bicultural actions to implement the Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia policy in order to bring about Māori achieving education success as Māori, and what have been some of the outcomes?'

You have been identified as an educational leader who strives to support ākonga Māori in in their schooling experiences. Your experience in this role makes you an ideal candidate for this research project and your lived experiences will add valuable knowledge to this project.

**Outline of the Research**

The following sub questions will be considered to gain a deeper understanding of the key research question above.

1. How do leadership actions of kaiako Māori and principals who are tauiwi, support Māori succeeding as Māori in general school settings?
2. What do leaders in educational settings, whānau of ākonga Māori and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
3. How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

This research project will explore these questions by exploring the narratives of Māori kaiako in leadership, Principals, ākonga Māori and whānau Māori.

I would like to ask you, and up to two other Māori leaders, questions such as:

- What do you describe 'Māori success as Māori' to mean?
- Do you see examples of this understanding in your kura? Can you share some examples of how you are/aren't seeing it evident?
- How would you describe culturally responsive leadership practice, and what does this look like in your kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports your cultural identity?
- How do you see yourself as a leader?
- In what ways do the interactions, with and decisions made by, senior leadership impact you in your role?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

**What your involvement would be**

In order to answer the above research questions, I would like to kōrero with you, at a time and place that suits you, providing you with a copy of the questions prior to this kōrero. You are not required to answer all the questions if you do not wish to, and there will be opportunities for you to add more information that is not listed in the questions if you feel the need. I anticipate that these kōrero will take up to 90 minutes of your time.

With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and then transcribed. Following this you will receive a copy of the transcription to read and approve or amend if necessary for use in the research. If I have not heard back from you within two weeks from the date of receipt of transcripts, regarding approval or amendments, I will follow up with phone contact. I will attempt phone contact for one week, during the third week after the date of receipt of transcripts. If I do not hear from you within this three week timeframe regarding your position on the transcripts, the data will be accepted as is and entered into the research. After these three weeks from receipt of transcripts, you will no longer be able to withdraw any data provided to the research.

Prior to meeting for the semi-structured interview, I would like the opportunity to meet face to face, to reconnect with each other and answer any further questions you may have about the research, the questions or myself and explain more in depth about the kaupapa behind this research. If you do not feel this is necessary, then please feel free to say no to this introductory session.

I anticipate that approximately no more than 4 hours of your time will be required across the entire research project. This time allows for dedicated interview times and extra optional time should you choose you need it.

**How your privacy will be protected**

Whilst I will endeavour to do my best to protect your anonymity to the best of my ability, I cannot fully guarantee this. I will attempt to protect your privacy through the use of pseudonyms and taking specific care around detailing the locality of the kura you are connected to. Furthermore, the data collected will be kept confidential in the respect that original transcripts and recordings will not be shared with anyone other than myself, and my supervisors where necessary. Any digital data collected as a result of this research will be stored on a secure, password-protected cloud based platform for five years, which thereafter will be destroyed or archived as agreed upon.

**What this research will be used for**

The research findings from this project will be used primarily for my Master's Thesis. The thesis will be submitted for examination to the Division of Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Research finds may be subsequently referred to in journal articles and/or professional presentations such as leadership development courses, or professional and academic seminars/conferences or other academic purposes such as book chapters.

**Your rights as a participant**

Your participation is completely voluntary. Having accepted the research invitation, you may, without explanation, withdraw all or some of the data you have provided, at any point prior to two weeks after receiving the interview transcript. If you need to withdraw, please email me. Three weeks after sharing back the transcripts with you, the data analysis will commence and it will no longer be possible to withdraw from this research study.

**Communication**

Email will be the main method of communication to organise meetings face to face throughout the process. You can expect to be emailed to receive meeting times as arranged together, notification of progress and the sharing of documents with you such as transcripts. However, if there is another method of communication you would prefer to use, then please advise me so that I can adapt to ensure that communication between us is effective.

At the completion of the research, and conclusion of the project by which the report has been completed, you will have access to the findings. You may choose to have these emailed through in a digital format, or a hand copy printed and delivered to you. Furthermore, links to and/or copies of any articles published within two years of the completion of the research will be shared with you. There will also be the opportunity for you to choose whether or not you would like me to share and present my findings to you.

**Support**

If you find you require social or cultural support during any stage of this research, please advise me at your earliest convenience so that I can arrange this. Likewise, if at any time you require language translation to assist you through the process, please let me know and I will organise this.

If a dispute arises throughout this research project, in the first instance we will work together to attempt to find a resolution together. If the dispute has not been resolved, as the participant, you can contact my lead supervisor at the University of Waikato.

They can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

**Final Notes**

Thank you for reading through this information. If you have any further queries regarding the research, or your requirements as a participant, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are satisfied with the contents of this information letter and are willing to participate in the research, please advise me via email so that I can organise the necessary consent forms to be sent to you.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to hopefully working with you on this project.

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
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## Appendix C: Participant (Principal) Information Sheet

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Outlined below is the description of the research project in which you have been invited to participate. The main research question being asked is 'how does the school's leadership interface, between Māori and tauiwi, influence combined bicultural actions to implement the Ka Hikitia-Ka Hāpaitia policy in order to bring about Māori achieving education success as Māori, and what have been some of the outcomes?'

You have been identified as a school leader who supports Māori kaiako in leadership endeavours. Your experience in this role makes you an ideal candidate for this research project and your lived experiences will add valuable knowledge to this project.

**Outline of the Research**

The following sub questions will be considered to gain a deeper understanding of the key research question above.

1. How do leadership actions of kaiako Māori and principals who are tauiwi, support Māori succeeding as Māori in general school settings?
2. What do leaders in educational settings, whānau of ākonga Māori and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
3. How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

This research project will explore these questions by exploring the narratives of Māori kaiako in leadership, Principals, ākonga Māori and whānau Māori.

I would like to ask you, and up to two other principal participants, whom lead Māori leaders, questions such as:

- What would you describe 'Māori success as Māori' to be?
- How would you describe culturally responsive leadership practice and what does this look like in your kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports Māori cultural identity?
- What do you understand about empowering Māori kaiako to bring about success for Māori?
- How does having a Māori leader support your school in meeting the needs of ākonga Māori?
- How do you feel your partnership with Māori whānau supports you in your role? Can you share some examples of how this partnership is/isn't evident in your kura?

**What your involvement would be**
In order to answer the above research questions, I would like to kōrero with you, at a time and place that suits you, providing you with a copy of the questions prior to this kōrero. You are not required to answer all the questions if you do not wish to, and there will be opportunities for you to add more information that is not listed in the questions if you feel the need. I anticipate that these kōrero will take up to 90 minutes of your time.

With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and then transcribed. Following this you will receive a copy of the transcription to read and approve or amend if necessary for use in the research. If I have not heard back from you within two weeks from the date of receipt of transcripts, regarding approval or amendments, I will follow up with phone contact. I will attempt phone contact for one week, during the third week after the date of receipt of transcripts. If I do not hear from you within this three week timeframe regarding your position on the transcripts, the data will be accepted as is and entered into

the research. After these three weeks from receipt of transcripts, you will no longer be able to withdraw any data provided to the research.

Prior to meeting for the semi-structured interview, I would like the opportunity to meet face to face, to reconnect with each other and answer any further questions you may have about the research, the questions or myself and explain more in depth about the kaupapa behind this research. If you do not feel this is necessary, then please feel free to say no to this introductory session.

I anticipate that approximately no more than 4 hours of your time will be required across the entire research project. This time allows for dedicated interview times and extra optional time should you choose you need it.

**How your privacy will be protected**

Whilst I will endeavour to do my best to protect your anonymity to the best of my ability, I cannot fully guarantee this. I will attempt to protect your privacy through the use of pseudonyms and taking specific care around detailing the locality of the kura you are connected to. Furthermore, the data collected will be kept confidential in the respect that original transcripts and recordings will not be shared with anyone other than myself, and my supervisors where necessary. Any digital data collected as a result of this research will be stored on a secure, password-protected cloud based platform for five years, which thereafter will be destroyed or archived as agreed upon.

**What this research will be used for**

The research findings from this project will be used primarily for my Master's Thesis. The thesis will be submitted for examination to the Division of Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Research finds may be subsequently referred to in journal articles and/or professional presentations such as leadership development courses, or professional and academic seminars/conferences or other academic purposes such as book chapters.

**Your rights as a participant**

Your participation is completely voluntary. Having accepted the research invitation, you may, without explanation, withdraw all or some of the data you have provided, at any point prior to two weeks after receiving the interview transcript. If you need to withdraw, please email may indicate such. Three weeks after sharing back the transcripts with you, the data analysis will commence, and it will no longer be possible to withdraw from this research study.

**Communication**

Email will be the main method of communication to organise meetings face to face throughout the process. You can expect to be emailed to receive meeting times as arranged together, notification of progress and the sharing of documents with you such as transcripts. However, if there is another method of communication you would prefer to use, then please advise me so that I can adapt to ensure that communication between us is effective.

At the completion of the research, and conclusion of the project by which the report has been completed, you will have access to the findings. You may choose to have these emailed through in a digital format, or a hand copy printed and delivered to you. Furthermore, links to and/or copies of any articles published within two years of the completion of the research will be shared with you. There will also be the opportunity for you to choose whether or not you would like me to share and present my findings to you.

**Support**

If you find you require social or cultural support during any stage of this research, please advise me at your earliest convenience so that I can arrange this. Likewise, if at any time you require language translation to assist you through the process, please let me know and I will organise this.

If a dispute arises throughout this research project, in the first instance we will work together to attempt to find a resolution together. If the dispute has not been resolved, as the participant, you can contact my lead supervisor at the University of Waikato. They can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

**Final Notes**

Thank you for reading through this information. If you have any further queries regarding the research, or your requirements as a participant, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are satisfied with the contents of this information letter and are willing to participate in the research, please advise me via email so that I can organise the necessary consent forms to be sent to you.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to hopefully working with you on this project.

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix D: Consent Form

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

**Participant role:** Please circle appropriate one

PRINCIPAL KAIAKO MĀORI

☐

I have been given an explanation of this research project and understand the information I was given. I have had an opportunity to ask any questions, and they have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am not required to participate in this research project if I choose not to and that I have the right to withdraw myself and any information I have provided to this project, within three weeks of receiving my transcript without requiring justification of any sort.

☐

I agree to participate in this research and understand that I will be provided with an opportunity to check the notes recorded in the interview before they are used. I understand the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose other than those outlined on the participant information sheet or released to others without my written consent. I understand that pseudonyms will be used to protect the anonymity of the participants involved.

☐

Please select a pseudonym name that you would like to be referred to as in the research report. If no pseudonym is provided you understand that one will be given to you by the researcher for the purposes of this research project.

Pseudonym: _____

Participant Full Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Should you need to contact myself or my supervisor at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email:nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

Dr Mere Berryman
Email: mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix E: Invitation Letter (Ākonga Māori)

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Tēna koe _____ (name of research participant).

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna koutou katoa

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ko | Putauaki | | te | maunga |
| Ko | Ōhinemataroa | | te | awa |
| Ko | Mātaatua | | tōku | waka |
| Ko | Ngāti | Hokopu | te | hapu |
| Ko | Ngāti | Awa | te | iwi |
| No | | Whakatane | | ahau |
| Ko | Morrinsville | tōku | kainga | ināianei |
| Ko | Ngaia | | tāku | ingoa. |

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēna koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

My name is Ngaia Mason and I am a postgraduate student studying a Masters in Educational Leadership through Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato (The University of Waikato). Alongside my academic endeavours I am a lead teacher within a primary school in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton), and an Across School Leader for my Kāhui Ako. As a Māori kaiako, I am passionate about pursuing education experiences that support ākonga Māori and their whānau in successfully engaging in learning opportunities that see them flourish in cultural identity. This year, I am privileged to have received a study award to complete a research thesis to complete my Master's program.

I am researching how teachers can better support ākonga (students) Māori so that they are successful in connecting to their culture and achieving their learning goals.

It is my intention that these research findings may benefit leaders within schools to empower Māori teachers, and ākonga (students), to see success as Māori within their kura.

You were identified as someone who has wonderful ideas and as someone who likes to help others learn. I am keen to hear your whakaaro (thoughts) and experiences about what it has been like for you as a Māori student in your kura. Attached to this letter of invitation is a participant information sheet outlining the details of the research and a research consent form, which your parent/caregiver will need to sign. If they are satisfied with the details of participation after reading through the information sheet provided, and are willing for you to participate as outlined, then they will contact me. I will then organise a time with your kaiako, where you can share your stories with me.

Ngā mihi nui,

Ngaia Mason

Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

# Appendix F: Consent Form for ākonga Māori

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

☐

I have been given an explanation of this research project and how my child will be involved. I understand the information I was given and have had an opportunity to ask any questions which have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that my child is not required to participate in this research project if I choose not to. I understand that I can withdraw my consent for my child to be involved at any point until the focus group has commenced, without requiring any justification of any sort.

☐

I understand that my child will have an opportunity to check the notes that have been recorded with the collective group once the focus group has been completed but that once the focus group is completed, any data shared in the group becomes the property of the researcher.

☐

I agree that my child can participate in this research. I understand the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose other than those outlined on the participant information sheet or released to others without my written consent. I understand that pseudonyms will be used to protect the anonymity of the participants involved.

☐

Please select a pseudonym name that you would like your child to be referred to as in the research report. If no pseudonym is provided you understand that one will be given to you by the researcher for the purposes of this research project.

Child's Full Name: _____

Pseudonym name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Full Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Should you need to contact myself or my supervisor at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email:nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

Dr Mere Berryman
Email: mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix G: Invitation Letter (Ākonga Māori Caregivers)

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Tēna koe _____ (name of parent/caregiver).

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna koutou katoa
Ko Putauaki te maunga
Ko Ōhinemataroa te awa
Ko Mātaatua tōku waka
Ko Ngāti Hokopu te hapu
Ko Ngāti Awa te iwi
No Whakatane ahau
Ko Morrinsville tōku kainga ināianei
Ko Ngaia tāku ingoa.
Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēna koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

My name is Ngaia Mason and I am a postgraduate student studying a Masters in Educational Leadership through Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato (The University of Waikato). Alongside my academic endeavours I am a lead teacher within a primary school in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton), and an Across School Leader for my Kāhui Ako. As a Māori kaiako, I am passionate about pursuing education experiences that support ākonga Māori and their whānau in successfully engaging in learning opportunities that see them flourish in cultural identity. This year, I am privileged to have received a study award to complete a research thesis to complete my Master's program. My passion for ākonga Māori, and like-minded Māori kaiako leading in kura, has developed a curiosity to use this opportunity to explore leadership actions and intentions that influence ākonga Māori succeeding as Māori in their kura. My academic endeavours have supported me to recognise the importance of both kaiako Māori and school Principals in this narrative, as well as the important narrative whānau, and ākonga themselves, have in supporting leaders to see what Māori success as Māori is. It is my intention that through this research I will be able to help link educational leadership theory with practical lived experiences of kaiako Māori and Principals as they seek to bring about better outcomes for ākonga Māori. It is my hope that my findings from this research may benefit leaders within schools to empower Māori leaders, and therefore your tamariki, to see success as Māori within their kura. Your child _____ has been identified as a student who may have kōrero and experiences of value to this research project. I am keen to hear your whakaaro (thoughts) and experiences more in depth and would like to invite you to take part in this study. Attached to this letter of invitation is a participant information sheet outlining the details of the research and a research consent form. If you are satisfied with the details of participation after reading through the information sheet provided, and you are willing for your child to participate in these focus groups, as outlined, I invite you to contact me via email. This focus group will be no longer than one hour of your child's time. At that point, I can share with you the details of when this focus group kōrero will take place so that you are aware of when your child will be sharing their experiences for this kaupapa.

Thank you for considering this invitation. If you have any queries regarding this research after reading through the attached participation information sheet, then please reach out via email and we can discuss these further.

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Ngā mihi nui,

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix H: Invitation Letter (Māori whānau)

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Tēna koe _____ (name of research participant).

Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, tēna koutou katoa
Ko Putauaki te maunga
Ko Ōhinemataroa te awa
Ko Mātaatua tōku waka
Ko Ngāti Hokopu te hapu
Ko Ngāti Awa te iwi
No Whakatane ahau
Ko Morrinsville tōku kainga ināianei
Ko Ngaia tāku ingoa.
Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēna koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

My name is Ngaia Mason and I am a postgraduate student studying a Masters in Educational Leadership through Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato (The University of Waikato). I am also a lead teacher within a primary school in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton), and an Across School Leader for my Kāhui Ako. As a kaiako Māori, I am passionate about pursuing education experiences that support ākonga Māori and their whānau in successfully engaging in learning opportunities that see them flourish in cultural identity. This year, I am privileged to have received a study award to complete a research thesis to complete my Master's program. My passion for ākonga Māori, and like-minded kaiako leading in kura, has developed a curiosity to use this opportunity to explore leadership actions and intentions that influence ākonga Māori succeeding as Māori in their kura. My academic endeavours have supported me to recognise the importance of both kaiako Māori and school Principals in this narrative. Through this research I endeavour to provide evidence to identify how senior leaders in education can lead through their implementation of Ka Hikitia, in ways that advantage Māori, through sharing their lived experiences.

You were identified as a whānau member who has valuable kōrero to share about yours and your child's experiences in education. I am keen to hear your whakaaro (thoughts) and experiences more in depth and would like to invite you to take part in this study. Attached to this letter of invitation is a participant information sheet outlining the details of the research and a research consent form. This focus group will be no longer than 90 minutes of your time across two hui. If you are satisfied with the details of participation after reading through the information sheet provided, and you are willing to participate as outlined, I invite you to contact me via email. At that point, I can share with you the details of when this focus group kōrero will take place so that you can be a participant in this group.

Thank you for considering this invitation. If you have any queries regarding this research after reading through the attached participation information sheet, then please reach out via email and we can discuss these further. I look forward to hearing from you.

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz
Ngā mihi nui,
Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix I: Consent Form for whānau Māori

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

☐

I have been given an explanation of this research project and understand the information I was given. I have had an opportunity to ask any questions, and they have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am not required to participate in this research project if I choose not to and that I have the right to withdraw myself and any information I have provided to this project at any point until the focus group has commenced, without requiring any justification of any sort.

☐

I agree to participate in this research and understand that I will be provided with an opportunity to check the notes recorded in from the focus group with the collective group before they are used. I understand the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose other than those outlined on the participant information sheet or released to others without my written consent. I understand that pseudonyms will be used to protect the anonymity of the participants involved.

☐

I understand that I will have an opportunity to check the notes that have been recorded with the collective group once the focus group has been completed but that once the focus group is completed, any data shared in the group becomes the property of the researcher.

☐

I understand the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose other than those outlined on the participant information sheet or released to others without my written consent. I understand that pseudonyms will be used to protect the anonymity of the participants involved.

☐

Please select a pseudonym name that you would like to be referred to in the research report. If no pseudonym is provided you understand that one will be given to you by the researcher for the purposes of this research project.

Participants Full Name: _____

Pseudonym name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Should you need to contact myself or my supervisor at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email:nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

Dr Mere Berryman
Email: mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix J: Ākonga Māori assent form

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

☐

I have been given an explanation of this research project and understand how I will be involved.

☐

I understand the information I was given and have had an opportunity to ask any questions which have been answered to my satisfaction.

☐

I understand that I am not required to participate in this research project if I choose not to.

☐

I understand that I will have an opportunity to check the notes that have been recorded with the collective group once the focus group has finished during the summary time.

☐

I know how I can ask for help during the focus group.

☐

I understand that the information I give will help the research.

☐

I understand that my name will not be used when the information is shared with others.

☐

I understand the importance of making sure I keep what is said in this focus group confidential.

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Should you need to contact myself or my supervisor at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email:nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

Dr Mere Berryman
Email: mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix K: Participant (Māori whānau) Information Sheet

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Outlined below is the description of the research project in which you have been invited to participate. The main research question being asked is 'how does the school's leadership interface, between Māori and tauiwi, influence combined bicultural actions to implement the Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia policy in order to bring about Māori achieving education success as Māori, and what have been some of the outcomes?'

You have been identified as a whānau member who has partnered with kura to support kaiako Māori in leadership endeavours. Your experience in this role makes you an ideal candidate for this research project and your lived experiences will add valuable knowledge to this project.

**Outline of the Research**

The following sub questions will be considered to gain a deeper understanding of the key research question above.

1. How do leadership actions of kaiako Māori and principals who are tauiwi, support Māori succeeding as Māori in general school settings?
2. What do leaders in educational settings, whānau of ākonga Māori and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
3. How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

This research project will explore these questions by exploring the narratives of Māori kaiako in leadership, Principals, and whānau Māori.

I would like to ask you, and a group of other parents, through a focus group kōrero are questions such as:

- What do you understand the phrase 'Māori success as Māori' to be?
- How do you feel this is experienced for your tamariki in kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports your cultural identity?
- What are the most important things you feel your child needs to learn at kura?
- How does having a Māori leader in your child's kura help support your aspirations for their learning?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

**What your involvement would be**

In order to answer the above research questions, I would like to take a focus group which includes a group of up to six whānau members from different kura, at locations familiar to the participants. Prior to this focus group, I will provide you with a copy of the questions that may be asked for your consideration. You are not required to answer all the questions if you do not wish to, and there will be opportunities for you to add more information that is not listed in the questions if you feel the need.

I anticipate that these focus will take up to 60 minutes of your time. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and participants will offer their responses in written form using post it notes. At the completion of the focus group, time will be allocated to summarise the key themes offered with the collective group present. At the completion of

this focus group, the data will then be analysed for the research report. At the conclusion of these focus groups, all information gathered will then be turned in for analysis.

Prior to meeting for this focus group, I would like to provide an opportunity to meet face to face, where we can reconnect with each other and I can answer any further questions you may have about the research, the questions or myself and explain more in depth about the kaupapa behind this research. If you do not feel this is necessary, then please feel free to not be a part of this initial meeting. This will be no longer than 30 minutes.

**How your privacy will be protected**

Whilst I will endeavour to do my best to protect your anonymity to the best of my ability, I cannot fully guarantee this. I will attempt to protect your privacy through the use of pseudonyms and taking specific care around detailing the locality of the kura you are connected to. Furthermore, the data collected will be kept confidential in the respect that original transcripts and recordings will not be shared with anyone other than myself, and my supervisors where necessary. Any digital data collected as a result of this research will be stored on a secure, password-protected cloud based platform for five years, which thereafter will be destroyed or achieved as agreed upon.

**What this research will be used for**

The research findings from this project will be used primarily for my Master's Thesis. The thesis will be submitted for examination to the Division of Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Research finds may be subsequently referred to in journal articles and/or professional presentations such as leadership development courses, or professional and academic seminars/conferences or other academic purposes such as book chapters.

**Your rights as a participant**

Your participation is completely voluntary. Having accepted the research invitation, you may, without explanation, withdraw yourself from the research project. All of the data you have provided within the focus group will be agreed upon by the collective at the end of the group session. At the completion of these sessions all data obtained will belong to the researcher and used for analysis purposes. You can withdraw from the research project at any time, however if you withdraw after the focus group has occurred, any information you shared remains within the research project.

**Communication**

Email will be the main method of communication to organise meetings face to face throughout the process. You can expect to be emailed to receive meeting times as arranged together, notification of progress. However, if there is another method of communication you would prefer to use, then please advise me so that I can adapt to ensure that communication between us is effective. At the completion of the research, and conclusion of the project by which the report has been completed, you will have access to the findings. You may choose to have these emailed through in a digital format, or a hand copy printed and delivered to you. Furthermore, links to and/or copies of any articles published within two years of the completion of the research will be shared with you. There will also be the opportunity for you to choose whether or not you would like me to share and present my findings to you.

**Support**

If you find you require social or cultural support during any stage of this research, please advise me at your earliest convenience so that I can arrange this. Likewise, if at any time you require language translation to assist you through the process, please let me know and I will organise this.

If a dispute arises throughout this research project, in the first instance we will work together to attempt to find a resolution together. If the dispute has not been resolved, as the participant, you can contact my lead supervisor at the University of Waikato.

They can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

**Final Notes**

Thank you for reading through this information. If you have any further queries regarding the research, or your requirements as a participant, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are satisfied with the contents of this information letter and are willing to participate in the research, please advise me via email so that I can organise the necessary consent forms to be sent to you.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to hopefully working with you on this project.

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix L: Participant (Caregivers) Information Sheet

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Outlined below is the description of the research project in which you have been invited to participate. The main research question being asked is 'how does the school's leadership interface, between Māori and tauiwi, influence combined bicultural actions to implement the Ka Hikitia- Ka Hāpaitia policy in order to bring about Māori achieving education success as Māori, and what have been some of the outcomes?'

Your child has been identified as an ākonga Māori who works closely alongside Māori kaiako who are striving to change education outcomes for ākonga Māori. Their experiences in kura make them an ideal candidate for this research project and their kōrero about these experiences will add valuable knowledge to this project.

**Outline of the Research**

The following sub questions will be considered to gain a deeper understanding of the key research question above.

1. How do leadership actions of kaiako Māori and principals who are tauiwi, support Māori succeeding as Māori in general school settings?
2. What do leaders in educational settings, whānau of ākonga Māori and ākonga Māori themselves believe Māori achieving as Māori looks like?
3. How do kaiako Māori experience the spaces of leadership as pathways for determining the aspirations and principles of Ka Hikitia - Ka Hāpaitia for ākonga and whānau?

This research project will explore these questions by exploring the narratives of Māori kaiako in leadership, Principals, ākonga Māori and whānau Māori.

I would like to ask your child, alongside a group of ākonga Māori, are questions such as:

- What do you believe it would look like for you to be successful as Māori both at school and beyond?
- How do you feel you are successful as a Māori student at school?
- What different actions/things does the Māori kaiako do to help you in kura?
- How does having a Māori kaiako support you in your learning?
- What are the most important things you feel you need to learn at kura?
- What different things happen in your kura that help build your culture?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

**What their involvement would be**

In order to answer the above research questions, a focus group, which includes a group of up to six whānau members from different kura and ākonga Māori representatives, will be conducted. Prior to this focus group a copy of the questions your child may be asked will be provided to you. Your child is not required to answer all the questions if they do not wish to, and there will be opportunities for them to add more information that is not listed in the questions if you feel the need.

I anticipate that these focus will take up to 60 minutes of your child's time. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and participants will offer their responses in written form using post it notes. At the completion of the focus group, time will be allocated to summarise the key themes offered with the collective group present. At the completion of this focus

group, the data will then be analysed for the research report. At the conclusion of these focus groups, all information gathered will then be turned in for analysis.

Prior to meeting for this focus group, I will meet face to face with the tamariki, so that we can reconnect with each other and I can answer any further questions they have about the research, the questions or myself and explain more in depth about the kaupapa behind this research. This will be no longer than 30 minutes.

**How your child's privacy will be protected**

Whilst I will endeavour to do my best to protect your child's anonymity to the best of my ability, I cannot fully guarantee this. I will attempt to protect your privacy through the use of pseudonyms and taking specific care around detailing the locality of the kura they are connected to. Furthermore, the data collected will be kept confidential in the respect that original transcripts and recordings will not be shared with anyone other than myself, and my supervisors where necessary. Any digital data collected as a result of this research will be stored on a secure, password-protected cloud based platform for five years, which thereafter will be destroyed or achieved as agreed upon.

**What this research will be used for**

The research findings from this project will be used primarily for my Master's Thesis. The thesis will be submitted for examination to the Division of Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. Research finds may be subsequently referred to in journal articles and/or professional presentations such as leadership development courses, or professional and academic seminars/conferences or other academic purposes such as book chapters.

**Your rights as a participant**

Your consent for your child's participation is completely voluntary. Having accepted the research invitation, you may, without explanation, withdraw your child at any point. All of the data you have provided within the focus group will be agreed upon by the collective at the end of the group session. Once the collective agrees with the summary, the data will belong to the researcher and used for analysis purposes. You can withdraw from the research project at any time, however if you withdraw your child after the focus group has occurred, any information they have shared will remain within the research project. Your child may have a support person present in the focus group should you wish. This person will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure anonymity measures have been taken.

**Communication**

Email will be the main method of communication to organise meetings face to face throughout the process. You can expect to be emailed to receive meeting times, notification of progress and the sharing of any necessary documents. However, if there is another method of communication you would prefer to use, then please advise me so that I can adapt to ensure that communication between us is effective.

At the completion of the research, and conclusion of the project by which the report has been completed, you will have access to the findings. You may choose to have these emailed through in a digital format, or a hand copy printed and delivered to you. Furthermore, links to and/or copies of any articles published within two years of the completion of the research will be shared with you. There will also be the opportunity for you to choose whether or not you would like me to share and

present my findings to you.

**Support**

If you find your child requires social or cultural support during any stage of this research, please advise me at your earliest convenience so that I can arrange this. Likewise, if at any time they require language translation to assist you through the process, please let me know and I will organise this.

If a dispute arises throughout this research project, in the first instance we will work together to attempt to find a resolution together. If the dispute has not been resolved, as the participant, you can contact my lead supervisor at the University of Waikato. They can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman

mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

**Final Notes**

Thank you for reading through this information. If you have any further queries regarding the research, or your requirements as a participant, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are satisfied with the contents of this information letter and are willing to participate in the research, please advise me via email so that I can organise the necessary consent forms to be sent to you.

Thank you for your support and I look forward to hopefully working with your child on this project.

Ngā mihi nui,

*Ngaia Mason*

Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz

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## Appendix M: Interview Schedule (Kaiako Māori)

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

These interviews seek to gain an understanding of how these leaders influence ākonga Māori through deliberate teaching and leadership actions. The following questions will be offered as a starting point to guide the discussion, however there will be opportunity for the kōrero to evolve to ensure that you can offer your experiences without any predetermined expectation.

The base questions for these semi-structured interviews will be:

- What do you describe 'Māori success as Māori' to mean?
- Do you see examples of this understanding in your kura? Can you share some examples of how you are/aren't seeing it evident?
- How would you describe culturally responsive leadership practice, and what does this look like in your kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports your cultural identity?
- How do you see yourself as a leader?
- In what ways do the interactions, with and decisions made by, senior leadership impact you in your role?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Should you need to contact myself at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix N: Principal Interview Schedule/Questions

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

These interviews seek to gain an understanding of how these leaders influence ākonga Māori through deliberate teaching and leadership actions. The following questions will be offered as a starting point to guide the discussion, however there will be opportunity for the kōrero to evolve to ensure that you can offer your experiences without any predetermined expectation.

The base questions for these semi-structured interviews will be:

- What would you describe 'Māori success as Māori' to be?
- How would you describe culturally responsive leadership practice and what does this look like in your kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports Māori cultural identity?
- What do you understand about empowering Māori kaiako to bring about success for Māori?
- How does having a Māori leader support your school in meeting the needs of ākonga Māori?
- How do you feel your partnership with Māori whānau supports you in your role? Can you share some examples of how this partnership is/isn't evident in your kura?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Should you need to contact myself at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix O: Ākonga Māori Interview Schedule/Questions

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

These focus groups seek to gain an understanding of how leaders influence ākonga Māori through deliberate teaching and leadership actions. The following questions will be offered as a starting point to guide the discussion, however there will be opportunity for the kōrero to evolve to ensure that you can offer your experiences without any predetermined expectation.

The base questions for these semi-structured interviews will be:

- What do you believe it would look like for you to be successful as Māori both at school and beyond?
- How do you feel you are successful as a Māori student at school?
- What different actions/things does the Māori kaiako do to help you in kura?
- How does having a Māori kaiako support you in your learning?
- What are the most important things you feel you need to learn at kura?
- What different things happen in your kura that help build your culture?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Should you need to contact myself at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz

## Appendix P: Whānau Māori Interview Schedule/Questions

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

These focus groups seek to gain an understanding of how leaders influence ākonga Māori through deliberate teaching and leadership actions. The following questions will be offered as a starting point to guide the discussion, however there will be opportunity for the kōrero to evolve to ensure that you can offer your experiences without any predetermined expectation.

The base questions for these semi-structured interviews will be:

- What do you understand the phrase 'Māori success as Māori' to be?
- How do you feel this is experienced for your tamariki in kura?
- What different actions/things does the school do that supports your cultural identity?
- What are the most important things you feel your child needs to learn at kura?
- How does having a Māori leader in your child's kura help support your aspirations for their learning?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?

If required my supervisor can be contacted at: Dr Mere Berryman
mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz

Should you need to contact myself at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email: nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

## Appendix R: Confidentiality Agreement

**Research Title:** Examining Māori leadership in kura auraki settings: Creating success for ākonga Māori.

Role in research project (Please tick appropriate one):

☐

Translator

☐

Support Person

☐

Reader/Writer

- I agree to keep all information, oral information and materials disclosed by participants, as part of this research study, confidential to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

- I agree to not disclose any of the information I receive, as a party in this research to anyone outside the research project.

- I acknowledge that the information shared, translated, or heard in this project is owned by the participants and the researchers.

- If I am a translator I understand that my role is to translate this as accurately as possible.

Full Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Should you need to contact myself or my supervisor at any point in time, please do not hesitate to reach out via the contact details below:

Ngaia Mason
Email:nhmhc1@students.waikato.ac.nz
021563310

Dr Mere Berryman
Email: mere.berryman@waikato.ac.nz