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# **Māori Transitions into Tertiary Education**

A thesis  
submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree  
of  
**Doctor of Philosophy in Education**  
at  
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by  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

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## Abstract

This thesis critically examines Māori transitions into tertiary education. The research explored the lived transition experiences of 20 Māori tertiary education students in the Bay of Plenty region. Historical and contemporary factors in Aotearoa influencing effective Māori student transitions into tertiary education were investigated. Data were collected and analysed through repeated semi-structured interviews and focus groups over the 2016-2018 period with 20 Māori students enrolled in a wānanga, a polytechnic and a university. Participants experienced their transition as a journey, continuously evolving their identities and agency in relation to the tertiary education environments and social structures they encountered.

The findings suggest that transitions to tertiary education for Māori students involve a reciprocal interplay of identity, agency and structure which support or constrain transition experiences. Effective transition experiences were underpinned by processes of continuity enabling identity growth. Support was central to how well participants perceived their transition—racism and lack of support were significant barriers; suitable support was a significant enabler.

An over-riding theme from this research related to the interplay of power relations and Māori identity. How effectively participants developed a sense of belonging (or alienation) and identity growth linked to the tertiary education environments they encountered during their transition. Within wānanga, participants felt their Māori cultural identity was highly valued; within polytechnics, there was a sense that Māori culture is included but more could be done; within universities, a need for more inclusive practices to support Māori learner requirements was identified.

Lastly, this research was conducted by a Pākehā researcher working across kaupapa Māori spaces within interpretive and critical paradigms. Unexpected moments of struggle, discomfort and vulnerability opened up new and deeper understanding of implications for Pākehā educators and researchers engaging across Māori research spaces. This thesis argues for Pākehā to use their privilege to foster more equitable social structures. Equitable social structures would be beneficial for Māori transitions into tertiary education environments.



## Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my three daughters, Olivia, Laura and Kate. I hope it encourages you to accomplish all that you wish to pursue in your own life. To my life partner Mark, my rock and inspiration, this PhD would not exist without you. Your caring support remained steadfast throughout late nights, long weekends and many months. You will always have my love and appreciation for the strength you gave me to keep going. To Nana and Grandad (Ella and Hilary Mason), Mum and Dad (Jane and Ian Mason), lovingly present throughout my life, my deepest gratitude. To wider family and friends who cared for me showing consistent interest in my research, I am honoured.



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## Glossary – Te Aka

The words listed in this glossary provide translations for words contained in this thesis:

|                     |                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ahuatanga Māori     | Māori tradition                    |
| Ako                 | To learn or to teach (reciprocity) |
| Akoranga            | Student                            |
| Aotearoa            | New Zealand                        |
| Haka                | War dance or posture dance         |
| Half-castes         | Of Māori and European descent      |
| Hapū                | Sub-tribe                          |
| Hawaiki             | Māori ancestral homelands          |
| He kākano           | A seed                             |
| Hikoi               | March, walk, events                |
| Hongi               | Press noses, greeting              |
| Huarahi             | Pathways                           |
| Hui                 | A meeting or gathering             |
| Io                  | Supreme Being, God                 |
| Iwi                 | Tribe                              |
| Kai                 | Food                               |
| Kaiako              | Teacher                            |
| Kaiārahi            | Guide, escort, mentor and support  |
| Kaikaranga          | Caller                             |
| Kaikaikōrero whānau | Research participant kinship group |
| Kaimoana            | Seafood                            |
| Kaitiakitanga       | Caring for the environment         |
| Kahu Huruhuru       | Feather cloak                      |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi                    | Face to face, in person                                |
| Karakia                                | Prayer   |
| Karanga                                | Call   |
| Kaumātua                               | Elders   |
| Kaupapa                                | Topic  |
| Kaupapa Māori                          | Māori philosophy, topic, approach, agenda              |
| Kaupapa-whānau                         | Informal learning community and cultural enclave       |
| Kauri                                  | Native New Zealand Pine Tree, <i>Agathis Australis</i> |
| Kete                                   | Bag or kit   |
| Kia piki ake inga raruraru o te kainga | The mediation of socio-economic factors                |
| Kia tūpato                             | Be careful or approach cautiously                      |
| Koha                                   | Donation, money, gift                                  |
| Kōrero                                 | Conversations, talking                                 |
| Kotahitanga                            | Unity  |
| Ko wai au?                             | Who am I?  |
| Ko wai tēnei?                          | Who is this?   |
| Kumara                                 | Sweet potato   |
| Kura Kaupapa Māori                     | Total immersion Māori school                           |
| Mana                                   | Pride, status  |
| Mana Ake                               | Uniqueness   |
| Manaaki ki te tangata                  | Share, host people, or be generous                     |
| Manaakitanga/manaakitia                | Caring or capacity to care                             |
| Manuhiri                               | Visitors   |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Māori               | Normal, ordinary; Indigenous peoples of New Zealand   |
| Māoritanga          | Māori culture   |
| Marae               | Community centre; sacred place for meeting  |
| Mātauranga Māori    | Māori education/knowledge   |
| Mauao               | Mount Maunganui, an iconic mountain in the Bay of Plenty region                                 |
| Mauri               | Life force  |
| Mirimiri            | Massage   |
| Moana               | Sea, ocean, body of water   |
| Motuhake            | Things that make Māori different and unique, including language preservation and cultural pride |
| Ngā kete wānanga    | Three baskets of knowledge  |
| Nga Marama          | Earliest known people in Tauranga   |
| Ngā taonga tuku iho | Treasures handed down by the ancestors  |
| Nō hea au?          | Where do I come from?   |
| Noho                | Stay at a marae, live-in block courses  |
| Pākehā              | New Zealanders of European descent, in relation to Māori  |
| Paptūanuku          | Earth Mother  |
| Patupaiarehe        | Supernatural forest people; fairy folk  |
| Pipiri              | To keep close together  |
| Pono                | Faith, truth  |
| Pōwhiri             | A formal Māori welcome  |
| Pūpuri taonga       | The capacity for guardianship   |
| Rākau               | Tree, plant; wood, timber, stick, rod   |

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Rangatiratanga       | Self-determination  |
| Ranginui             | Sky Father  |
| Raupatu              | Confiscation  |
| Rongoa               | Māori pharmacological medicine  |
| Ruia                 | To sow, plant   |
| Tāne                 | Forest God  |
| Tangata whenua       | Home people or an indigenous person   |
| Tangi or Tangihanga  | Māori funeral, usually lasting 3+ days  |
| Taonga               | Precious things; treasures  |
| Te Ao Māori          | The Māori world and a Māori world view (encompassing language and culture)                              |
| Te Ao Pākehā         | The western world and a western(particularly New Zealand) world view, encompassing language and culture |
| Te Reo Māori         | The Māori language  |
| Te Kauae Raro        | Sacred lower jawbone  |
| Te Kauae Runga       | Sacred upper jawbone  |
| Te Kawanatanga katoa | Complete government   |
| Te Kohanga Reo       | Language nests or Māori medium early childhood learning centres   |
| Te Puna              | The spring  |
| Teina                | A younger person  |
| Tēnā koe             | Hello (to one person)   |
| Te Tiriti o Waitangi | The Treaty of Waitangi  |
| Te Toi o Nga Rangi   | The uppermost domain, highest heaven  |
| Tikanga              | Protocol, customary practices, culture  |
| Tino Rangatiratanga  | Sovereignty; self-determination   |
| Titiro               | Look  |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Tohatohatia         | The capacity to share   |
| Tohu                | Degree, qualification, certificate  |
| Tōhunga             | A priest or person with sacred knowledge  |
| Tōhunga Ta Moko     | Tattoo Artists  |
| Tōhunga Makutu      | Priests, shaman   |
| Tōhunga Wahitanga   | Carpenters  |
| Tōhunga Whaikairo   | Expert carvers  |
| Tuakana             | An older person   |
| Tuakana-teina       | Older-younger person relationship dynamics (mostly used in the context of teaching and learning).               |
| Tūrangawaewae       | Place of standing; place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and <i>whakapapa</i> . |
| Waiata              | Song  |
| Waiora              | Water and herbal therapy  |
| Wairua(tanga)       | Spirit(uality)  |
| Waka                | A canoe, or vehicle for transport   |
| Wānanga             | Institution of higher learning  |
| Whaiwhakaaro        | Reflections, considerations, take into account  |
| Whakamana           | To empower, or, capacity to empower   |
| Whaktauī            | Proverb   |
| Whakapapa           | Genealogy   |
| Whakapapa-whānau    | Kinship family  |
| Whakarongo          | Listen  |
| Whakatakoto tikanga | The capacity to plan ahead  |
| Whakatauki          | Proverb   |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| (Whaka)whānaungatanga | Building relationships or social supports           |
| Whakawhiti            | Transfer; intersection                              |
| Whakawhitinga         | Transition/crossing                                 |
| Whānau                | Family  |
| Whānaungatanga        | Relationships                                       |
| Whare Wānanga         | A place or house of learning                        |
| Wharekura             | Secondary school component of kura<br>kaupapa Māori |
| Whenua                | Land  |

## He Mihi

*Tākiri te haeata, ka ao, ka awatea, horahia mai ko te ao mārama*

*Transitioning from our past to a new future*

*Dawn breaks, comes the daylight and the world is aglow with brilliant light*

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ko Mauao tōku maunga

Ko Wairoa tōku awa

Ko Tauranga tōku moana

Ko SS James Nichol Flemming tōku waka

Ko Hilary Mason te rangatira o runga

Ko Ngāti Aotearoa rāua ko Ngāti Pākehā ōku iwi

Ko Mason tōku hapū

Ko Amundsen tōku whānau

Ko tenei tōku whakapapa i te taha o tōku pāpā

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Ko Bruce te tamaiti tuatoru

Ko Carol te pōtiki

Ko tenei tōku whakapapa i te taha o tōku māmā

Ko Charles tōku koroua

Ko Alma tōku kuia

Tokowha a rāua tamariki

Ko Peter te mātaamua,

Ko John te tamaiti tuarua

Ko Jane te tamaiti tuatoru, ko Jane tōku māmā

Ko Cindy te pōtiki

Ko Ian rāua ko Jane ōku mātua  
Tokowha a rāua tamariki  
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Ko Paul tāku tungāne  
Ko Carolyn rāua ko Sonia āku teina

Ko Mark tōku hoa rangatira  
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Ko Diana Amundsen tōku ingoa.

No reira tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

## Whakataukī

*E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea.  
I will never be lost, for I am a seed sown in Rangiātea.*

### Chapter One Introduction

Lined up along the pathway under graceful shady trees are people of all ages and cultures. Near the front, two middle-aged males talk to each other spiritedly, their graduation gowns adorned with *kahu huruhuru* (feather cloaks), broad chests beneath. *Whānau* (family) proudly surround them. Further down the line, a young woman smiles. Peeps of her elegant red dress decorated with Chinese silk embroidery at the hem are visible beneath the black gown as she energetically converses with two blonde-haired women wearing freshly pressed dresses. Nearby stands a smartly dressed gentleman, his turban neatly wrapped five times around his head.

Bunches of people are laughing and conversing with each other, dressed formally for the occasion: suits, saris, turbans, and lavalavas mingling among a sea of black gowns and caps. People hug, shake hands, bow, and a few *hongī* (press noses). Some just stand and look around, taking in the celebratory mood as last minute latecomers rush across the grass to join the line. An air of excitement hovers, the mood is anticipatory; the bright and buoyant atmosphere matches the sunshine.

Whispers begin making their way down the line, “ssshh”, passing on to others, “ssshh”. Gradually, everyone hushes, expectantly waiting. A spiritual call pierces the air—it is a Māori woman’s voice. Her *karanga* (call) is unmistakable, steeped in *tikanga* (custom), epitomising the power of Māori women within *Te Ao Māori* (World of Māori). The *kaikaranga* (caller) has charisma; her tone warm and welcoming. Hers is a mystical call heard through generations of *whānau* throughout Aotearoa. She greets the ancestors before, and the living around, all on one held breath from her heart. The *pōwhiri* (ceremony) has begun.

With a sense of formality the occasion requires, the crowd begin slowly moving forward, as the *manuhiri* (visitor) *kaikaranga*’s voice calls back. This year’s graduating students carefully make their way toward the auditorium where they will take part in the final ceremony from their place of learning. Among the group,

diversity reigns. Young people who bravely embarked on the new world of adulthood, middle-aged people who set out to reinvent themselves as learners striving for new goals, older people who appreciated the opportunity to savour their learning. English and *Te Reo Māori* (Māori language), Mandarin and Korean, Samoan and Tongan, Hindi, Punjabi, Kiswahili and more, are all spoken among today's students. The demographics of tertiary education students and protocols of campus life proceedings reflect the socio-cultural transitions that have taken place in Aotearoa over recent decades.

Any staff member who has attended a pōwhiri ceremony such as the one described above will have their own stories to share about students. I am one such staff member. My stories are of those Māori students as they made their transition into tertiary education student life to achieve the educational success they pursued. Some stories are of those who struggled. A few stories are of those who soared to astounding levels in the face of enormous challenges in their personal lives. In truth, they are not *my* stories. They are *their* stories, the *students'* stories, and *their* voice. It is their stories I have been invited to take part in and have been entrusted with for the privilege of re-telling, through this thesis.

I started by describing graceful shady trees which lined the pathway to the graduation entrance. Each one of those trees began as *he kākano* (a seed). There was a small group of Māori students who planted the seed for this research to begin, like those graceful shady trees, to protect the pathway for future students coming after them. A student, as for he kākano in the transition from seed to seedling, to tree, carries a history while holding potential for growth, development and expansion. If a student, he kākano, has their potential nurtured and fostered through optimal foundational and environmental conditions, successful growth can be realised through learning and development.

This chapter explains the seeds of this research. I introduce who I am, where I come from and what shaped my experience and understanding of Māori culture. I discuss how this research came about from the small group of Māori students (the seeds of this research). I communicate my personal values and professional position in this research. Importantly, I discuss the issue surrounding transitions in

tertiary education for Māori students, introducing my research question, rationale and significance of this study. Lastly, I overview the thesis chapters.

### 1.1 Who is the Researcher? Nō hea au, ko wai au?

I have been an educator for more than 25 years. My career has been predominantly based in Aotearoa, but peppered with two years in England, five years in Japan and six years in Hawai'i. At age 20, I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Japanese from the University of Waikato in Hamilton; subsequently, I taught Japanese at a High School in the Wairarapa region. This experience connected me to teaching in Osaka and Tokyo, Japan. I further travelled to England, then returned to teach in New Zealand. Later, I lived and worked in the USA for six years. During that time, in 2004, mid-thirties, I completed my Master of Arts in Communication in Education from the University of Hawai'i.

While completing my master's degree, I was employed by the University of Hawai'i in the College of Education as an 'Education Specialist' with a federal grant project named 'Learning Enhancements Innovations (LEI) Aloha'. I was responsible for coordinating a teacher sabbatical programme of four online courses called the Technology Intensive Enhancement Series (TIES) Programme. This programme was taken up by numerous K-12 teachers, eligible for a one-semester paid sabbatical. It was a powerful experience in my life. I became more aware of the issues facing Indigenous Hawai'ians, and discovered commonalities with Māori historical and contemporary issues.

After the LEI Aloha project, I returned to Tauranga, where I had grown up, to raise our three children and support my parents, taking a brief career break. During that period, I was elected to my local primary school Board of Trustees as the Secretary and later, the Chairperson. This school opened in 1883 as a 'native school'; still today, there are strong links to three *hapū* (sub-tribes) with one third of students identifying as Māori (Education Review Office, 2016).

In 2011, returning to work as a tutor for Edvance Ltd in Tauranga, a Private Training Establishment (PTE) funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), I delivered literacy, numeracy and foundation skills training to adults in the workplace. For three years, I was 'hosted' in Māori health and community

organisations, primarily working alongside Māori adults to upskill their documentation, communication and computer expertise. This experience taught me more about Māori culture and enormously opened my eyes to present social concerns for Māori. I simultaneously embarked on foundation level Te Reo Māori night courses through Te Wānanga o Aotearoa to improve my Māori language skills.

In 2014, I accepted a position at the former Bay of Plenty Polytechnic as a Learner Facilitator to engage with tertiary students requiring foundational support. This role also extended to serving students enrolled at the University of Waikato in Tauranga, as a joint campus arrangement shared student support services. My knowledge of Adult Education was extended by completing a Level 5 National Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy for Adults in Education (NCALNE) in 2016. A large majority of students were Māori adult learners; I also worked alongside many Māori staff members. My doctoral study began whilst in this role; since then I have held Teaching Fellow and Lecturer positions for the University of Waikato in Tauranga. I continue working with a diverse range of tertiary education (TE) students.

During conversations with a group of Māori students whom I saw frequently in my capacity as a Learner Facilitator in 2015, we wondered whether deeper knowledge by the organisation of their transition experiences might support more effective transitions for future students. This interest bubbled up among the students and myself together as we built our relationships jointly. They pointed out that I was the staff member in a (seemingly) better position to act with intent on such exploration. Finally, after quite a few cups of tea and *kōrero* (conversations), a few students asked me to take up this idea more seriously. I listened. I took initiative. I raised their opinions with my manager (who is Māori). He knew I was thinking about undertaking doctoral research and when he suggested that I combine the two ideas into one project, it was a surprising response which gradually began to swirl around and grow into a real possibility.

This small group of Māori students planted the seed for this research to begin, to protect the pathway for future students who would come after them. In the *whakataukī* (proverb) for this chapter, *ruia* means to plant, or to sow. I refer to the

initial group of Māori students who helped to establish the foundation from which this research developed. Ruia represents the foundations that contribute to realising the seed's potential, earthing the seed so it can be nourished with time and energy. Ruia, like this group of students is the link between potential and realisation. "Rangiātea is the start and finish, depicting the cyclical nature of growth and development, the links and connections, and the enduring strength of relationship and location" (MoE, n.d.a., p.5). Because of the professional location I was in, and the relationships I had developed, the seeds of this research took hold and set down their roots.

Therefore, I began researching with a group of 20 Māori tertiary education (TE) students from the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership for this doctorate. I did not set out to investigate my own self-perceptions of being Pākehā (a New Zealander of European descent, in relation to Māori) during the research process. Although I was acutely aware that it was a cross-cultural study where I was a Pākehā and the participants were Māori, our focus was on exploring *their* personal transition experiences to capture a '*student voice*' (Cook-Sathers, 2014; Kidman, 2014) perspective. Though research communities may understand the value of including students' "voices" in educational research, Kidman (2014) argues that this practice is frequently misunderstood and often contested, notably so for research involving groups of Māori youth. Great care had to be taken in my role as a researcher. Ultimately, I adapted this research process to incorporate the priorities of the student participant community with whom I was researching. The research project was a way to formalise and build on the conversations and questions (the "voices") which had bubbled up organically in natural and relaxed settings during lunches and kōrero together.

My decision to become involved in researching with Māori was not a conscious decision to become actively involved in the politics of research with Māori. Somewhere within the process of *becoming a Pākehā* (Newton, 2009) researcher working with Māori communities, I began to think a great deal about my own role and the role of research in general for Māori. Identifying myself as a Pākehā has only come about later. I have since written about my experience (see Amundsen, 2018). This research journey has enabled me to confidently claim what a Pākehā

identity means to me. Just as I hope the stories and journeys of the research participants may inspire future Māori students, perhaps my own research story may inspire other non-Māori and Pākehā New Zealanders to understand their identity in ways to fully recognise Māori's unique place as tangata whenua.

## 1.2 Thesis as a Rākau

In a Māori worldview, metaphors are important. This research was located in the Bay of Plenty, Aotearoa New Zealand, a region connected to ocean and bush life. Far into this research journey, one Sunday, I tramped into the Kaimai bush. With graceful shady trees all around me, my thoughts drifted into ages gone by, when trees had sustained life for peoples with their trunks used for boat-building, carving and houses.

One of Tāne's children—a magnificent Kauri tree—stood before me. I placed the palm of my hand on the rough, ridged and patterned trunk (See Figure 1). In the Māori creation myth, Tāne, the son of Ranginui the Sky Father and Papatūanuku, the Earth Mother separate from their marital embrace until Sky Father is high above Earth Mother. Tāne begins to clothe his mother with vegetation – the birds and forest are Tāne's children.

As my fingers traced the scratchy, rough bumps and smooth skin on the bark, I contemplated the many hands contributing to this research. My mother's nursing hands, my father's wood-carving, violin-playing hands, my husband's weathered builder's hands, my sister's helping hands, my brother's big, strong hands, my children's soft youthful hands, my manager's surprising hands, my supervisors' guiding hands, my participants' capable hands, Māori wood-carving hands of ages gone by...



Figure 1: Hand on Kauri Tree (my photo)



Figure 2: Diana's Tree Art Poem (Design Inspired by Daniel Williams).



*Figure 3: Kauri Tree (my photo)*

I knew in that contemplative moment (Figure 2) that this thesis was like a *rākau* (tree). As this research progressed, and findings arose which caused me to explore branches and pathways not initially anticipated, I realised that, like the tree my hand was touching (See Figure 3), my own research was a process of ‘layers on layers’. Connections with new people, new phases and new knowledge brought about different seasons and layers within the inquiry.

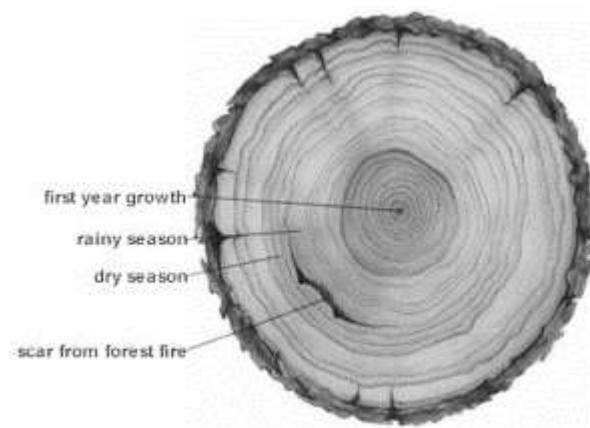
There are always seen and unseen aspects of trees. We know the seeds and roots of a tree are there, but are largely ‘unseen’. The seeds of this research are the initial group of Māori students who sparked the *kōrero* about improving transition experiences for future students who come after them. Though most of them were not formal participants in this study, were it not for them, the roots of this research would not have taken hold. It struck me that this research, after all, is about Māori students growing to be strong.

I am a ‘seen’ aspect of the research – the trunk in the centre connecting multitudes of branches, such as the other participants, the literature, my supervisors, the ethics committee, fellow doctoral students. I drew nourishment and inspiration

from the roots in order to carry sustenance throughout the tree to nurture the branches, twigs and leaves.

Again, there were ‘unseen’ aspects of this research reflected in the context and the environment. Just as a tree is affected by its environmental features such as rain, sun, wind, soil conditions and nearby trees, participants were affected by their socio-cultural environmental context—their whānau, their culture, the society in which they had grown up and the historical factors which had affected their ‘soil conditions’.

Underneath a tree’s layer of bark, inside the trunk, exist growth ring layers. Each layer tells the story of one year of the tree’s life – whether there was a flood, a drought, a forest fire, or too much wind (See Figure 4). Whilst the outside layer of the trunk may be the ‘seen’ aspect which protects and shelters the ‘unseen’ layers of a tree, the inside story is nevertheless completely part of a tree’s unique growth. During the early years, a tree works on establishing its roots; in this stage, not much growth is evident on the outside. But inside, the tree works hard to establish a firm base which will support its later growth. There were strong parallels here to the transition experiences of many participants.



*Figure 4: Tree Growth Rings Rabbischeinberg, 2015.*

The interconnections apparent in the tree metaphor hint at Bronfenbrenner’s (1979; 2005) ecological systems framework where human development results from reciprocal interactions between the individual and the environment. Micro-systems, exo-systems, meso-systems, macro-systems and finally, chrono-systems work in a reciprocal interplay in ecological transitions. Although Bronfenbrenner championed the rights of marginalised families and communities (Houston, 2015)

the role of power, agency and structure influencing the 'person-context' reciprocal interrelationship in education settings could be considered under-theorized. For that reason Bourdieu's (1977; 1984) theories offered a suitable theoretical framework for this research, however, there are many important overlaps and connections to be made here when considering the field of transitions.

In the creation of this thesis, I use the metaphor of a tree to communicate and frame my message. A tree reflects that there are always seen and unseen aspects to growth. This brings together the importance of using our senses when conducting research (Hōhepa, 2014). Trees grow into space, seeking light. Ultimately, through breath, lives of people and trees have inherent and reciprocal connections. In this thesis, a fusion of these elements is inherent in notions of transition.

### 1.3 Rationale for Research

Indigenous Māori in Aotearoa are working hard to address education, quality of life and well-being issues remaining from a legacy of colonisation. The New Zealand Government has charged the Tertiary Education Commission Te Amorangi Mātauranga Matua (TEC) with responsibilities to increase numbers of New Zealanders with a tertiary qualification, bring about high quality, relevant research, and manage a tertiary education (TE) system responsive to the needs of learners and employers (TEC, 2017a). The TEC prioritises gaining higher levels of achievement for Māori learners through 'stretch targets' which were established to concentrate on parity issues of performance and achievement.

Perspectives and experiences of Māori tertiary learners themselves are lacking noticeably in the literature (Chauvel & Rean, 2012). Tahau-Hodges (2010) advocated for listening to the learner voice to understand implications for producing positive outcomes; much of the literature has over-looked this proposition. Furthermore, Wiselely (2009) identified the need for future research on retaining Māori students in wānanga and other tertiary organisations to use longitudinal data with students from diverse institutions. Longitudinal research specifically focusing on Māori students' lived experiences of transitioning, entering and progressing in different TE environments is scarce.

Inadequate understanding of what “educational success” means for Māori, and what key outcomes are of primacy for Māori are under-researched areas. As highlighted in Chauvel and Rean’s (2012) review, “the literature lacks an in-depth focus on Māori learner participation in tertiary education, including enablers and barriers experienced by different Māori learners” (p.83). This PhD study aimed to address some of these research gaps, adding to this important knowledge base. Hence, my study design was longitudinal, focused on Māori student voice, investigated barriers and enablers in depth, prioritised data about meanings of educational success for Māori and, researched across three different types of TE providers.

### 1.3.1 The Problem

Facilitating effective transitions of Māori students into TE is a crucial economic and social issue for Māori communities and New Zealand society at large (Durie, 2009). It is also a central matter of interest for the TEC and most TE providers in New Zealand, as Māori students constitute a growing proportion of the student body. Currently the TE system under-performs for Māori, a demographic group which is forecast to grow in their share of the total population (New Zealand Productivity Commission [NZPC], 2017). Researchers are increasingly noting comparatively high fertility rate trends among Māori—this, coupled with a younger age structure relative to a generally aging population, has implications for the New Zealand economy becoming more reliant on Māori in the future workforce (Rubie-Davies & Peterson, 2016). Rubie-Davies and Peterson (2016) suggest that the ethnic achievement gap must be addressed for the future working population to be more educated and potentially more productive.

In the context of Aotearoa, Māori achieve below their Pākehā peers in the majority of academic subjects. This gap is noticeable as early as when Māori students transition into primary school and continues throughout schooling (Rubie-Davies & Peterson, 2016). Educators, researchers and policy makers have been disturbed about this gap because Māori experience continuing social and economic disadvantages. Yet, studies understanding education transition experiences from Māori student perspective are scant (Chauvel & Rean, 2012).

An institution's capacity to support Māori students potentially influences the effectiveness of any student's individually lived transition experience. During the last decade, some research studies have emerged with a focus on factors influencing Māori educational success in tertiary education environments. None was conducted to incorporate a university, a polytechnic and a *wānanga* (institution of higher learning) simultaneously. Few used a longitudinal research approach. Data about Māori students' perspectives and experiences of making an effective transition into TE are lacking, or have been collected inconsistently.

### 1.3.2 Research Question

This study sought to answer one over-arching research question:

RQ: What do effective transitions to tertiary education look like for Māori students?

With that purpose in mind, the following subsidiary questions provided focus:

1. What are the transition experiences for Māori students into tertiary study?
2. What are the transition barriers for Māori students into tertiary study?
3. What are the transition enablers for Māori students into tertiary study?
4. What do Māori students say defines an effective transition into tertiary study?
5. What are the differences, if any, in transition experiences into a university, or a polytechnic or a *wānanga*?
6. What does educational success in a tertiary education context mean to Māori students?

In the face of a strongly neo-liberal tertiary education system, there is a growing pressure on organisations to attract and retain Māori students, whether school-leavers or non-school leavers. Māori are the second-largest ethnic group after European New Zealanders (Statistics New Zealand, 2018). This prominent demographic in New Zealand society is reflected in the TE landscape. It is essential for *wānanga*, polytechnics and universities to understand Māori definitions of educational success. A recognition of factors that support effective transitions and student mobility among institutions may benefit individual students and potentially increase completions.

This study was carried out in the expectation that, informed by a 'student voice' perspective, institutions and staff may be better equipped to support Māori students in their transition to tertiary education. The research question is extremely important because it has potential to provide data collected from a longitudinal research design, from three different types of institutions, and importantly, information related to the personally lived experiences of Māori students themselves.

### 1.3.3 Significance of the Study

Increasing the number of Māori students who make effective transitions into tertiary environments can benefit individuals, their communities and the country as a whole. Gaining a higher education qualification directly correlates to higher income earning capacity and a better standard of life (OECD, 2018). Tertiary education plays a key role in improving people's life in regards to health, civic participation, being active in politics and in local communities, committing fewer crimes and relying on less social assistance (OECD, 2018).

So far, Māori have not enjoyed the same privileges as the total population, reflecting an unequal societal structure in Aotearoa, as evidenced by continual conversations around struggles by Māori, Indigenous and some liberal Pākehā academics for cultural, social, political and educational equality (Amundsen, 2018; Durie, 2009; Hutchings & Lee-Morgan, 2016; Smith, 1999). Māori students' transition experiences are a fundamental dimension of Aotearoa society and in this regard, are inseparable from the overall process of social organisation and social change. Thus, tertiary education outcomes for Māori students' are better understood in the broader context of social transformation. Social trends and their implications in relation to the role of tertiary education may not be well understood or researched. For instance, researchers (Kidman, 2014; Thrupp, 2007) suggest that notions of New Zealand as an egalitarian and classless society rooted in a fairly benevolent colonial past are ubiquitous, having a powerful grip on middle-class Pākehā ideas of New Zealand as a fair, just and equal society.

According to Wilkinson and Pickett (2009), more equal societies almost always do better (than unequal societies) by reducing income differences and related social

problems such as community life and social relations; mental health and drug use; physical health, obesity and life expectancy; teenage pregnancies; violence, crime and punishment; unequal opportunities for intergenerational social mobility; and significantly for this study, educational performance. Current trends in regard to the above-mentioned social problems do not point to New Zealand having an equal society (see, Duncanson et al., 2017; Durie, 2005; 2009; Krugman, 2009; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). By implication, this research is an exploration of the tertiary education sector's role in contributing towards creating a more equal societal structure in this country. The question of how social change might bring about a reduction in the effects of inequality for Māori was implicit in my study.

This research is unusual in that I was a Pākehā (non-Māori, non-Indigenous) researcher working across a *kaupapa* Māori (Māori approach) research space. This is a research space not without challenges. My findings about how Pākehā can engage in research with Māori communities in appropriate, respectful and useful ways were an unanticipated outcome of the research process (a 'layer on a layer'). Suggestions for how a non-Indigenous researcher could engage in Indigenous research were not the initial focus of this research endeavour, but nonetheless, have the potential to add value to the field of Indigenous development research.

In gaining a fuller understanding of what an effective transition to TE looks like for Māori students, application of this knowledge may benefit future students. Those benefits are that students remain engaged in TE, experience educational success in terms of what that means for Māori, and use their knowledge as a basis for individual and community transformation. This exploration was about a bigger *kaupapa* (topic) than a singular piece of research. It was about adding to a movement of raising awareness of the importance of decolonisation through reconciliation in Aotearoa to address racial inequities between Pākehā and Māori through better understanding the importance of educational transitions processes.

#### 1.4 Chapter Overviews

Chapter 2 explains the context of this research setting, providing a brief overview of tertiary education in Aotearoa. I focus on the Bay of Plenty region where this

research took place. I introduce the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership, presently comprising three TE institutions: Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology; the University of Waikato in Tauranga, and; Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. I describe the historical, geographical, political and social backgrounds of each of these three institutions in the Bay of Plenty region in which participants in this study were enrolled.

Chapter 3 presents an evaluation of two key areas of literature related to this research; tertiary education for Māori, and, transitions in education. I review the literature critiquing historical and contemporary factors which impact upon TE opportunities for Māori and assess what is known about how transitions in education have been experienced by Māori students. Major themes found in these bodies of literature provide a background and context for this study. I illustrate where this study fits within the wider fields of Indigenous success in education, and educational transitions, and within the more specific field of Māori student transitions in TE in Aotearoa. Important theorists and ideas are highlighted and controversies and disagreements are reviewed.

Chapter 4 makes explicit my social ontological and epistemological perspectives through the choice of the critical and interpretive paradigms used in this study. I outline the theoretical framework of this study, explaining the relevance of Critical Social Theory (CST) and Kaupapa Māori Theory. I make my researcher position transparent exposing my assumptions and pre-dispositions guiding my thoughts and interpretation of literature.

Chapter 5 outlines the Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) of this study. I reiterate the research question, alongside the relevance of qualitative research and a longitudinal design. Researcher positionality as a Pākehā researcher working across kaupapa Māori spaces is discussed, woven with consideration of ethics, insider-outsider dynamics and my subjective researcher position. I document the methods used, explaining how participants were selected through “kumara vine” sampling, and how data collection and analysis comprised semi-structured interviews, repeated focus groups, e-mails, researcher notes, visual stories and thematic analysis.

Chapter 6 presents the findings. First, an overview of the participants is given, followed by the findings pertaining to each of the six subsidiary research questions. Broadly, these include participants' lived transition experiences, factors that contribute to barriers and/or enablers, what students say defines an effective transition and what educational success means to the participants in this study.

Chapter 7 discusses the major over-riding theme of identity which emerged from this research. Within the theme of identity, sub-themes relating to Māori identity, personal identity and student identity are discussed. Then, the reciprocal interplay of identity with agency and structure is deliberated, with a discussion of each element individually. Lastly, I discuss another sub-theme from this research relating to Pākehā identity. I communicate relevant lessons I learnt being a Pākehā researcher working alongside Māori participants.

Finally, Chapter 8 provides a conclusion to this thesis, noting limitations pertaining to my researcher position, critical and interpretive paradigms and generalisability. Implications for future research are outlined based on gaps identified through the research outcomes. I suggest guidelines to underpin a Transition Programme (Akoranga Whakawhiti) for institutions and staff to support effective transitions to tertiary education for Māori students. Lastly, I make recommendations for Pākehā who work across Māori education and research spaces in order to operate in respectful and meaningful ways.

## Whakataukī

*Kua hōhonu ki te whenua ngā pakiaka o te rākau e kore e taea te huhuti.*

*The roots of the tree are deep into the ground and cannot be pulled out.*

## Chapter Two Context

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the historical, geographical, political and socio-cultural environmental context of the research setting. I first discuss the tertiary education context in Aotearoa, providing a snapshot of the role of the Tertiary Education Commission. Next, I give a commentary about how the tertiary education sector has been subject to neo-liberal forces and how tertiary education performs a function of social control in Aotearoa. A précis of the historical context of Tauranga is given including discussion of the Poike *raupatu* (land confiscation). I carried out this research with 20 Māori students enrolled in Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership (BOPTep, 2014) organisations comprising: Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, The University of Waikato in Tauranga, and, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī. I map out details of the historical roots, and geographical, political and socio-cultural backgrounds of each institution. A chapter summary is given.

### 2.2 Tertiary Education in Aotearoa

In Aotearoa, the tertiary education landscape is influenced by international trends. The *Washington Consensus* laid out a specific vision of globalisation influencing political, economic and educational agendas since the mid-1990s (Harvey, 2007). Neo-liberal discourses (Saunders, 2010) derive from these western world ideologies. Higher/further/tertiary institutions worldwide were forced to operate in a competitive global marketplace to survive.

Worldwide, TE shifted from being an accessible privilege for the middle class élite to being available for a massive section of society (Leach, 2013; 2014). Technological advances alongside globalisation imperatives and international competition directed TE from elitism to mass education, or *massification* (Leach, 2013). Massification was first about increasing participation in TE, and next about widening access. Emphasis in TE institutions globally shifted to increase

participation, widen access and increase student retention and course completion rates (McGivney, 1996; Rovai, 2003; Scott, 2010; Thayer, 2000; Tinto, 1987; 2006; Zepke & Leach, 2010). This was the case in Aotearoa too (Findsen, 2012; Goedegebuure et al., 2008; Leach, 2013).

### 2.2.1 Tertiary Education in Aotearoa

The Tertiary Education (TE) sector is defined by the Ministry of Education (MoE) (2017a) as comprising vocational and higher education. In 2016, the MoE began referring to *all* post-compulsory education as ‘further’ education on their website (MoE, n.d.b). Commonly, New Zealanders still refer to this sector as ‘tertiary education’ (TE), as do I in this thesis.

Vocational education is offered through 16 polytechnics, 11 Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) and approximately 200 Private Training Establishments (PTEs) (MoE, 2017a). From 25 polytechnics in 1990, there are presently 16 in 2018, with future reductions or mergers likely. Today, across 16 polytechnic providers, 147,300 students (77,300 Equivalent Full Time Students [EFTS]) are enrolled, with diploma and certificate level programmes accounting for over half the programmes (NZ Productivity Commission [NZPC], 2017).

Three wānanga operate in New Zealand – they are state owned Māori teaching and research institutions offering certificates, diplomas and degrees, some up to doctorate level (MoE, 2017a). Eighty percent of wānanga provision is at certificate level 1 to 4. Presently, wānanga enrol approximately 37,300 students, of whom around 60% are Māori (NZPC, 2017). Wānanga are considered to be teaching and research institutions essentially similar to a university, though different in that the learning occurs through a Māori pedagogy. Disparity of the status between wānanga and universities exposes the existence of a stratified social structure in Aotearoa where Māori are over represented in a lower tier of under-educated, under-employed and over-criminalised (Bryant, 2010). Bowl (2018) proposes that universities employ a discourse of ‘distinctiveness’ to denote their superiority over other TE institutions (for instance polytechnics and wānanga and competing universities).

Currently, eight partially state-funded universities provide TE at degree and postgraduate level, and between them, enrol 172,100 students (132,000 EFTS) which is 48% of total EFTS in the tertiary sector (NZPC, 2017). Almost three quarters of university provision is at Bachelor's degree level (NZPC, 2017). Yet, the education gap where socio-economically (dis)advantage remains a strong determinant of (under)achievement in schools becomes more starkly noticeable at university level (Johnston, 2015).

### 2.2.2 Tertiary Education Commission

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) is the Government body whose responsibility it is to plan, fund and monitor New Zealand's tertiary education system (TEC, 2016). In the early 2000s, a Tertiary Education Advisory Committee (TEAC) was set up to inform a new direction for the tertiary sector (Crawford, 2016). Subsequently, the TEC has released four versions of the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) document, which have been the centrepieces for reforms in the TE sector.

A guiding principle of the TEAC's vision for the future of TE was lifelong *equitable* access, which has continued to be an over-arching vision in all four versions of the TES documents. In this vision, as Aotearoa sought to assert an individual's right to continue learning throughout one's life course, the idea of 'lifelong' learning replaced notions of adult education within governmental policy (Findsen & Formosa, 2011; Findsen & Mark, 2016). However, despite governmental support for the rhetoric of lifelong learning, access and funding have not been readily provided (Findsen & Mark, 2016). From 2000 onwards, the Government's stated emphasis has been on aligning TE with New Zealand's socio-economic development (TEC, 2017a). One issue is how the competing tensions between its six priorities should be managed in order to achieve the over-arching goal of lifelong equitable access (NZPC, 2017).

The present Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019 (MoE, 2014a) states six priorities as follows, to:

1. Deliver skills for industry
2. Get at-risk young people into a career

3. Boost achievement of Māori and Pasifika
4. Improve adult literacy and numeracy
5. Strengthen research-based institutions
6. Grow international linkages.

In 2001, led by Linda Tuihiwai Smith, a Māori Tertiary Reference Group (MTRG) consulted with communities and iwi and in 2003, developed a Māori Tertiary Education Framework which stated Māori aspirations. Three core visions were identified (MTRG, 2003):

1. To live as Māori
2. To actively participate as citizens of the world
3. To enjoy a high standard of living and good health.

Furthermore, the framework (See Figure 5) identified guiding principles and seven priority areas, each with a set of objectives designed to strengthen the position of Māori within the tertiary system. Unlike the successive iterations of the TES, the Government has not facilitated subsequent updates to the Māori TE Framework.

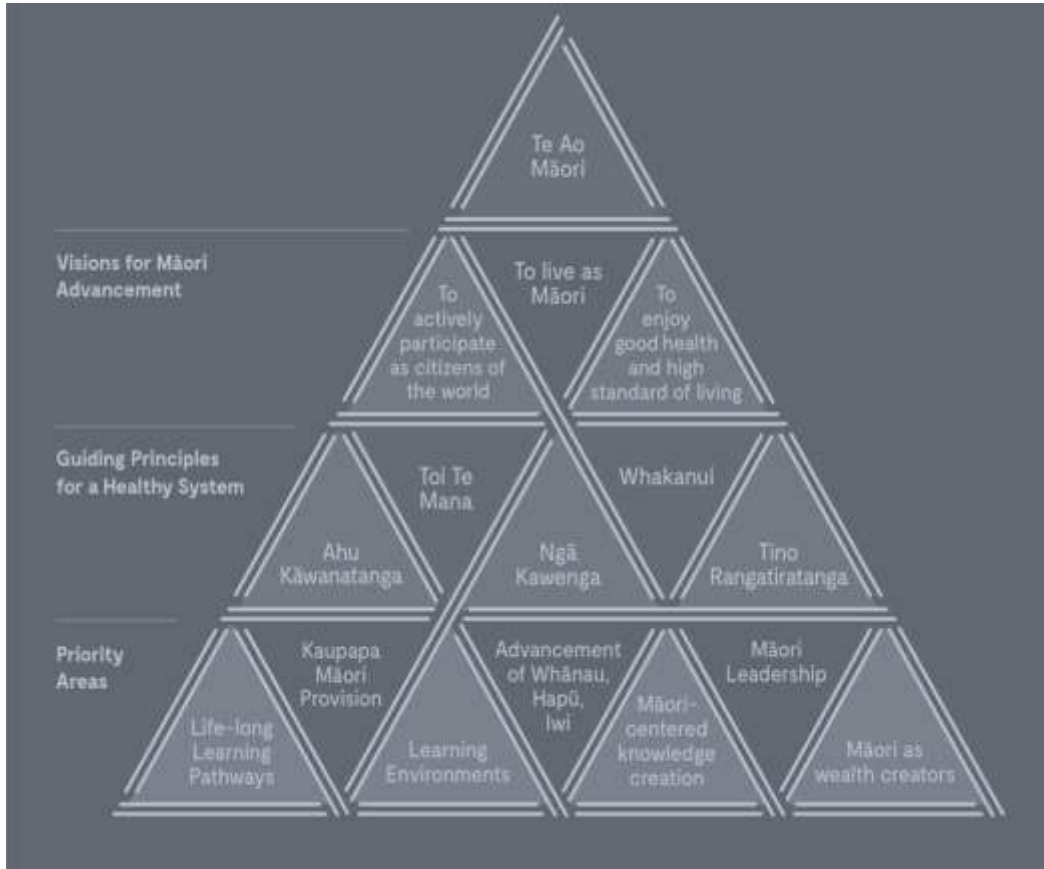


Figure 5: Māori Tertiary Education Reference Group (2003).

This lack of updating is concerning since the foreword of the document states: “While it has not been formally endorsed by the government we are expecting that government agencies and the wider tertiary sector will take it into account when interacting with iwi Māori and their communities” (MTRG, 2003, p.4). Research exists which points to strong silences around how Māori tertiary learners desire participation and involvement in the TE system (Law and Stalker, 2005; Wiseley, 2009). Failure to take into account Māori learners as key stakeholders results in denial of their voice.

My research explored Māori ‘student voice’ around transitions to TE and Māori students’ aspirations for participation. In order to “boost achievement of Māori and Pasifika” (TES priority 3) in an inequitable, hegemonic TE system, there must be possibilities for social justice and voices on the margins to be heard. Bearing this in mind, the question of *how* Māori student voice would be represented (and to what extent) during the processes of this research was paramount so as not to perpetuate the ‘status quo’ (Fielding, 2004). Kidman (2014) argues that many Aotearoa educators assume positive differences are made for Māori through initiating equity and diversity strategies to meet compliance requirements and introducing culturally responsive pedagogies in education arenas, but these may be what Troyna (1994) terms “comforting myths” that racism problems are being minimised. Accordingly, this research had the aim of making a ‘positive difference’ (Smith, 1999) for participants, which might or might not be immediately or directly beneficial, but was planned in conjunction with participants from the beginning in order to strengthen the likelihood of positive research benefits for Māori communities.

The 2008 global financial crisis took its toll on participation in the tertiary sector. Leach (2013) explains that in 2009, the New Zealand Government withdrew \$NZ500 million from the sector and capped enrolments. By 2010, universities were turning away thousands of students; performance-based criteria on student loans were initiated; loans were restricted and funding became tightly linked to student performance such as course and qualification completion, progression to higher study and retention (Joyce, 2010; TEC, 2011). All of these factors impacted upon participation rates in TE, which have generally been trending down for all students

in Aotearoa (Education Counts, 2017a). However, this is notably so for Māori students (Leach, 2013), as seen in the Figure 6 below. In 2016, fewer than one in five Māori students participated in TE.

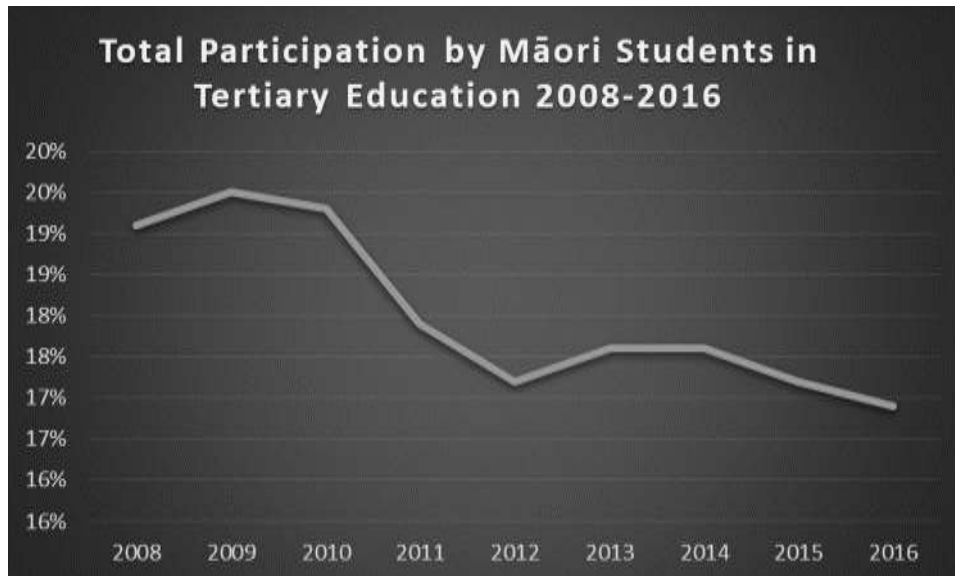


Figure 6: Participation Rates for Māori in TE 2008-2016. Source: Education Counts (2017a)

Policy directions of the TE sector in Aotearoa have been subject to political forces. After taking office following the September 2017 elections, Chris Hipkins (the new Minister of Education), announced that he would abandon the TE funding model of the previous government on the basis that it is a “failed ideological experiment” (“Chris Hipkins”, 2018). Hipkins disagreed with TE providers being forced to bid against each other for funding shares in non-degree post-schooling education. In a cabinet paper, he has called for a significant review of New Zealand’s entire education system (MoE, 2018a).

Hipkins proposes a bill to amend the Education Act (1989) and the related Education (Update) Amendment Act 2017 with the objective of improving the governance of tertiary education institutions (New Zealand Parliament, 2018). Some changes such as the introduction of the fee-free first year of tertiary education have already been implemented. Should more of these types of changes go ahead, the TEC will play a pivotal role making TE more accessible and more equitable as the governmental body charged with responsibility for planning, funding and monitoring the tertiary education system. Underpinning all

four of New Zealand's Tertiary Education Strategies has been a neo-liberal economic, political and ideological approach; it remains to be seen if this will be perpetuated in the subsequent fifth TES version.

### 2.2.3 Neo-liberal influences

Neo-liberal discourses (Gamble, 2019; Glenn, 2019) derive from western world ideologies and have steadily railroaded tertiary education institutions to operate in a competitive global marketplace to attract students for survival (Saunders, 2010). According to Gamble (2019), neo-liberalism first gained prominence in the 1970s, then emerged as a dominant western ideology following Europe's communism collapse in the 1990s, and has since remained a strong ideology and policy system in western countries. Glenn (2019) further elaborates that the rise of neo-liberalism entailed retrenchment of the welfare state, advancement of economic rationality into administration of society, and most of all, involved a very permissive environment for economically speculative aims of producing global capital.

Many commentaries on TE in New Zealand from the 2000s discuss connections with neoliberal ideologies (Amundsen, 2019; Bowl, 2010; Bowl & Tobias, 2012; Findsen, 2016; Olssen, 2001; Strathdee, 2009; Zepke, 2009a). Specifically, in the Aotearoa New Zealand context, neo-liberal education strategies are criticized for driving society to value formal and credentialed education as requisites for gaining job opportunities (Strauss & de la Maisonneuve, 2010). This is evidenced by the situation pointed out by Rowe-Williams (2018) in which students are "increasingly encouraged to view themselves as 'fully financialised subjects' in which tertiary education is considered an 'investment' into one's future self" (p.41). Gradually, the neo-liberal aims of successive New Zealand governments have led to the reshaping of tertiary education directly in relation to financial terms – a mission enforced by the TEC and adopted by tertiary education providers.

As the TEC has steadily drawn together numerous education avenues under its control, the post-2000 tertiary education sector in Aotearoa has undergone significant neo-liberal reforms. The TEC's tightening control over funding and operational rules have been felt nationally and regionally, for instance through

increased inter-institution competition, staff reductions and mergers within and across regions.

Neo-liberalism encompasses a, “variety of economic, social, and political ideas, and practices, functioning on both individual and institutional levels” (Saunders, 2010, p. 45). In Aotearoa, the Government has embraced an ‘inclusive’ type of neo-liberal ideology (Ballard, 2012), which has moved policy directions onto accountability and cost-cutting. Paradoxically, at the same, attention is drawn to issues of poverty gaps, lack of social cohesion and sustainability. Such an approach reflects the Government’s values of closely linking TE efforts to outcomes of employment, in turn creating a society that is driven by economics at the expense of addressing the social and cultural deficit (Kelsey, 1997) it leaves in its wake, notably for Māori citizens.

While differences arise over time and across contexts about neo-liberalism, three clear meanings are identifiable in the literature. Neo-liberal societies are about 1) free market economics; 2) a minimal role for the state, and; 3) the individual as a rational, economic actor often referred to as *homo economicus*, an ‘economic human’ (Birch & Mykhnenko, 2010; Bowl, 2010; Bowl & Tobias, 2012; Leach, 2014; Olssen, 2001; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Saunders, 2010). *Homo economicus* was first introduced by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and is now widely found in economic theories, depicting humans as narrow, self-interested agents whose sole desire is to possess wealth through the most effective means (Evensky, 2012). Neo-liberal governance depends on individualisation, decentralisation, and privatisation.

Societies structured by neo-liberal ideologies become less inclusive as they emphasise individual rights over collective rights and responsibilities, arguing for minimal state social welfare support (Harvey, 2007). Market exchange becomes an ethic in itself to guide human action. Ballard (2012) claims that neoliberalism advocates competitive market models as the way to structure education, health, prisons and other societal institutions. This approach is concerning because social democratic principles are demoted in neoliberalism, resulting in policies which drive high levels of societal inequality.

Neo-liberal societies value an economic human who has acquired educational credentials in order to contribute to the market economy.

Neo-liberal ideologies have brought about drastic budgetary cuts to the TE system, an economic rationality to cultural, social and political realms, and a redefinition of an individual as a citizen to an economic actor (Turner, 2008). The purpose of education has become entwined with prioritisation of economic outcomes (Giroux, 1981; 2005), yet, Aotearoa NZ is experiencing unparalleled levels of income and poverty gaps which have major impacts for Māori and other disadvantaged population groups. This echoes Giroux and Giroux (2008)'s point that neo-liberalism benefits few, and harms many. Neo-liberalism impacts more than just policy. It becomes an ideology and a specific style of rule – a style of rule that views TE as a tool to achieve socio-economic class control. In sum, neo-liberal changes accentuate a TE model which benefits few and potentially harms many through its interest of money and maintaining the status quo of power and knowledge in society. Political parties and prevailing neo-liberal ideologies undoubtedly influence how TE is organised, offered, accessed and credentialed in Aotearoa. Thus, the socio-political context as a whole cannot be ignored when considering the transition experiences of Māori students into TE environments.

There have been massive changes to tertiary education in the global system over the past two decades. For Māori students within the Aotearoa tertiary education system, neo-liberalism has had serious impacts on their transition and participation experiences. Peck and Tickell's (2002) research proposes that neo-liberalism has a transformative and adaptive capacity that has been underestimated and neglected. Aotearoa's insistence on progressing with neo-liberal policies since 1984 (Ballard, 2012) has resulted in high levels of income inequality and poverty, and a reduction in fairness and social cohesion (Krugman, 2009). Further, Aotearoa has exceptionally high rates of child poverty, with significant and persistent inequity between Māori and Pacific child poverty compared to non-Māori (Duncanson et al., 2017). As Giroux and Giroux (2008) propose, such harm and injustice is not inevitable; existing social structures contribute to these issues of social inequality.

Shore (2010) argues that effects of neo-liberal governance have seen a shifting paradigm when it comes to universities. Although still in the universities' statutes, the notion of universities as a public good has been largely abandoned in favour of higher education being an economic investment for an educated citizenry. In connection with 'value for money' (Findsen, 2001), globally and in Aotearoa, funding priorities have been re-directed from programme provision to tighter programme regulation. Neo-liberalism's dramatic effect on education is that knowledge itself becomes a commodity for markets (Giroux & Giroux, 2008; Krugman, 2009, Pierce, 2015). In Marxist political economy, commodification takes place when economic value is assigned to something that traditionally would not be considered in economic terms, for example an idea, identity or gender, or education (Gibbs & Maringe, 2008).

The commodification and contractualisation of education is a profound (and I would argue, detrimental) social and cultural change in what it means to be educated. Commodified education places education as a commercial transaction, where students are cast as clients to please, with rights of customer satisfaction, rather than a character to build. Without doubt, commodification has had the effect of marginalising education for local citizenship, global understanding and leisure (O'Neill, 2017) because of presumptions that the purpose of education is to prepare people for the workforce, a form of social control.

#### 2.2.4 Social Control

Tertiary education plays a role in *social control*. Sociological perspectives view social control as the way in which individuals' behaviours and attitudes become regulated. Without social control, chaos and confusion would reign; thus, social control is necessary for social order. Social control tends to be *informal or formal* (Borgatti, Brass & Halgin, 2014; Gramsci, 1971). Taking a Gramscian perspective, *informal* social control is when individuals conform to norms and values of a societal system which they have internalised through primary socialisation among family, caregivers, and teachers, usually enforced through rewards and sanctions. On the other hand, when individuals are required to conform to norms by governmental agencies and laws enforced through representatives such as

police officers, politicians and lawyers, this is *formal* social control (Borgatti, Brass & Halgin, 2014; Gramsci, 1971). Antonio Gramsci's (1971) theory of *cultural hegemony* posits that the ruling middle-upper class use ideologies and cultural institutions such as education (rather than physical coercion) to perpetuate and maintain their position of power. In this research, although I adopted a Bourdieuan perspective, Gramsci's argument, in this sense, closely parallels that of Bourdieu. Gramsci's (1971) theory contends that the *status quo* is maintained through hegemonic power of producing and reproducing cultural values and norms which become the dominant or 'common sense' values. A similar idea is used by Bourdieu in his argument that education is the transference of culture from one generation to the next: "cultural capital is added to cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1979, p.79).

Managing social order, social discipline and conformity requires some degree of power. Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, conceptualised power located within a comprehensive theory of power and practice (Bourdieu, 1977; 1984) which I later discuss in section 4.4.4. However, it is worth noting here that Bourdieu's comprehensive conceptualisation of power in his theories of society provides insightful ways of mapping how Māori students' transition experiences into tertiary education are linked with social control.

Like Bourdieu's theories, Michel Foucault's (1977; 1978) philosophical analyses of power relations provide insightful ways of mapping the evolution of Aotearoa's TE sector since the early 2000s. Growing centralisation and neo-liberal approaches of the TEC model have had a coercive effect upon educators, researchers and students in the TE sector. Academic freedom and autonomy replaced with regulation, auditing and emphasis on individual performativity by the TEC use, what Foucault terms, *normalising* power.

Normalising power creates a body of knowledge and behaviour which defines 'normal', acceptable or deviant behaviours – but nevertheless, it is a 'discursive practice which is in constant flux' (Foucault, 1991). Foucault has been influential in pointing out how norms can be so embedded they may be beyond our perception. One manifestation of normalising power is when a dominant culture

is normalised through political and social systems and practice as being a fundamental privilege – it can become invisible and unquestioned, ‘unseen’.

Devadas (2013) links Foucault’s concepts of power to nations controlling discourses about minority populations in order to promote particular beliefs impacting upon economic production and social cohesion. Within Aotearoa contexts of national identity, Māori are frequently narrated as problematic (Lee, 2009; Marshall & Peters, 1995; L. Smith, 1999). Promoting negative and mythical stereotypes of Māori justifies social protocols which systematise oppression and silence for Māori (Devadas, 2013; Moewaka-Barnes, Taiapa, Borell & McCreanor, 2013). This has had serious consequences for Māori identity and education.

In sum, the post-2000 tertiary education sector in Aotearoa has undergone significant neo-liberal reforms as the TEC has steadily drawn together a wide range of education avenues under its control. Impacts of the TEC retaining a high level of control over funding and operational rules have been felt nationally and regionally, for instance through increased inter-institution competition and polytechnic mergers within and across regions. One such region is the Bay of Plenty where this research was located.

### 2.3 Tauranga Roots (Historical Context)

Aotearoa is administratively divided into 16 regions—eleven governed by regional councils; five governed by unitary authorities (Local Government Act, 2002). The region of relevance in this research is the Bay of Plenty, as shown on the maps in Figures 7 and 8 below, comprising: seven districts, three mid to large size cities (Tauranga, Rotorua, Taupō) as well as many small towns including Waihi, Katikati, Te Puna, Te Puke, Whakatāne, Kawerau, Opotiki, Murupara, Tūrangi and others.

Tauranga is the fifth largest city in Aotearoa, and the largest city in this region, with a current population estimate of 131,500 people (Tauranga City Council, 2018a). The main priority of the Regional Council is environment protection, especially water quality and quantity (Bay of Plenty Regional Council [BOPRC], 2018). However, the Bay of Plenty Regional Long Term Plan (BOPLTRP) also has economic and infrastructural responsibilities. Thus, part of the Council’s infrastructure funding for economic development has contributed towards a joint

venture with the Bay of Plenty TE Partnership to create a new shared tertiary campus in Tauranga (BOPRC, 2018) which will open in 2019.

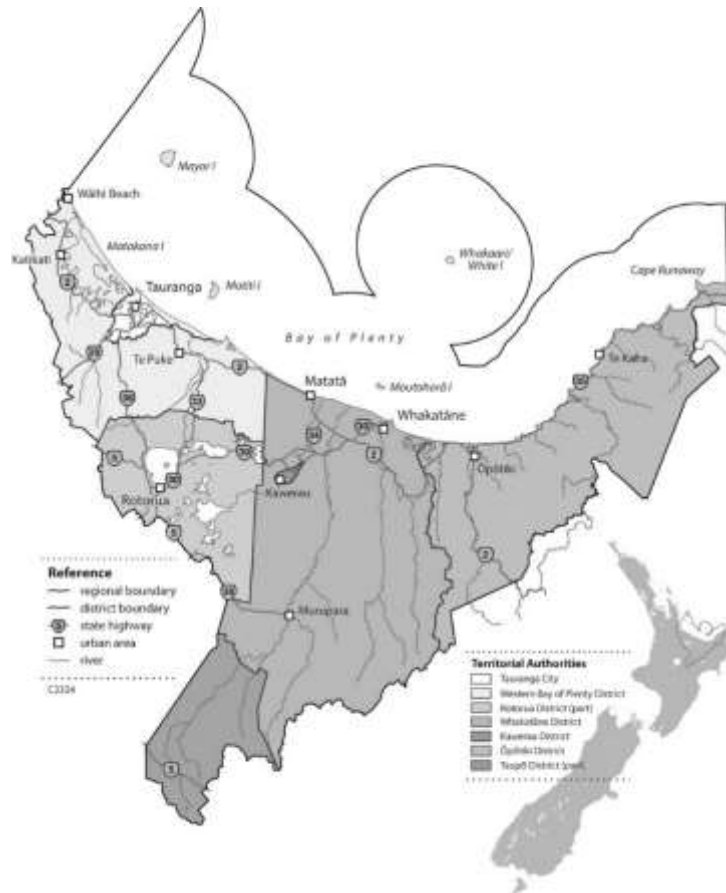


Figure 7: Map of the Bay of Plenty Region in Aotearoa.  
Source: Bay of Plenty Regional Council (2018).

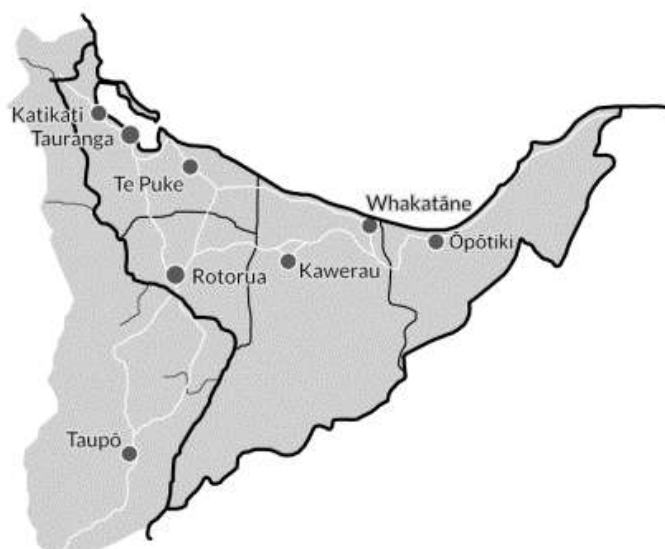


Figure 8: Map of the Bay of Plenty Regions where predominant tertiary education campuses are located.

The name Tauranga means an anchorage, resting place or fishing ground (McLintock, 1966; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). Historically, Tauranga provided a resting place for numerous *waka* (canoes) and kept Māori well supplied with fish and other *kaimoana* (seafood) (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). The Tauranga coastline attracted Māori settlement for its temperate climate and plentiful food (Belich, 1986; Stokes, 1990). Fish, eels and whitebait were bountiful, *kumara* (sweet potato) grew well, and the inland mountainous ranges offered nutritious berries and birds, as well as providing timber for buildings and *waka* (Stokes, 1990; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). Because of the Bay of Plenty region's rich resources, it has been occupied, and sporadically fought over by Māori tribes for over seven centuries (Stokes, 1990). Māori (and non-Māori) groups who have moved into the Tauranga area have all formed strong associations with Mauao.

At the southern entrance to Tauranga Moana is Mauao (Mount Maunganui), which stands alone, dominating the surrounding landscape. According to legend, this hill was originally located by the mountain Otanewainuku to the south. Mauao was in love with a neighbouring mountain, Pūwhenua, but she was pledged to Otanewainuku, so the lovelorn maunga decided to drown himself in the ocean. He enlisted the help of the supernatural forest-folk, the *patupaiarehe*, who dragged him to the sea. When they reached the shore, however, the sun rose and the *patupaiarehe*, who could not stand the sunlight, fled back to the forest. As a result, the hill was stranded in his present location, and was given the name Mauao, indicating that he had been caught or fixed in place by the dawn. (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004, pp.27-28)

The Nga Marama people are the earliest known peoples in Tauranga Moana – they were later conquered by other groups – and all present-day Tauranga Māori trace their descent back to Nga Marama (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). The first *waka* among the great voyaging fleet of *waka* from *Hawaiki* (Māori ancestral homelands) to visit Tauranga was Tainui (whose people rested, then left to settle in Kawhia, but have

continued close connections to the Bay of Plenty region). They were followed by Te Arawa (whose people settled mainly in the south of Tauranga, other than Waitaha who occupied part of Tauranga central) and thirdly, Takitimu arrived, landing at Mauao (Stokes, 1990; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). The tribe of Ngāti Ranginui descends from the people of the Takitimu waka, and, after conquering the Nga Marama people, they inhabited land west of the Waimapu River. Waitaha, who had fought with Ngāti Ranginui, took the land to the east of the Waimapu River. The Waimapu River is significant in the present research as it formed the boundary of subsequently confiscated land, being part of the story of the site where today's Toi Ohomai and University of Waikato's shared campus stands at Windermere. The Waimapu sub-catchment is south east of Tauranga Harbour and flows from Otanewainuku, north, to the harbour between Windermere and Greerton for about 21 km in length including 236km of stream and 3km of harbour margins (Bay of Plenty Regional Council [BOPRC], 2012).

A fourth waka, Mataatua, arrived in Whakatāne and those peoples also settled along the coast to east and west of Whakatāne. The last of the major iwi to arrive in Tauranga Moana were Ngai Te Rangi. Various hapū of Ngai Te Rangi (who claim descent from the ancestor Te Rangihouhiri and the Mataatua waka) settled around the edge of the harbour east of the Waimapu River, at Otumoetai, Ongare, Otawhiwhi, Te Puna through to Katikati and on the islands in the Tauranga Moana region (Stokes, 1990; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). Therefore, by the end of the 1700s, the Ngai Te Rangi tribe of Mataatua descent and Ngāti Ranginui tribe of Takitimu descent were well established all along the eastern coast and inland of the region we now call Bay of Plenty (Belich, 1986).

European contact first came with Captain James Cook sailing across the Bay of Plenty harbour in the Endeavour in 1769 (Wilson, 2016). However, European settlement did not get underway until the early 1820s with Brown and Williams choosing the Te Papa site for Tauranga's first Mission Station, resulting in the purchase of the first block of land by Brown for the Church Missionary Society in 1838 (Elms Foundation, 2017). Subsequently, the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi was signed; however, by 1864, there was great unrest. Following on from the Waikato land war in 1864, significant battles between the British military and Māori took

place in the Tauranga region at Gate Pa (Pukehinahina) on 19 April and at Te Ranga on 21 July in 1864 (McLintock, 1966; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004).

#### 2.4 Raupatu (Confiscation) of Poike land

On 18<sup>th</sup> May 1865, by an Order in Council legitimised under the New Zealand Settlements Act 1863, 214,000 acres of Tauranga land was confiscated from Māori and passed into the hands of the Crown (N.Z. Gazette 1865, in Stokes, 1990). This *raupatu* (confiscation) was subsequently extended to 290,000 acres by the Tauranga District Lands Act 1868 (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). Ultimately, the Crown surveyed and returned portions of land to Māori, retaining an area of approximately 50,000 acres, minus 8,700 acres of reserves for Māori which were located mainly between the Waimapu and Wairoa Rivers, including the Te Papa peninsular on which Tauranga city has been developed (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004).

Among the raupatu and subsequently returned land was the site where a traditional wānanga had been located in a cave in the eastern banks of the Waimapu stream at the base of the hill where Greerton meets Poike (Windermere). The area of land nearby was named *Poike*, derived from the Māori words *Po* and *ike* meaning *to arrive late at night*. “This was recognition of the significance of this piece of land because it was where the many hapū (sub-tribes) of Ngāti Ranginui would hold their meetings, which took place at night” (Toi Ohomai, 2018, p.3). These meetings were known to be about higher learning dedicated to perpetuating mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge).

Using section 32 of the Public Work Act 1928 law, in April 1975, the Ministry of Works and Development took 20 acres of Poike 1B block for the purposes of a proposed technical institute (N. Z. Gazette 35/920, in Easthope, 2004). The Bay of Plenty Times published an article *Land ready for Institute* (25 June, 1974) which disclosed that the Māori owner of the proposed Poike Tauranga Technical Institute site had agreed to sell the land to the Ministry of Works (Easthope, 2004). ‘Agreement’ was essentially compulsory under the law of the Public Works Act, and despite a known objection from one Māori landowner, Makarita Malcolm, who categorically did not consent to the Crown acquisition of the Poike IC2 block (Easthope, 2004), acquisition ensued. More land was similarly acquired for roading

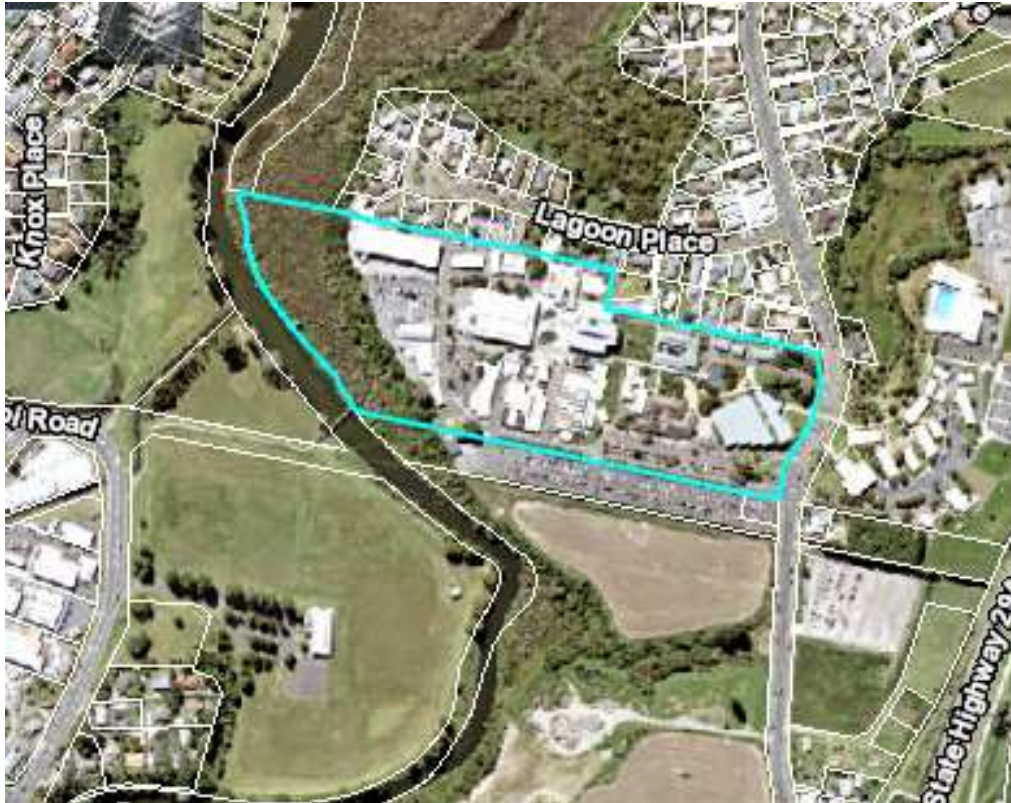
to the proposed technical institute and a secondary school (Easthope, 2004). The New Zealand Gazette (7011, as cited in Easthope, 2004) printed a notice indicating that land would be taken compulsorily for a proposed Tauranga No. 4 Secondary School and this ultimately occurred on 13 December, 1979.

Therefore, in 1975, as a result of an ‘agreement’ with the owner, the legal title for Poike 1B block was conferred into the name of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (Easthope, 2004; Waitangi Tribunal, 2004). Between 1975-1979, “the legal titles for Poike 4B, 1C1 and 1C2 blocks were acquired by agreement with the owners and trustees of the blocks, and vested in the Ministry of Education” (Easthope, 2004, p.139). These blocks, known as the “Orchard Block”, were (and still are) used by the polytechnic for horticultural educational purposes while the Ministry of Education deliberated building a school on this site.

Today, in 2018, the 10.345 ha Poike 1C block (Legal description Lot 1 SO 59066) is owned by the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (73 Windermere Drive) with a capital value of \$15.4 million (Figure 9) (Tauranga City Council, 2018b) whereas the 8.052 hectare Poike 1B block (70 Windermere Drive) is still owned by the Ministry of Education with a capital value of \$63.4 million (Figure 10).



*Figure 9: 73 Windermere Drive owned by Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and also Poike 1C1 and 1C2 and 4B sites. Source: Tauranga City Council (2018b).*



*Figure 10: 70 Windermere Drive owned by the Ministry of Education And also Poike 1B site. Source: Tauranga City Council (2018b).*

The Poike block originally held by Ngati Ruahine after the Crown returned the land following the raupatu has been subject to enormous and irreversible shrinkage. The state highway and residential growth irretrievably impacted upon Māori land ownership in this area. Raupatu aspects of all Tauranga Moana claims were addressed in hearings held between February 1998 and January 2002. The Wai 362 and Wai 215 reports (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004) findings reported the inadequacy of the Crown's land acquisition procedures and required the Crown to compensate for grossly insufficient historical payments of the Poike acquisitions. Despite the historical land acquisition process, in contemporary times, this site is where the present-day shared Toi Ohomai and University of Waikato in Tauranga flagship campus is located.

## 2.5 Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology

In Tauranga, around the 1970s, a technical institute was proposed (Easthope, 2004). Ultimately, the technical institute was formalised through the establishment of the Bay of Plenty Community College (BoPCC) in 1982 (Easthope, 2004; Toi Ohomai, 2018). In 1982, with a small staff of 15 people, the BoPCC officially opened at Poike Road (Toi Ohomai, 2018). The BoPCC offered secretarial and administration programmes, apprenticeships (carpentry, electrical, automotive engineering) and agricultural programmes. Additionally, horticultural students comprised about one third of the enrolments, reflecting needs of the region (Toi Ohomai, 2018) which was becoming New Zealand's leading kiwifruit production region.

Programme demand grew over the ensuing decades. More amenities were developed alongside the expansion of new programmes (for instance textiles, tourism, television training). In 1988, the idea of a community college was abandoned, and, "the organisation's name changed to Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in line with the nationwide move to adopt a common term" (Toi Ohomai, 2018, p.6). By 2010, Bay of Plenty Polytechnic student numbers had reached 9,443 with a staff of 375 (Toi Ohomai, 2018).

Whilst all this growth was occurring in Tauranga, a similar story was unfolding in Rotorua, another major city in the Bay of Plenty region about one hour's drive from Tauranga. The Waiariki Community College opened on Mokoia Drive in Rotorua in April 1978 (Toi Ohomai, 2018). Like the BoP Polytechnic, Waiariki Community College aligned itself with national priorities and changed its name to Waiariki Polytechnic in 1987 (Toi Ohomai, 2018). Similarly, the Waiariki Polytechnic experienced growth in student enrolments, staff, programmes and establishment of a satellite campus throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s.

Then, in 2016, during the course of the present research, the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the Waiariki Institute of Technology underwent a merger. The new organisation was formed on 1 May, 2016 and subsequently gifted the name by regional iwi of 'Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology' (Toi Ohomai). *Toi* is the pinnacle of achievement, the pursuit of excellence and also refers to Toi-te-

huatahi and Toi Kai-rākau, a common iwi ancestor across the region (Toi Ohomai, 2017). Similarly, *Ohomai* is a reference to Ohomairangi, an ancestor of Te Arawa and Tainui, containing meanings of an awakening, being alert and becoming transformed (Toi Ohomai, 2017). This name signalled the intent of the organisation to purposefully build on existing and foster further connections with Māori communities as explicitly stated in the *Annual Report 2016*: "...we identified the key focus areas as being Māori engagement; improving transitions and promotion of pathways from local education to industry..." (Toi Ohomai, 2016, p.6). Of 16 Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics (ITPs) in Aotearoa, Toi Ohomai is presently the third largest ITP (Toi Ohomai, 2016). Toi Ohomai has a student enrolment of approximately 14,000 students, 1,000 staff (academic and non-academic) and provides 150 programmes from 70 locations (Toi Ohomai, 2016). Toi Ohomai is the largest provider of tertiary education in the Bay of Plenty region.

Whilst the merger was seen by some as a means of more effectively attaining the economic goals of the Bay of Plenty community, particularly in outlying regions (New Zealand Government, 2015; NZQA, 2015) it was seen by others (Gray, 2015; Radio New Zealand, 2018) as a cost-cutting operation which would compromise the quality of education being offered. No matter the angle one views this merger, it appears the entire polytechnic sector is in financial jeopardy nationwide. A cabinet paper was released stating that eight ITPs will be in deficit by 2020 (Kawekōrero Reporters, 2018) if the present trend is not halted.

Toi Ohomai's CEO Leon Fourie communicated in March 2018 that Aotearoa's polytechnic sector is trending towards an economic crisis by 2022, based on current government funding formulas (Olley, 2018). In July 2018, media reported Aotearoa's largest ITP, Auckland-based Unitec, in extreme financial difficulty with an expected shortfall of \$19m in 2018 (Dunlop, 2018). It is likely that more changes to this sector will therefore occur in response to this unsustainable financial trend, which is attributed to falling enrolments and rising costs.

The first Annual Report produced by the newly established Toi Ohomai (Toi Ohomai, 2016) departed from traditional BoP Polytechnic and Waiariki Polytechnic annual reports of reporting key statistics numerically in tables, instead

opting for an infographic as shown in Figures 11 and 12 below. Despite an infographic approach providing a ‘snapshot’ summary which potentially masks the full story, useful material can be ascertained. For instance, the infographic data reveal that with the combination of former Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the former Waiariki Polytechnic students, Toi Ohomai student enrolments numbered 14,000, of whom slightly more than half were female. Approximately 75 percent of students were aged over 20 years (i.e., non-school leavers)—a dramatic statistic!

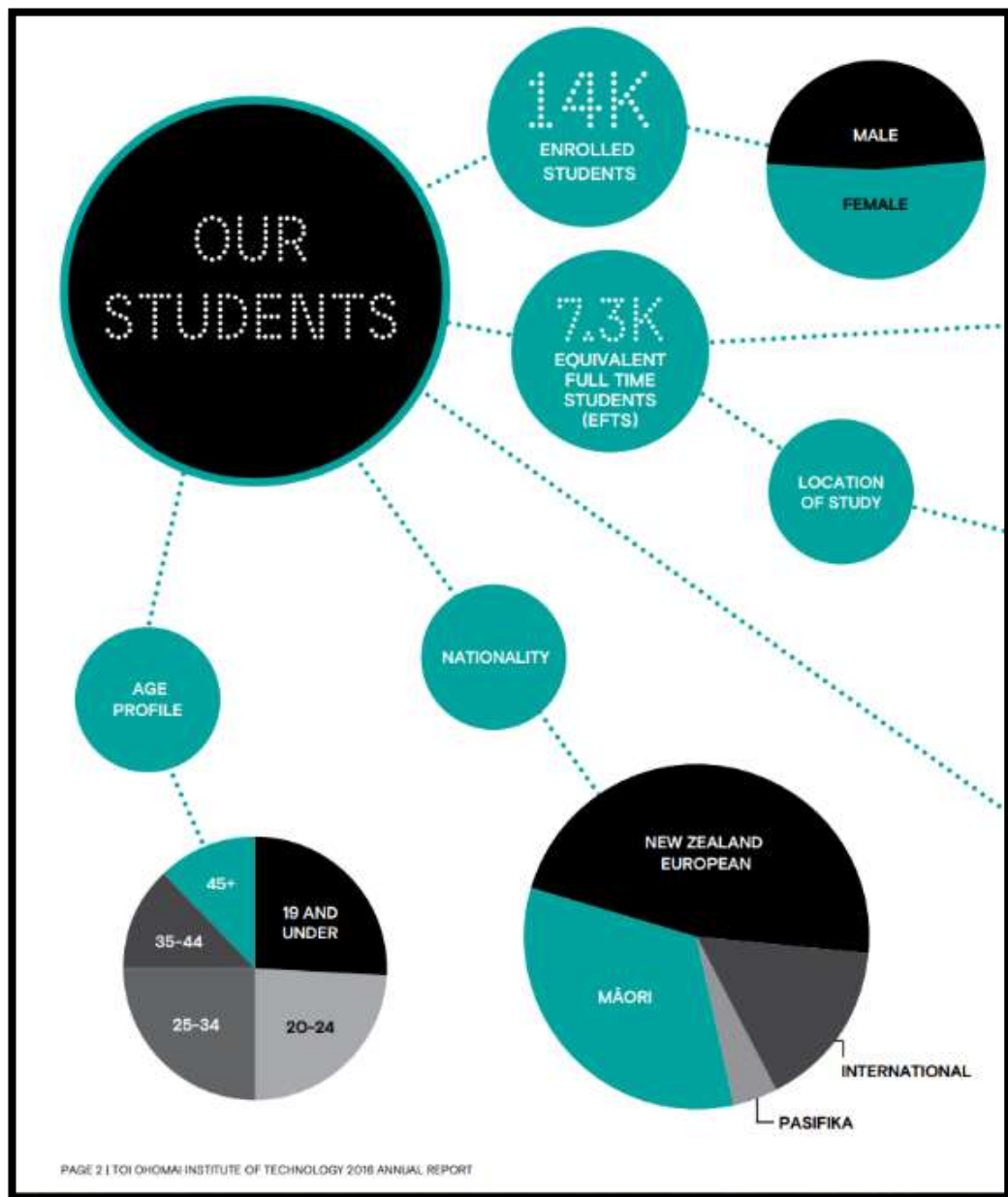


Figure 11: First year of Toi Ohomai Statistics. Source: Toi Ohomai (2016, p2).

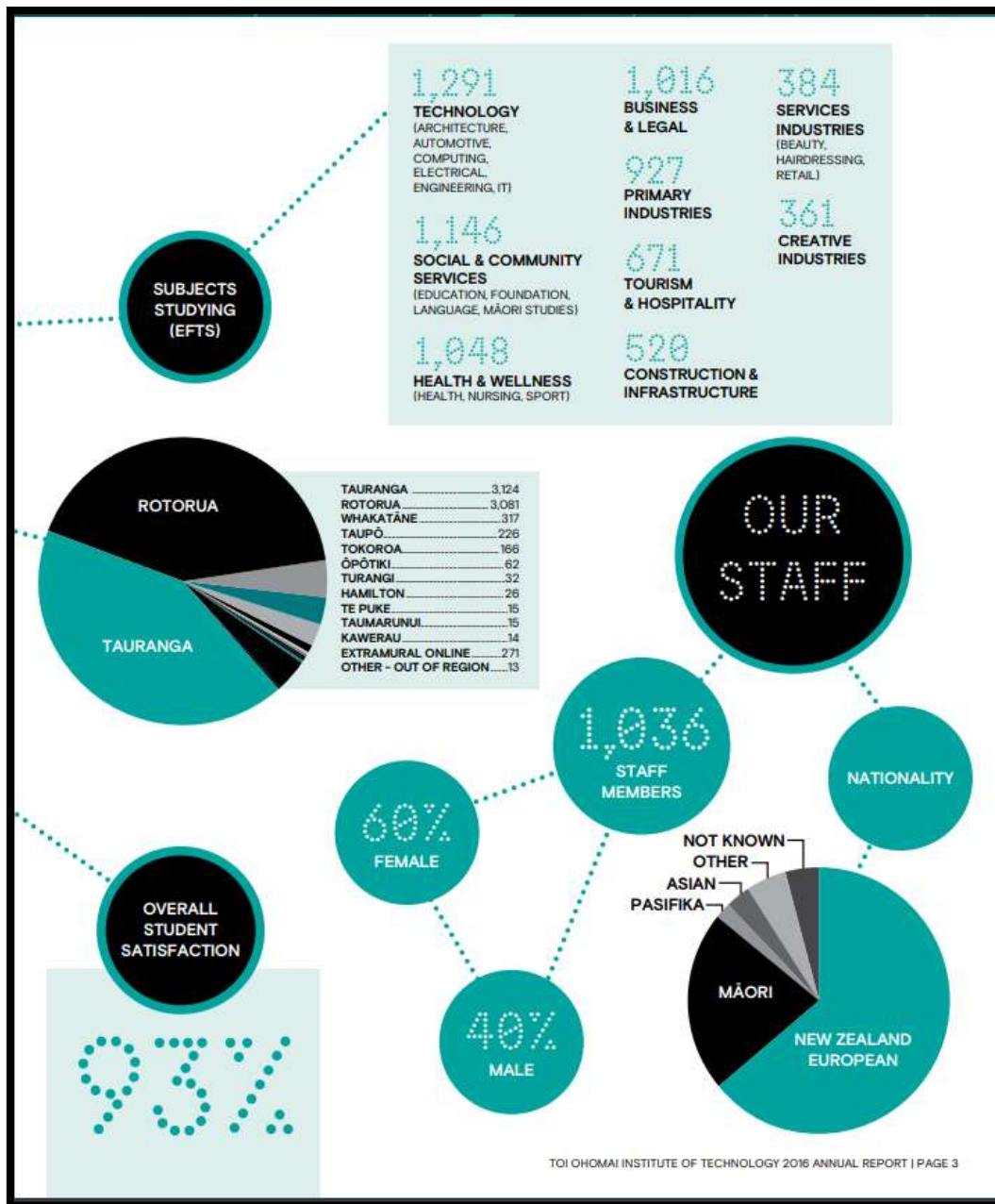


Figure 12: First year of Toi Ohomai Statistics. Source: Toi Ohomai (2016, p.3).

The highest proportion of students were New Zealand European, followed by a significant proportion of Māori students, a small number of Pasifika students and approximately one sixth international students. Similar numbers of students studied in Tauranga as in Rotorua, followed by Taupō and online students as the next highest; the remainder studied in smaller outlying towns (Toi Ohomai, 2016). Present numbers indicate a growth in areas such as social and community services (education, foundation studies, languages, Māori studies) and health and wellness

(health, nursing, sport). In 2016, the total Toi Ohomai staff numbered 1,036 with a 60/40 female/male split. The highest number of staff members were New Zealand European, followed by a large proportion of Māori staff members and smaller numbers of other ethnicities. In response to larger numbers of Māori students, and as more Māori have become qualified, the proportion of Māori staff members has increased over time (Toi Ohomai, 2018).

Toi Ohomai qualifications are primarily offered at sub-degree level, although degree programmes exist. Whilst some degree programmes may be completed in their entirety at Toi Ohomai, many are designed for students to pathway into the University of Waikato (UoW) for their final year(s) of the programme. Toi Ohomai has highlighted their emphasis on improving transitions. One of the BOPTeP Tertiary Intentions Strategy (TIS) strategic goals is to 'Improve Transitions' (see section 2.7 in this chapter for discussion of the TIS). This includes transitions into TE programmes, transitions from study into work, and transitions into higher levels of programmes (Bay of Connections, 2015; Toi Ohomai, 2016).

Enabling seamless transitions between existing Toi Ohomai and UoW programmes brought into focus the need to redevelop some current pathway programmes and to continue developing new pathways for students between Toi Ohomai and UoW qualification for 2019 and beyond (Toi Ohomai, 2016; UoW, 2018a). Recently re-confirmed, the Bay of Plenty TE Partnership affirmed UoW's position as the preferred partner for Toi Ohomai to pathway students into university programmes in Tauranga and the wider region, ensuring a significant number of student enrolments for the UoW. The next section discusses the historical and contemporary context of the UoW in Tauranga.

## 2.6 The University of Waikato in Tauranga

Today, the University of Waikato is one of eight partially state-funded universities in Aotearoa (NZQA, 2016). The University of Otago, located in Dunedin, is the oldest university, established in 1869 (Te Pōkai Tara, 2018a). Subsequently, the University of Canterbury in 1873, followed by Lincoln in 1878, Auckland in 1883, Victoria in 1897, Massey in 1927 were established, and after several decades, the University of Waikato (UoW) was established in Hamilton in 1964 (Alcorn, 2014).

Robson (2017) notes that the land which would eventually be the location of the UoW in Hamilton was part of the Waikato Land Confiscation in December 1864. Tainui land confiscations were re-distributed as military land grants in one acre allotments to the members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Waikato Regiment who had fought in the Waikato region (Robson, 2017; Stokes, 1990). Officers were awarded larger lots. The land which was later to become the UoW site was received by several officers including John Peacocke's 250 acres in Hillcrest and Isaac Coates' 280 hectare Ruakura farm (Robson, 2017).

The Bay of Plenty region has not established its own university. During the 1990s, from the neighbouring region of Waikato, Hamilton's university formed an alliance with Tauranga's Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (Alcorn, 2014; Toi Ohomai, 2018). Professor Peter Ramsay from the UoW's School of Education in Hamilton was appointed director of Tauranga, charged with the task of finding suitable teaching premises (Alcorn, 2014). In 1998, the first university courses to be taught completely face-to-face outside of Hamilton were offered at the polytechnic's Bongard Centre campus in Tauranga (Alcorn, 2014; UoW, 2018a). The next year, Ramsay leased premises from 1999 in Durham Street (Alcorn, 2014) where the UoW began building up programmes in education, social sciences, and marine studies. The first cohort of Tauranga-based UoW students graduated in 2001. With the University's presence becoming more established in Tauranga, in 2006, the UoW signed a new deed of co-operation with the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (Alcorn, 2014).

Since then, Tauranga-based programmes offered by the UoW have increased. Programmes available to students enrolled in UoW in Tauranga consist of undergraduate degrees in arts, business, engineering, sport and human performance, law, science, social science, social work and teaching. Graduate and post graduate options also extend to psychology, teaching, business, digital business, education, health, sport and human performance as well as various doctoral study options (UoW, 2019).

Presently, across all eight universities in Aotearoa, there are 16,775 Māori students enrolled, equating to 11% of all domestic university students (Te Pōkai Tara, 2018b). Māori doctorate student enrolments increased from 280 in 2006, to

535 in 2016 (Education Counts, 2017b). Māori bachelor’s degree equivalent full time students (EFTS) have increased by 23% in universities between 2008 and 2018 (Te Pōkai Tara, 2018b). Notably, almost half of recent Māori university graduates were the first in their families to attend university; of these, one third are parents and 70% are female (Te Pōkai Tara, 2018b). The UoW has made efforts to increase Māori participation in the Bay of Plenty region using their student recruitment team to run *hiko* (events) across schools to build stronger links among Māori youth, which although beneficial, tends to ignore the significant proportion of students who transition into tertiary education from avenues well beyond school.

Table 1: Statistical Information. Source: UoW Annual Report (2016, pp. 38-41).

| <b>University of Waikato Statistical Information</b> |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|
|  | <b>2008</b>  | <b>2016</b>  |
| Total Students                                       | 12,006       | 12,016       |
| Total Pākehā/European Students                       | 5,631        | 5,066        |
| Total NZ Māori Students                              | 2,230        | 2,261        |
| Total Qualification Completions (Degree)             | 1,884        | 2,038        |
| Total Qualification Completions (Post-graduate)      | 995          | 1,025        |
| Total Qualification Completions (Higher Degree)      | 53           | 91           |
| <b>Total Staff</b>                                   | <b>1,560</b> | <b>1,498</b> |

Table 1’s Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) statistics show a high proportion of Māori students enrolled at UoW. The UoW has the highest proportion of Māori students of any university in New Zealand (UoW, 2016). The appointment of Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith as Pro Vice-Chancellor Māori in 2007 (Alcorn, 2014) has likely helped to broker closer relations between her own Ngāti Porou people and wider Māori communities with the University. Moreover, ties with Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi have generated agreements to work jointly with the University in a professional development capacity (Alcorn, 2014).

The Pro Vice-Chancellor Māori Office also manages a university wide approach towards support for Māori students—the *Māori Student Achievement Programme (MSAP)*, which receives some TEC equity funding (UoW, 2016). The primary focus

of the MSAP is to foster success among Māori students through cultural empowerment. There are a number of focus areas in place, for instance, a mentoring programme, improving Māori completion rates in specific papers, early and sustained intervention for first year students, establishment of Māori Advancement Committees in two faculties and student support initiatives (UoW, 2016). In Tauranga, a strategic recruitment plan began in 2014 involving selection and training of student ambassadors to engage with Māori throughout the region. Furthermore, a new role was created to work with Tauranga UoW staff assisting with Māori student recruitment to widen activity with Māori in the region (UoW, 2016).

From the outset, the development of a university presence in Tauranga strongly linked to the teacher education programme because of high student enrolment numbers. However, according to the University's annual report, enrolment declines were apparent in each of the five UoW Tauranga programmes which have usually been most desired by students in the region: the Bachelor of Teaching, Bachelor of Social Sciences, Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Science and diploma programmes (UoW, 2016). Reasons for this may include costs for students, as well as wider choice within the region of TE providers. An example of one provider offering a study context alternative to a Western organisation, attractive for many Māori students, is Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi located in Whakatāne.

## 2.7 Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi

This section outlines the historical roots of traditional wānanga and contemporary conceptions of a wānanga and then discusses the context of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi relative to this research. 'Wānanga' is an old concept in Māoridom, dating back well before European settlers arrived in Aotearoa (Durie, 1998a; Merritt, 2005). Pihama, Smith, Taki and Lee (2004) argue that information from Māori themselves provides the most beneficial and productive understandings and valuable insights into how pre-colonial education operated in traditional Māori society. Specific details of traditional wānanga are written down by Whatahoro (1913) from the teachings of Te Matorohanga and Nepia Pohuhu who were *tohunga* (priests, experts) of the wānanga of the East Coast.

Translations were carried out by Percy Smith, a non-Māori anthropologist and President of the Polynesia Society in the early 1900s (Whatahoro, 1913; Weimer, 2003).

In Māori philosophy, 12 domains exist within the spiritual realm (Pihama et al., 2004). *Io* (The Supreme Being) lives in *Te Toi o Nga Rangi* (the uppermost domain, the highest heaven). *Io* created the first known *whare wānanga* (formal place, house of higher learning) named *Rangiātea* (Pihama et al., 2004) as well as creating knowledge and two guardians of that knowledge – *Whatukura* and *Mareikura* (Merritt, 2005). *Io* placed *Mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) into *nga kete wānanga* (three baskets) and two sacred stones (*Hikutai* and *Rehutai*) (Merritt, 2005; Weimer, 2003) which were brought by Tāne to the earthly realms (Pihama et al., 2004). The three baskets and two stones contained knowledge of both celestial and terrestrial realms—knowledge that was protected for formal teaching within earthly *whare wānanga* (Merritt, 2005; Pihama et al., 2004; L. Smith, 1986).

Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1986) explains that formal knowledge was protected and appropriately transmitted through *whare wānanga* in order to serve collective interests. Formal knowledge was divided into *te kauae runga* (sacred upper jawbone) and *te kauae raro* (sacred lower jawbone) symbolising two distinct knowledge systems - celestial and terrestrial (Pihama et al., 2004; L. Smith, 1986). “This metaphor is a way to understand the structure and organisation of the traditional *whare wānanga* with the ‘*kauwae runga*<sup>1</sup>’ representing esoteric and most sacred knowledge and the ‘*kauwae raro*’ representing the knowledge of daily existence” (Pihama et al., 2004, p.19).

A complex education system comprising numerous *whare wānanga* existed in order to retain, maintain, develop and transmit *Mātauranga Māori* (Nepe, 1991; Pihama et al., 2004; L. Smith, 1986). Responsibility for the formal education of knowledge was given to *tohunga* (experts) (L. Smith, 1986). *Tohunga*, experts of particular crafts, were named accordingly, for instance, *tōhunga wahitanga* were

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<sup>1</sup> Different regions had slightly different pronunciations for words, hence the difference in spelling of ‘*kauae*’ and ‘*kauwae*’, yet the word has the same meaning. This is very common in Māori language.

carpenters, *tōhunga whaikairo* expert carvers, *tōhunga ta moko* tattoo artists, *tōhunga makutu* priests or shamans (Woodard, 2014). Furthermore, tohunga were largely known for their extensive range of healing systems (*rongoa, mirimiri, karakia, waiora* – pharmacological, massage, prayer, water and herbal therapy) (Durie, 1998a).

The Ngāti Ranginui Tutara wānanga, a wānanga in the caves on the east bank of the Waimapu River in the Poike area of Tauranga had two stones at its entrance, Hikutai and Rehutai: the mauri of the whare wānanga – the mauri of learning (Winiata, 1954). Maharaia Winiata (1954) traces many generations of tohunga who were entrusted with the responsibility of protecting and disseminating Mātauranga Māori, notably Te Whiringa who is thought to be the last tōhunga of this particular whare wānanga before the 1907 Tohunga Suppression Act forbade tōhunga to continue their practice (Tata, 2018, personal communication).

Numerous researchers have explored, documented and discussed the ways in which pre-colonial education existed in traditional Māori society (Hiroa, 1950; Hōhepa, 1978; Hōhepa, Smith & McNaughton, 1992; Ka'ai, 1990; Mead, 2003; Pere, 1982; 1994; Pihama et al., 2004; Zepke, 2009b). Notably, whare wānanga served as places of higher learning and were decidedly selective, both in what knowledge was studied and who was eligible to study.

Contemporary wānanga, although reflecting Māori knowledge and traditions, are framed in a Western tradition of TE delivery, qualification structures, funding measures and so on. “The first modern wānanga—Te Wānanga o Raukawa in Ōtaki—was founded in 1981, but wānanga were not formally recognised as tertiary institutions until the Education Amendment Act 1990” (Pollock, 2012, p.5). Consequently, this organisation gained the status of a contemporary wānanga in 1993. It was a similar story for Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (TWOA) which was founded in 1984 and gained wānanga status in 1993, and for Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi (Awanui) which, although founded in 1991, gained wānanga status in 1997 (Pollock, 2012). Long delays were intentional as the Government waited to see whether wānanga fared successfully.

In contemporary Aotearoa, as defined in the Education Act (1989), “a wānanga is characterised by teaching and research that maintains, advances, and disseminates knowledge and develops intellectual independence, and assists the application of knowledge regarding *ahuatanga Māori* (Māori tradition) according to *tikanga Māori* (Māori custom)” (section 162, s2). Contemporary wānanga must meet the Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) priorities just like other tertiary organisations. Therefore, wānanga have dual (and sometimes conflicting) priorities of both supporting advancement of Māori knowledge and application of Māori custom and also of preparing students to contribute to the economic productivity of the nation as per the Government’s mandate that TE is the vehicle for economic transformation. Zepke (2009b) suggests that though these two focuses may not necessarily contradict, they do bring considerable tensions (rather like the six TEC priorities mentioned earlier). For instance, Sir Hirini Mead, Chair of the Council, refers in the 2016 Annual Report to the institutional whakataukī as a guiding organisational vision, yet this does not present an immediately recognisable link to the Government’s economic priorities.

Pursue knowledge to its greatest depths and broadest horizons. To empower the descendants of Awanuiārangi and all Māori to claim and develop their cultural heritage and to broaden and enhance their knowledge base so as to be able to face with confidence and dignity the challenges of the future. (TWOA, 2016, p.22)

On the one hand, a wānanga desires to support Māori to live as Māori in accordance with Māori philosophy and principles, and on the other hand, the wānanga must meet economic imperatives of its funding providers to upskill the present and future workforce to achieve economic transformation.

Presently three wānanga exist in Aotearoa, each unique, but each similar in many ways. For instance, all three have the same priority of serving post-school educational interests of Māori; all are dispersed across several campuses with their flagship campuses located outside main cities (Zepke, 2009b). Like universities and polytechnics, they obtain government funding through rigorous documentation, monitoring and procedures. Yet all three wānanga differ in size

and focus. Awanuiārangi is unique because it is the only wānanga granting doctorates. “This accent on higher qualifications is captured in the title by the use of the term ‘Whare’ to describe this institution as a higher house of learning similar to the ancient whare wānanga academies” (Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, 2018, p.10).

Awanuiārangi is of particular interest for the present research and therefore iwi affiliations are noted here. The Mātaatua waka landed in Whakatāne; the name Awanuiārangi is linked to the *whakapapa* (genealogy) of Mātaatua waka and the Awanuiārangi ancestor (Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi [TWOA], 2018). An explicit goal of Awanuiārangi is to ensure that programmes have transformational approaches for students who enrol so that their education leads to tangible growth and development in the communities from which they come (TWOA, 2018).

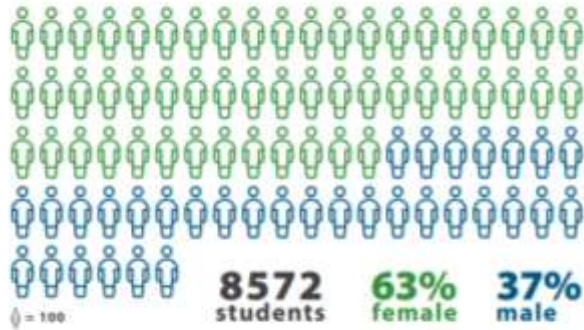
Presently, Awanuiārangi is organised in three schools: School of Iwi Development (SID), School of Undergraduate Studies (SUS), and Indigenous Graduate Studies (IGS). The largest school is SID, with 63% of students enrolled in SID programmes. Overall, 65% of Awanuiārangi students undertake programmes at NZQF Level 3 or 4 (TWOA, 2016). The purpose of the SID is to strengthen the socio-cultural capital of *marae* (community centre) throughout Aotearoa. Accordingly, programmes focus on “second-chance” learners’ needs and marae-centred and foundation skills.

The SUS offers a range of degrees including Ngā Mana Whakairo a Toi (Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts); Te Ōhanga Mataora Paetahi (Bachelor of Health Sciences Nursing); Te Ahu Taiao (Bachelor of Environment Studies); Te Tohu Paetahi (Bachelor of Education), and; Te Tohu Toi Tangata (Bachelor of Humanities), which is designed to teach students critical thinking and communication skills across policy, business and mātauranga Māori disciplines. Two bridging programmes are also offered in this school. Lastly, in the IGS, four programmes are offered: Master of Māori Studies, Master of Indigenous Studies, Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate. Furthermore, Awanuiārangi has a growing international outreach aspect to its organisation with established links

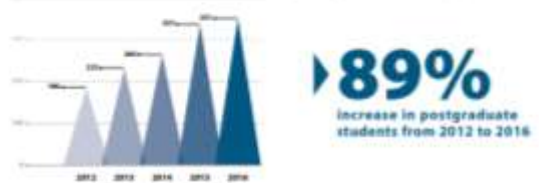
to Indigenous programmes in universities in British Columbia and Victoria in Canada; Samiland in Norway; Ohio, Washington State, Hawai'i in the USA; and, Darwin and Melbourne in Australia.

Like Toi Ohomai, Awanui presented their key statistical information in their 2016 Annual Report (their 25 year anniversary) by way of an infographic, as shown in Figure 13 below. This information shows that in 2016, there were 8,572 students or 3,252 EFTs enrolled (including many part-time student enrolments), of whom 95.8% were Māori, and almost two thirds were female (TWoA, 2016). Significantly, only 7% were aged under 19 years, leaving 93% over 20 years old (i.e. non-school-leavers). Overall, since 1991 when Awanuiārangi was established with four programmes, the wānanga has grown to now providing 19 programmes in a range of certificates, diplomas and degrees, largely for Māori students in the Bay of Plenty region.

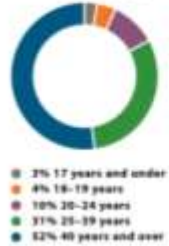
# 2016 at a glance



## Number of students enrolled in postgraduate study



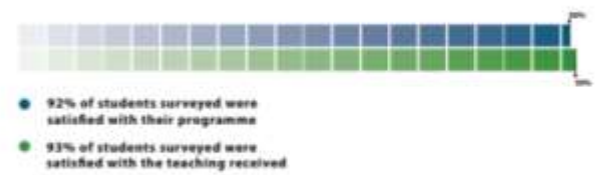
## Students by age



## Students by ethnicity



## Student satisfaction



## Educational performance

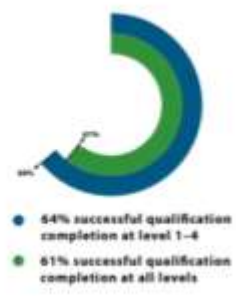
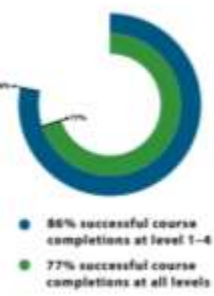
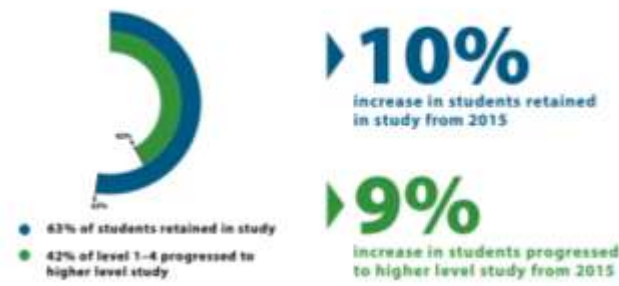


Figure 13: Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī Annual Report (2016, p.10).

## 2.8 Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership

In 2006, urged by the Government, a regional Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership (BOPTeP) was established to improve access to TE options for students in this region (UoW 2018a). The partnership initially formed between the former Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the UoW. In 2010, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi (Whakatāne) joined the partnership and then in 2014, the former Waiariki Institute of Technology (Rotorua) joined the group. Recently, in 2018, (following the merger of the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the Waiariki Institute of Technology into one organisation re-named Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology), the BOPTeP was reaffirmed in the signing of a new Deed of Cooperation agreement (UoW, 2018b). The partnership is underway with the creation of a new shared TE campus, driven by the UoW. During 2016, UoW renegotiated funding arrangements for the Tauranga Campus Development Project, resulting in the campus building being University owned from the start of construction, rather than leased (UoW, 2016). Located in the CBD of Tauranga city, it is proposed to open in 2019.

Although each organisation operates separately, the BOPTeP aims to work cooperatively to increase TE opportunities in the region. Significantly for the present research, the partnership aims to, “increase regionally relevant research which supports social and cultural development and economic sustainability, and supports tertiary participation amongst Māori” (UoW, 2018b, p.4). The BOPTeP is also a participant in the Bay of Connections (2015) Bay of Plenty Tertiary Intentions Strategy 2014-2019 (TIS) which was established in 2014 to define a collective vision and strategy for actions to deliver TE regionally.

One of the key objectives of the TIS is to increase TE participation and attainment in the region, particularly for Māori. To this end, consultation hui (meetings) have been held regionally with Māori communities to investigate what market skills Māori organisations require in future, how they would like tertiary institutions to engage with them, and what research needs and interests Māori have (Bay of Connections, 2015). Particularly as 43% of Māori school leavers in the Bay of Plenty region do not transition to TE (Bay of Connections, 2015), chief among the

responses were work skills, leadership skills, business skills and improving transitions into education and into jobs.

## 2.9 Summary

Tertiary education in Aotearoa has been influenced by international trends in higher education; notably neo-liberal effects have been felt in this sector as the TEC began ushering in sweeping reforms from the 2000s. In this chapter, I examined how attitudes and behaviours are regulated through social control in connection with tertiary education provision for Māori in Aotearoa. I observed that the TEC has steadily drawn together a wide range of education provision under its control through retaining strict funding and operational rules, felt nationally and regionally. Gramscian and Foucauldian perspectives provided insight to the TEC's policy decisions. Impacts of such choices are that the status quo is maintained through hegemonic and normalising power to produce and reproduce cultural values and norms as dominant or 'common sense' values. These theoretical ideas closely parallel those of Bourdieu's (1977) theory of power and practice which stresses that social discourse production and cultural reproduction account for processes and systems continuously excluding and marginalising particular groups.

This chapter also appraised the historical and contemporary factors affecting tertiary education trends pertaining to one particular region in Aotearoa—the Bay of Plenty region—the context for this research setting. I explained the environmental context of the Bay of Plenty region, detailing historical roots and the geographical, political and socio-cultural context of three participating organisations in this research. These organisations form the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership (BOPTep). Research was carried out with students enrolled in all three participating organisations: Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, The University of Waikato in Tauranga, and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiāraangi. Clearly, other regions and individual tertiary institutions face specific and distinct issues regarding tertiary education for their distinct population of students. Therefore, readers are left to make connections, if any, to their own specific context. The focus of this chapter was to provide contextual information for this particular research setting.

## Whakataukī

*Titiro whakamuri hei ārahi i ngā uaratanga kei te kimihia.  
Look to the past for guidance and seek out what is needed.*

### Chapter Three Literature Review

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review two significant areas of literature pertinent to the present study. These are: a) historical and contemporary factors impacting tertiary education opportunities and identity for Māori; and, b) transitions in education for Māori students. This chapter identifies and summarises existing research, evaluating key themes as they apply to the research question: what does an effective transition to tertiary education look like for Māori students? The reported issues demonstrate where and how my research fits within the wider field of Māori success in education, and within the more specific field of Māori student transitions in TE in Aotearoa.

The first section comprises three parts. First, I give an overview of literature relating to historical factors that have contributed to the contemporary situation, explaining how Māori view education. Second, I provide key contextual elements integral to understanding contemporary education for Māori, interpreted in light of social structure and history. I include statistics relating to Māori in tertiary education, and evaluate government priorities and commitment to Māori learner success. Lastly, I recognise the place of Māori identity, both historically and contemporarily, suggesting how this connects to transition issues for Māori in education.

In the second part, I examine literature of transitions in education contexts more generally. I concentrate on what is already known about educational and lifecourse transitions. Next, I interpret what is reported in the literature about transitions into TE for Māori students—the central focus of this study. I explore key findings from projects and studies relating to enablers and barriers for Māori making effective transitions into further education, providing indications of

research gaps. I also discuss in broad terms what previous literature reveals about Māori definitions of educational ‘success’ and ‘effective’ transitions. Lastly, I review the long-standing debate in sociology over the primacy of agency and structure for determining human behaviour (Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1984; Habermas, 1987; Parsons, 1949; 1966; 1991; Wittgenstein, 1976; 1989) in light Māori transitions to tertiary education.

### 3.2 Tertiary Education and Māori Identity

In this section, I critically analyse historical ideas and theories that have contributed to shaping contemporary tertiary education environments and experiences for Māori students. This section is premised upon past and present social, political, economic and cultural impacts on education environments for Māori. I seek to bring to light the complexity of Māori identity construction. I analyse the literature documenting the history of Māori in education, tracing assimilation, integration, bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism stages and the introduction of Te Kōhanga Reo. Furthermore, I critique contemporary TE for Māori, evaluating statistics to understand trends.

Lastly, I discuss what is known about how education contributed to Māori identity. Over the past four decades, Māori and non-Māori academics have debated the construct of identity; not only Māori identity, but also national and ethnic identity broadly (Awatere, 1984; Belich, 1986; 2001; Bell, 2009; Celermajer & Kidman, 2012; Hokowhitu et al., 2010; King, 1991; 2003; L. Smith, 1999; Reilly, 2011). I expose how narratives of Māori identity offer a critique of the TE system’s discourses around issues of inclusion and exclusion, and dominant modes of knowledge implicit within the colonial power structures.

#### 3.2.1 Historical Māori education and identity

Prior to European settlers arriving in New Zealand in the early 1800s, traditional Māori society had established methods of teaching and learning with an educative philosophy, system and process in place long-term (Hiroa, 1950; Hōhepa, Smith & McNaughton, 1992; Ka’ai, 1990; Makereti, 1986; Mead, 2003; Pere 1991; Pihama et al., 2004). Great importance was placed on *ako*—reciprocal learning and

teaching (Bishop, 1998; L. Smith, 1999) always having a fundamental place in society (Mead, 2003; Nepe, 1991; Pihama et al., 2004). Transmission of Māori knowledge relied heavily on the strength of Te Reo Māori (Dewes, 1968; Pihama et al., 2004). Communication of knowledge worked both informally through *iwi* (tribe) and *whānau* relationships and formally through systems such as *whare wānanga* and *tōhunga* (see section 2.7). Those with the appropriate chiefly lineage and who had the mental aptitude for retaining an immense range of *waiata*, *karakia* and *whakapapa* (song, chants and genealogy) were groomed for a *tōhunga* role, a role confined to few (Bidois, 2012; Calman, 2012). Contemporary *wānanga*, although reflecting Māori knowledge and traditions, are conceptually framed in a western tradition of TE delivery, qualification structures and funding measures (see sections 3.2.2 and section 2.2.7).

As more European settlers arrived during the 1800s in New Zealand, colonisation disrupted traditional Māori's established educative processes. The history of education for Māori since then has resulted in cultural and identity dislocation, deprivation and subjugation (Rameka, 2017). Missionaries believed that Māori needed to be 'civilised' to save their souls as they lived in a 'barbarous' state owing to their inferior intellect and language (Awatere, 1984; Belich, 2001; Hokowhitu, 2004). Consequently, early missionary schools intended to terminate Māori culture and language and assimilate Māori into western norms by replacing the language and culture with perceived superior civilised European worldviews (Belich, 2001; Hokowhitu et al., 2010; Rameka, 2017).

Injustices of colonisation have been discussed more as social times have changed. For instance, academics (Irwin, 1989; 1990; Marshall & Peters, 1995; Sullivan, 1994) have discussed educational policy development in Aotearoa throughout colonisation in various stages including assimilation, integration, cultural difference, bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism. I analyse how the formal education system has impacted upon Māori, grouping trends and ideologies into four stages: assimilationist, integrationist, bi-cultural and multi-cultural. It is important to note, however, that these stages do not necessarily linearly transition into the next, as aspects of some stages may overlap with others.

### *3.2.1.1 Assimilationist Stage*

Early education policies had the intention of attaining social control (much like present education policies) through an assimilation of Māori to Pākehā norms. Parliament formalized a 'native' school system through the establishment of the 1867 Native Schools Act which required Māori to donate (and subsequently transfer into Crown ownership) land for village primary schools and, contribute to building and teaching costs (Barrington, 2008). Schooling became compulsory for Māori in 1894; teaching English was prioritised through harsh punishments for Māori language use. Ideologies of Māori having limited intellectual abilities only suited to physical labour narrowed curriculum delivery to domestic and manual instruction (Sullivan, 1994). Native speakers of Te Reo Māori declined markedly, partly fuelled by the belief among both Pākehā and Māori that English language was the best way to advance upward social mobility for Māori (King, 2003).

Academics (Pihama et al., 2004; G. Smith, 2000; L. Smith, 1986; 2012) claim that the role of the education system from the late 1800's was an ideological conquest aimed at assimilating Māori into colonial thoughts and customs in order to achieve social 'stability'. The main goal of this assimilationist policy approach was to educate Māori in the values and behaviour of the Pākehā culture (Sullivan, 1994), requiring Māori to surrender their language and cultural identity in return for access to the goods of the dominant society.

### *3.2.1.2 Integrationist Stage*

The 1960 Hunn Report recommended that New Zealand society shift from assimilation policies to integration (Bidois, 2012; Hunn, 1961). The report's central proposition was for the nation to become 'one people' through mixing two cultures (far from the present social context). The integration stage marked tentative acknowledgement of cultural diversity through the eyes of the dominant society (Sullivan, 1994). In practice, integration meant colonisers imposing their culture over Māori culture under the guise of 'one nation, one people'.

From around the 1960's to the 1990's following the release of the 1960 Hunn Report, much of the research around Māori in education documents the underachievement and poor performance of Māori students, utilising a deficit approach (Berryman, 2008; Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Lani, 2009; Durie,

2003; Mahuika, 2008; Pihama, 1993; L. Smith, 2012). Deficit approaches are typical of integrationist ideologies (Sullivan, 1994) where a Māori child is viewed outside the norms of development, needing remediation. Deficit thinking cast Māori educational underachievement as an individual's lack of appropriate knowledge and skills, not as a deficit in the wider social and education system itself.

### 3.2.1.3 *Bi-Cultural Stage*

The assimilationist and integrationist stages reflect an unofficially mono-cultural nation with governmental policies favouring the dominant European culture (Hayward, 2012). From the 1970s, emphasis on bi-culturalism gained momentum, based on the partnership between Māori and the Crown in the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi* (Barrington, 2008; Bennett & Liu, 2018; Bidois, 2012; Orange, 1988). The Treaty of Waitangi Act (1975) established the Waitangi Tribunal to hear claims of breaches of the promises stated in the Treaty of Waitangi. Alongside a growing Waitangi Tribunal claims process, Māori politics demanded a newfound cultural recognition and identity. Many Pākehā resisted Māori activists' politics (Bidois, 2012) and a contested history of identity and cultural politics framed debates around bicultural relations in Aotearoa.

Throughout the 1980s, a state-sector bi-culturalism focus arose as governmental agencies began recognising both Pākehā and Māori languages, cultures, traditions (Hayward, 2012) in policy and in practice. For instance, traditional Māori ceremonies to open and close official functions (such as the pōwhiri described at the beginning of this thesis) became more widespread and accepted. The report of the Royal Commission on Social Policy became an influential example of the bi-cultural vision (Hayward, 2012). Barrington (1991; 2008) documented the close relationship between recognition of the Treaty and the educational rights of Māori through the establishment of bi-cultural educational policies.

Bi-culturalism was to be about power sharing and mutual respect, based on an anti-racism and a *cultural pluralist* paradigm (Banks, 1988). Cultural pluralism supports bilingual and/or separate development, recognising education as important for actively promoting ethnic identification in non-alienating ways. Proliferation of Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, three wānanga and Māori

departments at universities are examples of meaningful education initiatives for and with Māori in what was previously a mono-cultural education system.

Bi-culturalism has been criticized for not going far enough (Hayward, 2012; Liu & Robinson, 2016) and for limiting Māori self-determination, notably in the justice system (Jackson, 2017). Bennett and Liu (2018) argue that bi-culturalism was used as a dominant discourse to manage cultural diversity, but, today is primarily symbolic. Since Māori were signatories to the Treaty of Waitangi, it is widely known that underpinned by that legitimacy, Māori have constitutional rights and are symbolic in the identity of the nation. Yet institutional reforms have been superficial, doing little to advance Māori culture and rights; more action is needed to genuinely express the treaty partnership (Amundsen, 2018; Jackson, 2017). In practice, bi-culturalism has not been about a significant restructure of power and resources in favour of Māori (Bennett & Liu, 2018), but rather, bi-culturalism has been a system of meaning contributing to the construction of New Zealand identities.

#### *3.2.1.4 Multi-cultural Stage*

Officially, the New Zealand Government recognises only two cultures: the dominant Pākehā and the Indigenous Māori cultures. Hayward (2012) argues that notions of bi-culturalism are debated by some New Zealanders who hold the view that Aotearoa should officially become a multi-cultural society to recognise, in policy terms, the many cultures of Aotearoa citizens, not just those of Māori and Pākehā. According to Banks (1988) multiculturalism depends on a paradigm of *cultural difference* which acknowledges the importance of a group's unique worldview (anti-racism). It is important to note that in a multi-cultural paradigm, language values and cultural characteristics are seen as both functional for that group and valuable to the nation (Banks, 1988).

The 1982 Race Relations Conciliator's *Race Against Time* promoted urgent action to bring to life ideas of multi-culturalism and associated perceptions of all cultures holding equal value. The publication pro-actively endorsed bi-culturalism, prioritizing, "first a bi-cultural then a multi-cultural society" (Hill, 2010, p.303). Sir Ranginui Walker (1990) argued that when Pākehā become bi-cultural and at ease with Māori as the other founding partner, they are also taking the first step

towards becoming multi-cultural. Many who are in favour of bi-culturalism believe it is the essential foundation from which to establish a successful multi-cultural nation. In this sense, bi-culturalism and multi-culturalism spring from different ideologies and are in principle separate, although overlapping occasionally – a perspective which has been subject to debate, though not necessarily more in this thesis.

### 3.2.1.5 *Te Kōhanga Reo*

During the 1980s, alongside the growth of state-sector bi-culturalism, Te Kōhanga Reo Māori immersion pre-schools began proliferating. Te Kōhanga Reo, driven and empowered by *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination), was an education movement playing a major role in revitalising Māori language, culture and identity. Following a significant *hui* (gathering) in 1982, Māori leaders took a ‘language nest’ idea back to their communities and developed the *Te Kōhanga Reo* (Pre-School) initiative. Graham Smith (2000) asserts that revolutionary changes to New Zealand’s education occurred in 1982 in response to, “dual crises of educational underachievement on the one hand and the loss of language, knowledge and culture on the other” (p. 57). Galvanized by the empowerment coming from within Māori communities to implement Te Reo language revitalisation, numbers of Kōhanga Reo grew rapidly. In 1982 there were 50 Kōhanga Reo established; yet by 1996, incredibly, this number had grown to 774 (G. Smith, 2000). There have also developed *Kura Kaupapa Māori* (Māori primary schools), *Whare Kura* (secondary schools) and *Whare Wānanga* (tertiary institutions) (G. Smith, 2000).

Growth of Te Kōhanga Reo inspired, or perhaps was inspired by, a wider undertaking by Māori to influence Māori destiny, question westernized philosophies of knowledge, culture and research, and rights to determine education for Māori, by Māori. By the 1990s, researchers (Bishop, 1999; Metge, 1995; Pihama, 2001; Pihama et al., 2004; G. Smith, 1997; L. Smith, 2012) were challenging Aotearoa’s established and traditional research practices through suggestions that they sustained colonial values to the detriment of Māori. The Māori political and cultural movement gained momentum in mainstream society and was backed with academic clout through respected Māori academics (for instance, Sir Ranginui Walker, Sir Hirini Moko Mead, Graham and Linda Smith, Sir

Mason Durie). Kaupapa Māori theory (see section 4.4.2) also gained momentum; at the same time, sought to transform the status quo.

Significantly, momentum grew within the tertiary education arena. An academic professional community of Māori scholars emerged with a shared commitment to making a transformative difference for Māori (Amundsen, 2017; Kēpa & Stephens, 2016). Strathdee (2009) points out that in 1999 Te Wānanga o Aotearoa had just over 1,000 students enrolled, whereas incredibly, five years later by 2004, there were 63,387 students enrolled (34,280 Equivalent Full-Time Students) and more than 1,200 staff. Māori strove to change education through existing power structures to respect and legitimise Māori, who were not included in the dominant culture.

Te Kōhanga Reo programmes have become perhaps the most well-known international example of Indigenous language, culture and identity revitalization efforts among contemporary early childhood sectors (Mita, 2007). The social, political, economic and cultural implications of Aotearoa's history of assimilation, integration, bi-cultural and multi-cultural philosophies should not be underestimated in how they influence education for Māori in contemporary society.

### 3.2.2 Contemporary Māori education

Effects of the widespread loss of Te Reo Māori drove efforts to reclaim, revitalise and strengthen language ability among Māori. One initiative was Te Kōhanga Reo as discussed above in section 3.2.1. Another initiative within the MoE's strategic planning for New Zealand education is *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success* (Māori Education Strategy) 2013-2017 which built on a previous strategy, *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success 2008-2012* (MoE, 2018b). *Ka Hikitia*, extended until the end of 2018, continues to be the MoE's current Māori education strategy. *Ka Hikitia* (meaning to 'step up, lift up') provides guiding principles, resource and activity priority areas, goals and measures to track success (MoE, 2018b). The first focus area of the strategy, integrated across all four other focus areas, is to ensure that all Māori students have access to high quality Māori language in education (MoE, 2018b).

The Māori Language Act was passed in 1987, designating Te Reo Māori an official language of New Zealand. Since then, significant gains have been made as reflected in The MoE's (2013) *Tau Mai Te Reo* The Māori Language in Education Strategy 2013-2017 opening statement: "Māori language in education is a defining feature of Aotearoa New Zealand's education system" (p.7). Such statements illustrate the government's focus on bi-culturalism and a move towards positioning Māori language as important to the identity of not just Māori, but to all New Zealanders.

Linguists note in recent research (Albury, 2018) that Māori terms are entering the general vocabulary and are widely known by New Zealanders (746 Māori words are in the New Zealand Dictionary of English). As the notable Wai 262 2011 Waitangi Tribunal report identified, the language revival was a Māori movement realised through and beyond education and it was extremely successful at a grass-roots level.

However, despite all of this and much more, Māori language speakers currently show a declining trend, with the 2013 census revealing about one in five Māori can converse in everyday Māori language (2018 census results pending). Māori with high levels of language proficiency are in older age brackets. As they pass away, younger Māori are not offsetting the losses, despite an increase of immersion Māori language schooling participation. The Waitangi Tribunal Claim No. Wai 262 (Ministry of Justice, 2011) looked into the reasons for decline and reported that it was mainly because of: a) continued loss of older native speakers; b) complacency by the institutions that instigated the revival; c) concerns about quality of education received at immersion centres; d) shortage of supply of teachers; e) excessive regulation and control, and; f) ongoing lack of education resources to teach the full curriculum in the Māori language. The most crucial of these issues appears to be the short supply of teachers, which also has implications for universities and teacher training programmes.

### *3.2.2.1 Bilingual and Immersion Māori Education*

In Aotearoa, Māori-medium education is a term which describes a range of educational settings where teaching and learning takes place in Te Reo Māori for 51-100% of the time (MoE, 2017b). After the first immersion classroom of 5-year-olds was created in 1985, children began progressing through primary and secondary school. From this original class, a group of six students completed their final year of secondary school in 1997, and were the first Māori students in New Zealand to enter polytechnic or university programmes in 1998 having completed their full schooling years in Māori immersion education (Harrison, 2009). In the ensuing 20 years, more immersion Māori students have continued to transition into TE programmes. However, their experiences in TE environments are yet to be canvassed and understood; more research in this area would be beneficial.

In my research, four participants were unable to participate in immersion schooling owing to their age and immersion language opportunities not yet being established. Contrarily, four other students who participated in this research had enrolled in some level of immersion Māori primary and/or secondary schooling. Their transition experiences are all included in the findings and discussion chapters.

Numbers of Māori attending Māori immersion schooling contexts indicate small increases over time (MoE, 2018b) and overall, larger proportions of all Māori students are experiencing some level of Te Reo Māori education in either or both primary and secondary schooling. Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, these efforts have not yet stopped a declining trend of language knowledge—disturbing signs are evident that the language is losing ground (Lourie, 2016). Ko Aotearoa Tēnei (Waitangi Tribunal, 2011) recommended significant law and policy reforms for Māori culture and identity revitalisation in order to reverse the present decline. Urgent action is needed, otherwise, over the next 15 to 20 years, Te Reo speaking proportions of the Māori population may steadily decline.

For any students who enter polytechnic or university environments, it is likely that predominantly, their education will be conducted in English. However, some Māori immersion opportunities may exist in pockets throughout these organisations' programmes, especially in Māori departments. In a wānanga

environment, students are more likely to access Māori-medium education, however, their desired programme of study (e.g. marine biology, dentistry) may not necessarily be an option as current qualification types offered through wānanga are less broad than at polytechnics or universities. Tertiary transition experiences of students who have carried out their early childhood, primary and/or secondary schooling in immersion language environments is an area for further research.

### 3.2.2.2 *Trends of Māori Transitions into Tertiary*

In this section, I examine the data to ascertain TE transition trends for Māori students evaluating enrolments, participation, age groups, completions, qualification types and institution types. Research emphasis in terms of investigating adult enrolment and participation patterns has changed over decades. Earlier studies focused on adults' motives to improve occupational and financial status which continue to be enduring reasons for adult participation in educational programmes (Stein, Trinko & Wanstree, 2008). Ensuing studies developed instruments to measure motivational attitudes and reasons for participating in adult education, for instance the *Deterrents to Participation Scale* was developed by Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984).

In further studies developing theories were grounded in the decision-making processes adults use to decide when and where to enrol in educational programmes (Cross, 1981; Knowles, 1984; Miller, 1967). Later researchers focused on issues of decision-making processes and retention (O'Donnell & Tobbell, 2007); these studies demonstrated the importance of institutional support for recruiting and retaining adult learners in formal education (university) contexts. Yet another wave of participation literature sought to uncover issues surrounding adult learners in distance education programmes, flushing out how unique aspects of virtual learning environments influence participation and persistence decisions of adult learners (Kemp, 2002). These five research movements reflect more than 50 years of constant interest in adult participation and enrolment patterns (Stein, Trinko & Wanstree, 2008).

'Enrolments' is the term used to quantify the number of students who have enrolled in a course or programme. For instance, the total number of student

enrolments in Aotearoa tertiary education in 2008 was 418,690 and in 2016 was 353,300 (Education Counts, 2017a). This data related to students enrolled at any time during the year with a TE provider in formal qualifications (Education Counts, 2017a). Whereas enrolments data consider numbers of students, participation rates consider percentages of students.

Participation rates quantify the percentage of the population aged 15 and over who were enrolled at any time during the year (Education Counts, 2017a). In Aotearoa, in 2008, 12.5% of the total population participated in TE and in 2016, that figure had fallen to 9.4% (Education Counts, 2017a). For Māori, in 2008, 19.1% participated in TE; by 2016, it fell to 16.9%. The NZPC (2017) reported the current participation rate for Māori is 14.91% (while for Europeans it is 34.75%; for Asians it is 71.73%; for Pasifika it is 23.31%).

Participation rates are distinct from completion rates, which are calculated as the cumulative percentage of students who have successfully completed a qualification at the same level as the one they started (Education Counts, 2017b). Participation and tertiary education completion outcomes for Māori are concerning. Even allowing for prior achievement at school, young Māori have lower rates of participation in degree-level study (NZPC, 2017). Students are disempowered by tertiary education organisations (TEOs) to change their minds about a programme, or qualification level or type of education (NZPC, 2017). They are not well supported to change their path or to have credit of prior learning recognised in such situations, if they are even aware of this possibility. In this regard, TEOs need greater flexibility and incentive to support students wishing to make these changes, without them being cast as ‘failures’.

Māori have a higher rate of age-standardised participation than other ethnic groups in Aotearoa (MoE, 2017b), as seen in Figure 14 below. However, like the overall total population trend, Māori age-standardised participation (16 to 64-year-olds) rates show a decreasing trend. Some peaks and troughs, for instance 2012 and 2013, due to the *Youth Guarantee* (formerly *Youth Training*) (Gordon, Sdegewick, Grey, & Marsden, 2014) programme occurred, but as seen in Figure 14 below, for Māori and the overall population in Aotearoa, participation rates have decreased (MoE, 2017b). Reasons attributed for this decline by the MoE (2017b);

2017c) are high levels of net migration as well as reviews into the quality, relevance and cost-effectiveness of non-degree qualifications carried out in the mid-2000s.

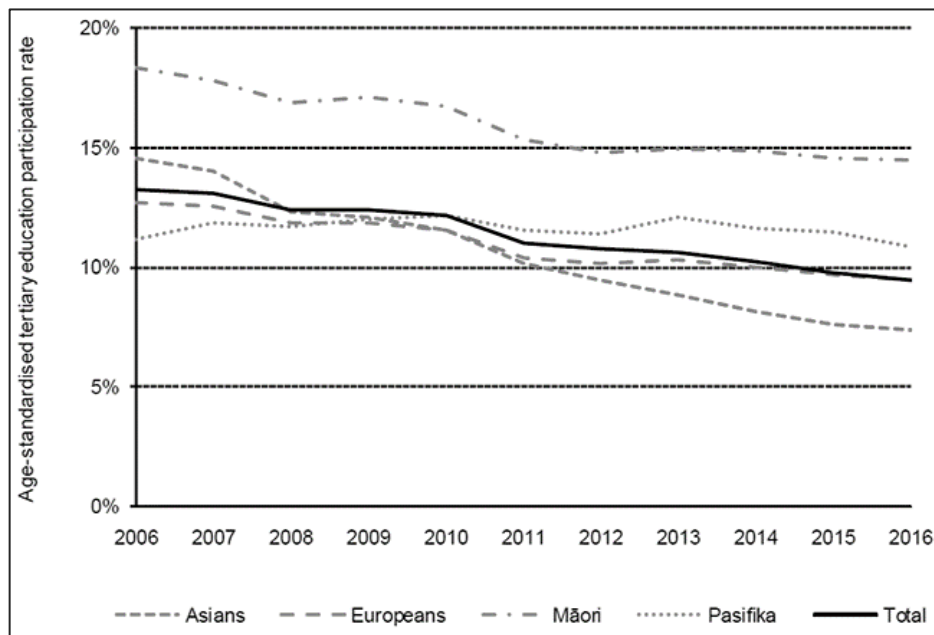


Figure 14: TE Participation Rates for New Zealand by Ethnicity from 2006-2016. Source: MoE (2017b).

The following graph (Figure 15) illustrates that in 2008, approximately 40% of Māori students enrolled in TE were *19 and Under*, whereas approximately 62% were aged *20 and Over*. I used Education Counts (2017a) data to examine the age-groups of Māori who participated in TE from 2008 to 2016. Combining the *Under 18 years* and the *18-19 years* statistics, I calculated the *19 and Under* figures. These students were most likely to have made a transition into TE directly from secondary school. However, for the *20 and Over* figures, I combined three age group brackets: *20-24 years*, *25-39 years*, and *40 years and over*. In 2016, approximately 50% were aged *19 and Under*, whereas approximately 58% were aged *20 and Over* (Education Counts, 2017a). More young Māori students are entering TE, while there is a small decline in older students. Still, one of the key points here is that approximately half of all Māori students who transition into TE in Aotearoa are not school-leavers.

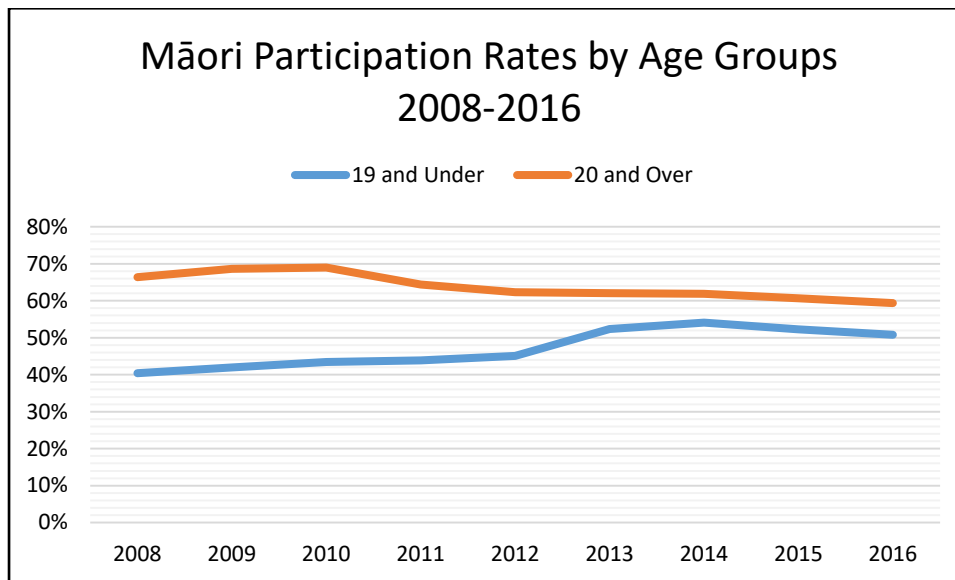


Figure 15: Māori Participation rates by age groups: 2008-2016.  
Source: Education Counts (2017a)

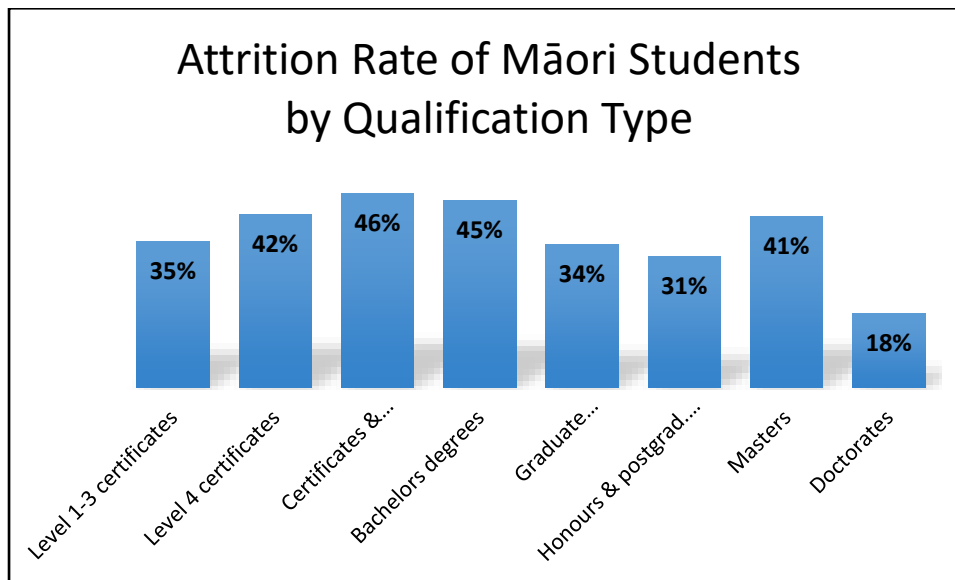
Government priorities have pushed for young Māori to enter some form of TE directly from school. Whilst it is important to consider those students who transition directly from secondary school into TE, to ignore transition experiences of other students who have entered TE later in life is to ignore a large number of Māori students in TE. Findsen and Formosa (2011) discuss in depth the significance of older adults in the terrains of lifelong learning and population ageing. According to Findsen (2012; 2014; 2015) older adults returning to further study and encore careers are subjected to diverse issues and challenges, not the least of which include overcoming stereotypical assumptions about their capabilities. The TEC has so strongly narrowed its focus on promoting school-leavers into TE that TEOs appear to largely equate tertiary students with school leavers. This environment is particularly disadvantageous for Māori students as, controlling for prior school achievement means Māori school leavers are less likely to participate in higher levels of TE. Although massification brought about some improvements in access to TE for Māori students, lower educational achievements than their peers persist (NZPC, 2017).

TE environments include diverse Māori students: those who have not been in education, employment or training (NEET); those who enter based on Tertiary Education Organisation (TEO) relationships with iwi, industry and community agencies; those who are the first persons from their whānau to undertake tertiary

studies; and those who have been involved in work, travel or other activities post-school engagement and students studying in prisons. Māori students may move in and out of formal tertiary learning over time; just as with transition studies generally, this research was interested in what facilitates and hinders certain pathways and educational success.

Part of being a transitions researcher involves considering reasons for students discontinuing their TE studies. Attrition and retention rates refer to measurements pertaining to the rate at which students discontinue or persist in TE study (Education Counts, 2017c). The definition of attrition rates are those students who spend eight consecutive years of non-enrolment after starting a qualification (Education Counts, 2017c). Similar to the total population trends, Māori students who enrol part-time have a higher attrition rate than full-time students. This is significant because many Māori students enrol on a part-time basis. Reasons for discontinuing include needing to simultaneously hold a job to fund their studies or, to attend to whānau needs, for instance caring for children or an older family member. Whilst this may also be the case for Pākehā, this is accentuated amid Māori.

Attrition rates among Māori students are higher than the total population rates. Attrition rates for Māori students vary depending on the qualification level. The cumulative percentage of students who began their studies in 2008, but who have taken five years or more consecutive break was used to calculate the statistics shown in Figure 16 below, from the Education Counts (2017c) spreadsheet.



*Figure 16: Attrition Rate of Māori Students by Qualification Type.  
Source: Education Counts (2017c).*

Although attrition rates may appear high in some qualification levels, credentialed educational attainment for Māori (and the total population) has actually increased over the past 25 years. Cervero and Kirkpatrick (1990) established that there was a consistent and persistent theme in the literature that prior educational attainment was the single most potent and reliable predictor of future participation in TE. Weensvoort (2015) found there remain disparities between Māori and the total population in school achievements, which accounts for higher levels of Māori who enrol in foundation-focused Level 1-2 certifications than the total population and relates to the relative lack of academic capital.

Education Counts (2017d) report that since 1991 the highest educational qualification held by New Zealanders aged 15 and over has risen. This applies for Māori students. Figure 17 below illustrates the increasing percentages from 1991 to 2016.

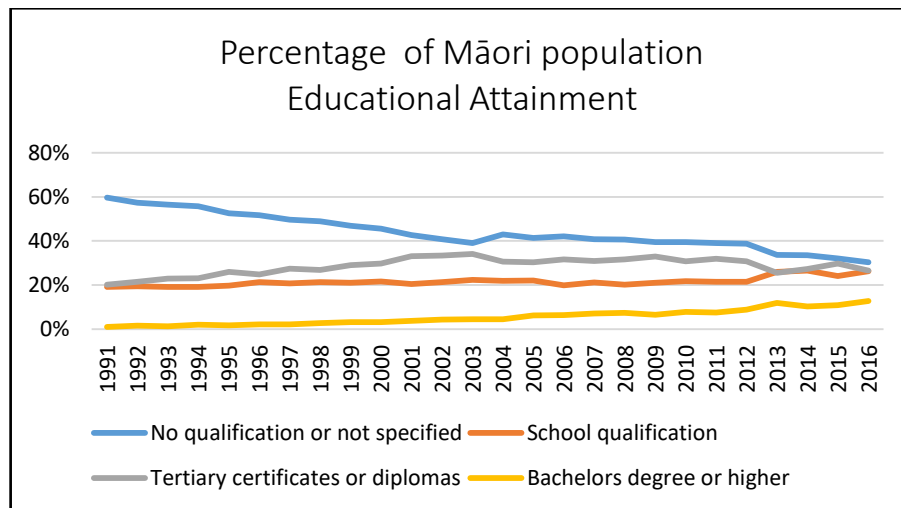


Figure 17: Percentage of Māori population Educational Attainment.  
Source: Education Counts (2017d)

This illustrates an encouraging decrease in the percentage of the Māori population who do not hold an education qualification (or did not specify that they held one) and at the same time, an encouraging increase in people who hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher (Education Counts, 2017d).

The TE sector encompasses a wide range of organisations and providers as outlined in section 2.2. However, this research was specifically interested in the transition experiences for Māori students into wānanga, polytechnics and university. For that reason, I examined trends of Māori students enrolling in these three types. As shown below in Figure 18, the number of Māori students enrolled in polytechnics exceeds those in wānanga and universities. From 2000 to 2015, enrolment numbers in universities remained relatively consistent. However, between 2000 and 2005, a dramatic increase occurred of enrolments in wānanga and polytechnics occurred, but has gradually declined since then. This may be in part due to the nature of qualifications offered at different types of institutions and in part due to the values and cultures of institution types which are more or less inviting for Māori participation (Chauvel & Rean, 2012).

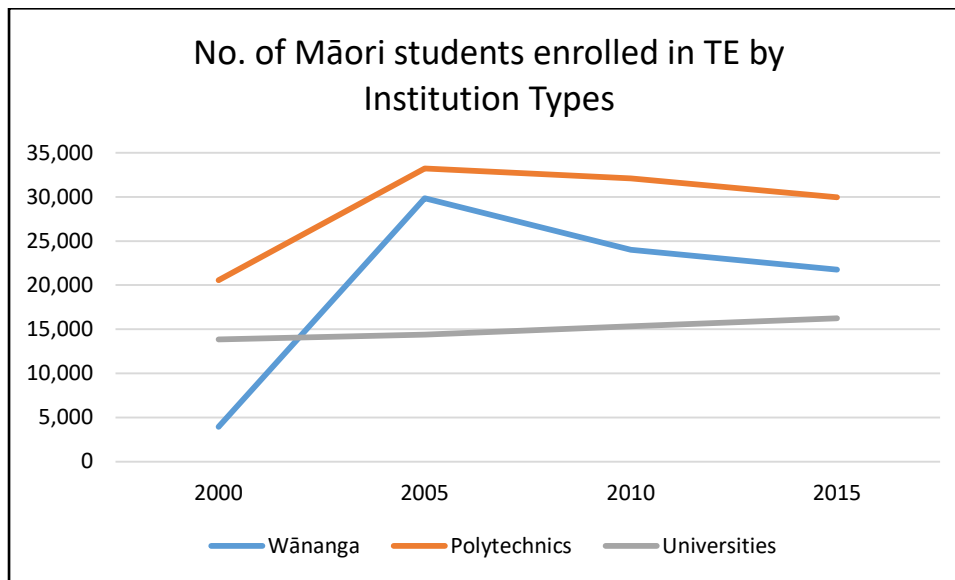


Figure 18: No. of Māori students enrolled in TE by Institution Types.  
Source: Education Counts (2017d)

Summarily, two prominent trends for Māori in contemporary TE are firstly, their higher rate of age-standardised participation than other ethnic groups in Aotearoa (MoE, 2017b), and secondly, that their highest educational qualification has risen, with an encouraging increase in those who hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher. This is a guarded interpretation, however, as much depends on the starting base. Historical attitudes regarding race have continued to influence contemporary Aotearoa social structure, including the terms of engagement with TE for Māori. The MTRG (2003) established a Māori TE Framework which never been formally accepted. This document outlines the aspirations of Māori within TE to achieve what they determine as education success for Māori in order to grow and strengthen Māori identity.

### 3.2.3 Māori Identity

Māori identity has been closely considered by many Māori academics (Bidois, 2012; Celermajer & Kidman, 2012; Durie, 2003; Nikora, 2007; Rameka, 2012; L. Smith, 1999; Te Huia, 2015; Webber, 2008). Researchers have noted how complex and diverse individual and national Māori identity is, and how traditional notions differ from contemporary notions of ‘being Māori’ (Durie, 1985; McIntosh, 2005; Pere, 1982; Rameka, 2012). A. Durie (1997) argued that articulation of the right of a Māori identity flows from the Treaty in Article 2 which guarantees Māori

protection of *taonga* (precious things), and in Article 3 which promises Māori citizenship rights equal to those of other New Zealanders.

Identity is one of the most studied concepts in the social sciences (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Western European males (Erikson, 1950; Giddens, 1991; Marcia, 1996) have dominated identity theory development (Crandell, Crandell & Zandin, 2009), yet there are clear differences in non-western identity development theories. One major variation rests on an individualistic focus in western theories, whereas a collective, communal and holistic focus is more prevalent in non-western theories of identity (Crandell et al., 2009). A collective and holistic focus is evident in notions of Māori identity (Durie, 2003; Hawaikirangi-Pere, 2013).

Identity draws on distinct aspects comprising the whole identity. For instance, personal identity, cultural identity, ethnic identity, social identity, student identity may all have distinct nuances yet overlap in a myriad of ways comprising the whole identity. In this research, broadly, identity means the way in which individuals perceive themselves and their collective group in dynamic and evolving contexts of their lives. It is their sense of who they are as a person and as a group, where they 'belong' in social contexts and how they believe others perceive them. Essentially, as I argue more strongly in the discussion chapter, identity is a fluid concept.

Contemporary British/New Zealand female theorist, Margaret Wetherell (2007), explores the way identities are made within psycho-social interconnections of the personal, social, emotional and cultural, through actions that flow from understanding one's role in a social system. Similarly, Ecclestone, Biesta and Hughes (2010) state, "Identity is therefore constructed through complex interactions between different forms of capital (cultural, social, economic and emotional), broader social and economic conditions, interactions and relationships in various contexts, and cognitive and psychological strategies" (p.9). An example of this is the term *Māori* itself as an identifier of a person that developed in relation to the arrival of Pākehā and was only brought about as a result of that specific relationship (Rameka, 2017). Webber (2008) indicates that the word *Māori* meant normal or ordinary in contrast to Pākehā who were different. Therefore, a concept of *Māori* identity was constructed through

interactions and relationships in the context of Aotearoa during the 1800s. Previously, Māori did not refer to themselves collectively, identity was by iwi affiliations (Durie, 1998a).

Māori identity, although experienced on a deeply personal and individual level, is about the ways that 'being Māori' gives meaning to (and is an expression of) experiences (Durie, 2003). Nikora (2007) claimed that in order to support a resilient and positive sense of heritage identity, it is important that Māori "intensify" (p.344) their experience of *whānaungatanga* (kinship, sense of family connection), Māori *motuhake* (things that make Māori different and unique, including language preservation and cultural pride) and *kotahitanga* (sense of togetherness and belonging resulting in unity).

Māori academic Tracey McIntosh (2005) outlined three identity positions available for Māori: fixed, fluid, or forced. Fixed identity associates with traditional structures and practices. Fluid identity associates with moving back and forth between Māori and non-Māori contexts in hybrid and shifting positions. Forced identity associates with Māori as a social category imposed by oppressive structural societal inequalities. Bennett and Liu (2018) found these positions to be still relevant in Aotearoa's present socio-cultural context. Furthermore, Melinda Webber's (2012) research pointed to high achieving Māori students adopting "multiple identities to represent themselves" (p.20), finding ways to strategically manage to their advantage these identities in education and other contexts.

Rameka (2017) suggests that Māori identity can be viewed through interpretative systems which are interrelated components dynamically weaving historical and contemporary identities. Such interpretative systems include: whakapapa, whanau/hapū/iwi, *whenua* (land) and Te Reo. The literature on Māori identity is diverse and varied, and despite there being many facets to Māori identity, in this research I use whakapapa, *wairua* (spirituality), *whenua*, whānau, and Te Reo Māori to further understand Māori identity.

### 3.2.3.1 *Whakapapa*

Mindful of my researcher position as a Pākehā in relation to my research participants who are Māori, understanding notions of Māori identity involved understanding relevant interpretive systems such as *whakapapa*. Whakapapa

clearly links to both traditional and contemporary notions of Māori identity. Cheung (2008) states, “Māori cosmology is based upon a whakapapa of creation” (p.2) and is found to be significant in the development of Māori identity (Durie, 2002; Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Te Huia (2015) argues from a socio-cultural perspective that for Māori, the self is made through meaningful webs of connections between whakapapa interpersonal connections.

Whakapapa signifies the genealogical descent of Māori from the divine creation of the universe to the living world, from the past to the present time (Berryman, 2008; Rameka, 2017). A person who knows their genealogical descent and understands their place in that lineage knows their Māori identity. “Whakapapa is not simply about having ‘Māori blood’, but also knowing about that descent and having a meaningful relationship to it. Knowledge of whakapapa and sense of identity are very important to Māori” (Karetu, 1993, p.235). Walker (1990) explains that whakapapa encompasses multiple layers and interpretations that form the basis of Māori values and beliefs – the literal translation of whakapapa is to ‘place in layers’ (Rameka, 2017). Whakapapa is essential to developing a full and meaningful life within a Māori worldview.

### 3.2.3.2 *Wairua*

Wairua literally means ‘two waters’, the spiritual and the physical, and is taken to mean the ‘spirit’ of a person which exists beyond death (Moorfield, 2011, p.237). This reflects a Māori understanding of the world that all living things (land, rivers, humans, animals) have both a spiritual and a physical body (Rameka, 2017). Rose Pere (1994) outlined a communal and holistic approach of Māori identity, involving a sense of belonging to a wider community of people (living and dead) and places. Spirits of the living or the dead are accepted as real. This links to cultural practices such as Tōhunga, agents of Atua, instilling wairua into something like a new building, through karakia.

Durie’s (1985) *Te Whare Tapa Whā* model (first presented in 1982 at a Māori Women’s Welfare League hui) of overall well-being emphasises an essential component of Taha Wairua (spiritual well-being). Spirituality of life is viewed as a transitory process moving from body-to-body and generation-to-generation, in this way, intertwining past, present and future as a continuous cosmic process

(Rameka, 2012; Tse, Lloyd, Petchkovsky & Manaia, 2005). In this sense, wairua is an important past, present, and future aspect of Māori identity.

It is worth noting here that among the traditional sphere of higher education settings, rational-only modes of thought have dominated. However, some adult education researchers point to the significance of spiritual underpinnings in emancipatory education work. For instance, Tisdell (2003; 2007; 2010) includes spirituality in her teachings of social transformation, addressing people's extremely emotional experiences of oppression and privilege affecting who they are and how they view their identity. Wairua (spirituality) is integral to Māori identity.

### 3.2.3.3 *Whenua*

Another historical and contemporary element of Māori identity is connection to *whenua* (land). As the physical and spiritual connections to *whenua* and past generations were curtailed throughout colonisation, concepts of Māori identity were impacted upon by land loss. Walker (1989) contends that land loss severed Māori from a fundamental economic base as well as a source of identity. Land loss culminated in approximately 80% of Māori moving from rural to urban living (Durie, 1998b) to find employment (Rameka, 2017). Ties to land and identity were lost. Te Rito (2007) adds that ex-Māori Party co-leaders Tāriana Tūria and Dr. Pita Sharples attributed lost Māori identity and *whakapapa* connections by urban Māori to Māori over-representation in crime and poverty statistics. Urban migration during the 1940's and 1950's impacted upon education for children, where urban teachers were ill-prepared to cope with burgeoning numbers of Māori students, who in teachers' eyes lacked the basic experiences of Pākehā children (May, 2003). Māori children were frequently compared to Pākehā children in terms of failure.

Effects are still evident among some disconnected Māori who struggle to articulate their *mihi whakatau* (speech of greeting) or their *pepeha* (speech of self-introduction). These Māori traditions specifically tie areas of land affiliation (e.g. this is my mountain, this is my river) to the identity of the speaker. Land is therefore not viewed as a commodity, but as a source of identity (Rameka, 2012)

and is about a sense of being at one, not at odds, with nature and the environment (Te Rito, 2007).

Durie (1995) described the diverse and complex realities underlying the identity positions of modern Māori and concluded that the extent to which Māori have active links with their traditional whenua, hapū (sub-tribe) or iwi (tribe) does not denote whether they are more or less Māori than others. A good example of this is Borell's (2005) research analysing identity positions of Māori youths living in urban South Auckland. She found that they had strong and meaningful associations with their immediate land and community, but these were articulated as a sense of neighbourhood or 'street' identity.

Borell's (2005) research further uncovered a sense of personal agency that these youths felt to challenge prevalent negative poverty, unemployment and crime discourses ascribed to South Auckland (an urban area of perceived underachievement) by mass media and social statistics. According to Rameka (2017), for urban Māori, identity formation is symbolic as well as physical, where knowledge of whakapapa and reclaiming tribal identity offers freedom to choose and develop identity on an intellectual, political and spiritual level. Another strong example of Māori youth who moved freely between many different identity discourses was reported in Joanna Kidman's (2012) research. Kidman uncovered diverse ways that Māori youth who grew up in regional tribal environments position land narratives as they develop a "range of fluid socio-spatial cultural identities" (p. 189). Diverse and complex realities underlie identity development for urban, tribal and regional Māori in contemporary contexts.

#### *3.2.3.4 Whānau (Hapū/Iwi)*

This concept encompasses all aspects of an individual's identity as part of a collective group consisting of whānau, hapū and iwi (Hawiakirangi-Pere, 2013). According to Hōhepa (1978), traditional Māori society was founded on kinship and community groupings, classified into three: whānau (family), hapū (sub-tribe, groups of related whanau) and iwi (tribe, consisting of hapū who could trace their descent from a single ancestor, or bones), although these social groupings were not totally distinct and differed across regions. In contemporary contexts, owing to urbanisation limiting Māori living in extended whānau units, a dislocation from

tribal influences stimulated a new cultural identity emerging (Rameka, 2017). This identity was about simply 'being Māori', rather than being tribal. Maaka and Fleras (2005) suggest this shift from tribal identity as a predominant source to one aspect of 'being Māori' was a key step in the development of contemporary Māori identity.

#### 3.2.3.5 *Te Reo*

Language is a source of power, a vehicle for expressing identity (Barlow, 1991). Colonisation seriously impacted upon Te Reo Māori language loss, which, for many, caused disconnection from Māori identity. Te Reo Māori has been described by a number of educationalists as the essential key to Māori identity that enables the speaker to express all of their thoughts, opinions and emotions (Durie 2006; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; 2015; Ratima & May, 2011; Waitangi Tribunal, 2011). More generally, applying a dialectic Whorfian hypothesis (Hunt & Agnoli, 1991) to this intricate relationship between language and culture, Māori language potentially determines the structure of the real world as perceived by Māori, influencing perceptions, thoughts and behaviours characteristic of Māori culture.

Te Kōhanga Reo movement (see section 3.2.1), underpinned by Kaupapa Māori philosophy saved the impending death of Te Reo Māori, and in conjunction with Governmental policy, developed across all education sectors (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Māori pre-schools (language nests) revitalised the language and culture (Bishop, 1998; Irwin, 1990; Pihama et al., 2004; Rameka, 2017). Despite this resurgence, language use is again in decline (Albury, 2018), a situation which requires urgent measures.

For contemporary Māori, whether educated in English or Māori language or both, developing a secure Māori identity may be challenging. Inevitably, this process involves where they belong in the world of western beliefs, values and norms. Part of the identity journey and challenge for contemporary Māori is deciding where to position themselves in relation to their Māori identity reclamation process (Milne, 2013). Rameka (2017) suggests identity reclamation requires unmasking identities inherited from colonisation as part of the process to develop a positive cultural identity. Māori language has inherent connections with identity, and

identity itself has inherent connections with transition experiences into tertiary education.

### 3.3 Transitions in Education

#### 3.3.1 Transitions Research

I was interested in transition experiences for Māori students into tertiary education environments—the focus of this section of the literature review. Let me start by asking the question: ‘What is a transition’? A simple question with a complex answer! The field of transitions in education has attracted research interest among many researchers. Notably, transitions from early childhood to primary school have been well documented (Dockett & Perry, 2001; 2004; 2006; 2007; Dockett, Perry, & Petriwskyj, 2014; Dunlop, 2016; Dunlop & Fabian, 2007; Hōhepa, 2014; 2015; Paki & Peters, 2015; Peters, 2010; Rameka, 2009). Dunlop (2016) suggests that the way children experience their first transition may have an impact that remains with them throughout all their educational experiences and into adult life, in terms of capacity to cope with what is new and their sense of self-worth, confidence and resilience.

Key differences between transitions from early childhood to primary school, and transitions into TE programmes, are the compulsory/voluntary aspects, respectively. A transition into primary education (from a range of early childhood settings) is essentially compulsory, and is generally only made in a one-way direction in an individual’s life course. Contrarily, TE is voluntary and is therefore a transition that might be made by an adult at any age, at any stage, and may be made multiple times in an individual’s life course. In this regard, research about transitions through the lifecourse also has useful links to research about transitions into TE.

Lifecourse transition theorist Daniel Levinson (1977; 1978; 1986; 1996) makes an assumption that individuals move through predictable age-related crises, followed by periods of relative stability; an overall view that adulthood comprises a series of various periods of stability and periods of transitions. Transitions are a key

concept associated with lifecourse theory (Hunt, 2005; Mortimer & Shanahan, 2004) and highlight the dynamic, interrelated reality of peoples' lives and events.

In earlier literature, transitions in education were often conceptualised as 'events'. However, notions of transitions as 'events' have been superseded theoretically and practically by conceptualisations of transitions as 'processes' (Boyle, Petriwiskyj & Grieshaber, 2018). Various researchers have defined life course and education transitions as trajectories and turning points (Cooper, 2015), rites of process and liminal spaces (Turner, 1969), dynamic processes (Zittoun, 2014) and non-deterministic, embodied, multi-directional time-spaces processes (Hörschelmann). Furthermore, recent publications are paying attention to the importance of 'continuity' in education transitions (Ballam, Perry, & Garpelin, 2017; Boyle et al., 2018; Dockett & Einardsdottir, 2017).

Transitions research inquiries generally investigate factors determining how well an individual makes a transition, what successful/failed transitions look like and ways to support transitions. Studies have ranged from multiple country collaborative efforts, to large-scale, institution-wide investigations to longitudinal studies and literature reviews, to small case studies and one institution-based inquiries (Peters, 2010). It is helpful to view transition studies groupings to determine what key themes emerge. Dunlop (2014) usefully suggests that there are three groupings, or 'sets' of transition studies which focus on either the characteristics of the individual, or of the system, or of 'development in context'. Each set is now considered.

The first set of transition studies relates to characteristics of the individual. These tend to focus upon themes of readiness, preparation, adaptation and adjustment, generating theories about the individual person who is in transition from one setting to another. Implications rest on the individual's capacity for a more or less effective transition, and are quite often linked to psychological concepts such as identity, self-esteem, attitudes, skills, and competence (Dockett & Perry, 2008; Dunlop, 2014).

In the second set of transition studies, the context and capacity of the system to adapt or accommodate the transitioning individual is paramount. Ideas such as

difference in learning environments, teacher adaptation, pedagogies, curriculum adjustment and relationships with students have been researched. Dunlop (2014) classifies these sets of studies as 'context without development'. Quite often, these studies generate theories about policy, practices and standards.

The third set of transition studies is classified by Dunlop (2014) as 'development in context' as this set of transitions research emphasises the inter-relatedness of interpersonal and sociocultural effects on transition experiences. Early childhood transitions researcher Sally Peters (2014) is drawn to sociocultural and ecological theories as a framework for understanding the complexity inherent in transitions; thus, her research belongs to this third of Dunlop's sets - 'development in context'. Peters (2014) discusses the concept of transitions as chasms, bridges and borderlands using Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 1986; 1992, 1997; 2005) ecological theory as an explanation for the way an individual's disposition and resources inter-relate with features of the environment that inhibit or invite engagement. In this sense, the present research belongs to Dunlop's (2014) 'development in context' set of transitions research as I am emphasising the inter-relatedness of interpersonal and sociocultural effects on transition experiences for Māori students into tertiary education.

Using a non-western framework, Paki and Peters (2015) explored whakapapa (genealogy) as a Māori cultural concept to map transition journeys and understand what happens, based on one's social and cultural origin. In another study with significant overlaps to Paki and Peters (2015), Hōhepa (2014) researched the collective transition experiences of children, their families, the teachers and the community in Māori medium education contexts and found that, "transitions are not just about moving from one physical space to another, but also involve moving across worldviews" (p.2).

### *3.3.1.1 Educational Success*

Implied within discourses of transitions are measurements of a 'successful' or an 'effective' transition. Academic predictors and measurements of success or failure in a TE environment generally rest on whether a student stays in the course (retention), passes the course, completes the programme and gains the

qualification (Hunt, Morgan & Teddy, 2001; Wikaire et al., 2016). In a report by Kinnane et al. (2014), educational success was viewed as existing on a spectrum defined by individual and collective terms, as well as a range of measures utilized by universities and government departments. It may be tempting to view achievement data provided by institutions as sources of measurement of educational success. Or, it may be tempting (but misleading) to see ‘failures’ as a fault sitting with students, or teaching staff, or families, or curriculum (Quinn, 2010). These may offer surface or ‘seen’ explanations of success or failure.

However, it is more astute to examine the (‘unseen’) assumptions behind these measures of success and failure, which are far less articulated, reflecting a predominantly western view about the purpose of education. One dominant prevailing theory in discourses of educational success is *human capital theory* (Becker, 1993; Guenther, Disbray, Benveniste, & Osborne, 2017) which argues that people acquire credentialed education for a return on their investment. By implication, if a person wishes to acquire education for other purposes, or they do not believe that there is a return on their investment worth pursuing, they disengage. Seen from another angle, meanings of educational success may be tied to *cultural reproduction* (Bourdieu, 1986). Such notions account for why knowledge, as it is reproduced in the education system, does not have the transformative impact it is alleged to have (discussed later in section 3.3.3).

Importantly for this study, ideas of educational success seen from a Māori worldview are very clearly outlined in the Māori TE Framework developed by the MTRG (2003) which plainly recognises the aspirations of TE for Māori. Three core visions were identified (MTRG, 2003) similar to Durie’s (2004) goals: a) to live as Māori; b) to actively participate as citizens of the world, and; c) to enjoy a high standard of living and good health. Two of my research questions inquired about how Māori students define an effective transition and what educational success in a TE context means *to them*. Inclusion of these questions served to ascertain perspectives of Māori students themselves about meanings of ‘effective transitions’ and ‘educational success’ and to suspend any preconceptions on what might constitute educational “success”.

Eccelstone et al. (2010) argue that linear notions of transition are insufficient. Instead, transitions are multilevel and multidirectional, and further, they suggest that transitions are inescapably connected to time, place and social contexts. It is also necessary to, “pay greater attention to the collective as well as the individual aspects of transition” (Eccelstone et al., 2010, p.22). Overall, the literature points to an emerging trend of transitions researchers advocating for the notion of transitions to be re-conceived. Outdated views of transitions as events are a mismatch with present realities of transitions as continuous processes.

### 3.3.2 Transitions Barriers and Enablers for Māori

In the last two decades, publications have increased about the transition of Māori students into university and other forms of tertiary study (Sciascia, 2017). From these inquiries, barriers which hinder effective transitions or enablers which facilitate effective transitions are evident. Wikaire et al. (2016) noted that there are a mix of factors which can serve as *both* enablers *and* barriers for Indigenous and ethnic minority students in tertiary study. Conducted among health professional students in Aotearoa, Wikaire et al.’s (2016) research found the following factors influencing transition experiences: academic preparation (including secondary school academic achievement, exposure to appropriate subjects, meeting tertiary admission prerequisites, and having clear career goals); socioeconomic status; availability of role models and mentors; family support; work/life balance; access to childcare; financial support; clear career information; student support systems; support to transition, and; first year academic results and environments.

Rather like Dunlop’s (2014) transitions literature ‘sets’, it is helpful to view groupings of literature of transitions barriers and enablers for Māori students around common themes. Hall, Rata and Addis (2013) have done just that, categorizing studies into four general ‘sets’, though overlaps exist. These are characteristics of: 1) Māori students; 2) the tertiary environment; 3) student relationships; and 4) teaching pedagogy and practice. I used these four categories to identify transition barriers and enablers reported in the literature.

1) *Characteristics of Māori students* groups studies which focus on features of individual students, often in terms of shortcomings or strengths, but not exclusively. Barriers include low self-esteem levels (Jeffries, 1998); Māori cultural concept of whakamā (shame) (Hunt, Morgan & Teddy, 2001); cultural obligations such as responsibility and connectedness to whānau as a priority over study commitments (T. Smith, 2012), although notably this same phenomenon was also an enabler (Chauvel & Rean, 2012); being a first-generation tertiary student and; belief that assimilating into dominant culture is necessary (Gorinski & Abernethy, 2007; Nikora, Levy, Henry, & Whangapirita, 2002). Enablers predominantly linked to having a strong Māori cultural identity (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009; Karena & Fenton, 2015; King et al., 2011; Macfarlane, 2010; McCaw, Wakes & Gardner, 2012; Mete, 2013; Ngāwati, 2013).

2) *Characteristics of the Tertiary Environment* are studies which focus on the successes and failings of the educational institutions to meet student needs. Barriers include a lack of quality course and enrolment information (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Jeffries, 1998; T. Smith, 2012); lack of Māori student support units and pastoral care (Hall et al., 2012); low numbers of Māori academic role models (Kidman, Chu, Fernandez & Abella, 2015; Nikora et al., 2002); and financial pressures placed on students (Chauvel & Rean, 2012, Curtis et al., 2012; 2017; Hall et al., 2013). Institutional racism and marginalisation contributed to high levels of attrition in the first year (Wilson et al., 2011). Guidance and support to enroll (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Sciascia, 2017) was a factor which could be an enabler or a barrier. For Māori students who enter into TE institutions, experiences during the first year, and even the first semester, have a strong influence on whether they are likely to continue (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Earle, 2007; 2008). Students' decisions about whether to continue studying link to how socially and academically supported students feel to succeed (Wilson et al., 2011).

Enablers reported by researchers endorse affirmative action policies, the adoption of culturally specific spaces along with Māori-focused support services (Bishop, Berryman, & Wearmouth, 2015; Curtis et al., 2012; Hohapata, 2011; Macfarlane, 2010; Mete, 2015; Tomoana, 2012). Yet another enabler related to the value of bridging transitions, in other words, enrolling in foundation courses to “bridge the

gap” and prepare students with skills and knowledge needed for continuing into formal TE endeavours (Apanui & Kirikiri, 2015; Chinlund et al., 2011; Hohapata, 2011; Nock & Johnson, 2015; Ross, 2008). Curtis et al. (2017) recently found that bridging programmes are positively associated with increasing grade averages and passing courses in the first year of degrees; however, they simultaneously noted challenges remain for how degree programmes can better support Indigenous and ethnic minority first-year tertiary study students.

3) *Student Relationship Characteristics*. This group of studies address the relationships a Māori student experiences once enrolled. The significance of *whānaungatanga* (building relationships and network connections) for Māori students was extremely strong, most of all with teaching staff and also importantly, with support staff and other students (Apanui & Kirikiri, 2015; Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012; Earle, 2008; Gorinski & Abernethy, 2007; Hall et al., 2012; Harrison, Marshall, & Beckham, 2009; Hohapata, 2011; Karena & Fenton, 2015; Ross, 2008; McCaw et al., 2012). Additionally, using *tuakana/teina* (older/younger person relationships) approaches systemically and within teaching practices was identified as an enabler (Chinlund et al., 2011; Hohapata, 2011; Mete, 2013; Tomoana, 2012). Enablers also included a higher presence of Māori staff role models, positive peer relationships, but equally, negative peer relationships or lack of approachable staff were seen to have harmful effects on success (Bishop & Berryman, 2015; Gorinski & Abernethy, 2007). Barriers include institutions failing to recognize aspects of whanaungatanga and tuakana/teina and building the necessary capacity (Hall et al., 2012; Nikora et al., 2002).

4) *Characteristics of Teaching Pedagogy and Practice*. In this group of studies, barriers included teaching Māori content in isolation (not cohesively across the academic programme), demeanour of teachers (Chauvel & Rean, 2012), and their having low expectations of Māori students. Conversely, enablers for students to make effective transitions include culturally responsive teaching practice (Zepke & Leach, 2007); inclusive practice and “cultural congruence” by teaching staff (Jeffries, 1998; Hall et al., 2013); reflecting Māori embedded within the curriculum, encouragement for students to speak in their first language (i.e. Te Reo) and setting high expectations (Gorinski & Abernethy, 2007).

Other factors connected with effective transitions overwhelmingly related to the use of Māori pedagogies and/or culturally relevant pedagogies and/or ako (reciprocal learning and teaching). The literature has been saturated with this message (Apanui & Kirikiri, 2015; McCaw et al., 2012; Macfarlane, 2004; Curtis et al., 2012; Hohapata, 2011; Nock & Johnson, 2015; Tomoana, 2012; Ross, 2008; Sciascia, 2017).

In sum, a number of factors appeared to be *both* a barrier and an enabler while some factors were clearly either barriers or enablers. In this study, which adopted a 'development in context' (Dunlop, 2014) approach, I focused on three aspects to understand the transition experiences of the participants, comprising a micro and a macro (Giddens, 1984) analysis. These were the characteristics of Māori students, the characteristics of the tertiary institution and the student relationship characteristics in context and thirdly, the wider socio-political characteristics. Whilst I did not ignore the characteristics of teaching pedagogy and teaching practice, this aspect was not a strong focus of the inquiry because of the emphasis on *students'* perspectives and transition experiences, not *teaching staff* perspectives. Given the importance of the three aspects of individuals, the tertiary environment and student relationships plus the wider socio-political characteristics, it was important to consider both the agency (capacity of an individual student) and the structure (social arrangements influencing or limiting choices and opportunities that are available for a person).

### 3.3.3 Transitions for Māori: Influences of Agency and Structure

There has long been a debate in sociology over the primacy of agency and structure for determining human behavior (Arab, 2016; Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1984; Habermas, 1987; Parsons, 1966; Wittgenstein, 1976; 1989). *Agency* is defined as an individual's capacity to act independently of their own free will to make autonomous choices (Barker, 2005). Structure is the term given to recurrent social, cultural, economic and political patterned arrangements influencing or limiting choices and opportunities that are available (Barker, 2005). Therefore, the debate of agency versus structure centres on issues of autonomy versus determinism in influencing whether individuals behave as free agents or in

manners dictated by social structures. Underpinning this debate is a question of what the social world is made of – what causes the social world, and what are the effects of the social world?

Leading theorists have answered this question differently. Émile Durkheim (Giddens, 1978) believed that social structure and hierarchy are fundamental to establishing a society which benefits individuals - a *structural functionalist* perspective. On the other hand, Karl Marx (Alessandro, 2008) believed that social structure acts for the disadvantage of the majority of individuals in society. These viewpoints share in common the notion that “structure” refers to *material* (economic) and *cultural* (norms, customs, ideologies) aspects. Therefore, one school of thought is that our social existence is fundamentally decided by the structure of society. Perceived individual agency is essentially explained by the way this social structure operates to liberate or constrain the person’s decision-making.

Generally, this approach is founded on macro-level explanations, or *methodological holism*, the belief that the ‘whole is greater than the sum of its parts’ (O’Neill, 1973). Actors are socialized within social institutions which restrict or enable individual capacity for action (Durkheim, 1938 [1895]). Hence, the social structure is more significant than an actor’s agency. Seen from this perspective, when a Māori student enrolls in a TE programme, the wider socio-political and educational policy context has a far greater influence on their transition experience than their individual capacity to make an effective transition.

By contrast, other theorists (Blumer, 1969; Hurrelmann, 2009) emphasise the capacity of an individual *agent* to construct their worlds. This perspective aligns with a *social phenomenology* theory instigated by Alfred Schutz (Embree, 2011) which accentuates the role of human agency in the production of social action and social worlds by postulating that subjective meanings give rise to understanding an apparently objective social world. A social phenomenology approach has overlaps with *symbolic interactionism* (Blumer, 1969) which is premised on three core principles: a) humans act towards things based on the meaning those things have for them; b) meanings arise out of social interaction, and; c) social action is a consequence of fitting together individual lines of action.

Another theory emphasising an agent's capacity to construct their world is *ethnomethodology* developed by Harold Garfinkel (1967) who was influenced by Talcott Parsons and Alfred Schutz. Ethnomethodology is how an individual uses social interaction to maintain an ongoing sense of reality in a situation. Ethnomethodologists attempt to classify actions people take when in groups through conversation analysis. Generally, social phenomenology, symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodological approaches are founded on micro-level explanations or *methodological individualism*, the belief that actors are the central actors in social systems (O'Neill, 1973). Therefore, the social structure is a consequence of the actions and dynamics of interacting individuals; their agency is significant. Seen from this perspective, when a Māori student enrolls in a TE programme, their individual capacity and interactions with others to construct or reconstruct their world will have a significant influence on their transition experience within the wider social structure.

#### 3.3.3.1 *Structuration Theory*

Summarily, the debate between methodological holism (macro) and methodological individualism (micro) centres on the extent to which research should revolve around social structures and individuals, respectively. As a result, a third option has been considered by theorists (Bourdieu, 1977; 1986; Giddens, 1984) which attempts to find a balance between the two previous positions where structure *and* agency (not *versus*) are complementary forces. Structures influence individual behaviour, and individuals have the capacity to change the social structures in which they dwell. *Structuration* (Giddens, 1984) is an example of this view which analyses both social structure and agents with equal emphasis to understand the creation and reproduction of social systems. Both macro *and* micro-focused analyses are needed (Giddens, 1984).

Giddens (1976; 1979; 1984) was an influential theorist in this field. Interested in reconciling both agency and structure, he became known for his *structuration theory* (Giddens, 1984) where social practices are a result of overlapping intersections of structures and agents. An individual does not create their self (identity) independently from society; rather, individuals are continuously being shaped throughout their lifespan through a dynamic interactive process with

society. Reciprocally, an individual has agency and can instigate particular actions which may result in changes to the social structure (prominent figures in history such as Nelson Mandela, Adolf Hitler, Kate Sheppard, Sir Āpirana Ngata and Donald Trump illuminate this point). Seen from this perspective, when a Māori student enrolls in a TE programme, their transition experience will be influenced by the wider socio-political and educational institution contexts as well as their capacity for agency and interaction with others. In this research, I adopted a dialectical approach (tracing back to Marxism) of the mutually reinforcing forces of agency and structure.

### 3.3.3.2 *Cultural Reproduction*

A key thinker who widely discussed the dichotomy and relationship between agency and structure was a neo-Marxist French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (1977; 1984; 1986; 1997). He first began by presenting his concept of *habitus* (1972), then *field*, *capital* and *doxa*. When an individual enters a field, they always have with them, their *habitus*—a combination of the amount and type of economic, social or *cultural capital* (Bourdieu, 1984; 1986). Bourdieu (1977; 1984) depicted society as comprising a number of multi-dimensional spaces and sub-spaces called *fields*. Bourdieu's *field* might be a social institution like the education system, or a particular university or wānanga within the education system, or even a social group such as a class FaceBook page. Each field has its own set of *doxa*, or rules. Doxa are dominant beliefs, denoting what is taken for granted in society; a person's place in the field is determined by the capital they bring to the field. When a Māori student transitions into a polytechnic, there are codes and rules (*doxa*) that must be understood about how that institution or system of education operates, such as enrolment application processes, relevance of prior education credentials, course assessment criteria, how to relate to staff and other students, how to "be a polytechnic student" to name a few. Bourdieu (1977) believed that according to this *doxa*, the social group ascribes them their position in the field. In Bourdieu's theory, *cultural capital* is very important, having to do with knowing the right codes of what works in various fields (see section 4.4.4).

Power relations between and within fields influence human behaviour; in order to understand human behaviour, it is necessary to understand in what kind of power

relations a person is taking part. Cincinnato et al. (2016) explain that notions of existing power relations rest on a larger body of research on social stratification and inequality in modern societies.

Division of social strata in society has relevance for Māori in education because typically Māori occupy a lower social class in Aotearoa resulting in over-representation in crime, poverty and low-paying jobs (Durie, 2011; Marriott & Sim, 2014) and under-representation in higher-level tertiary qualification holders (MoE, 2014a). Bourdieu (1984; 1986) proposed that strata are distinguished based on volume of possession of resources; not just economic but significantly, cultural and social resources. When all these resources are combined, they determine social positions. Thus, when an individual enters a field, they always have with them, their habitus and cultural capital, which may in part, determine their social position. However, Nash (1990) cautions against allowing Bourdieu's insights into social processes being overly reliant on habitus as a central concept as it is an inherently ambiguous and over-loaded concept. But Nash (1990) does suggest that Bourdieu's work has been helpful in allowing us to recover the centrality of family resources to better comprehend educational differentiation, defying cultural deficit theory.

Bourdieu (1984) argued that social positions are passed on from parents to children (inherited capital), and in a largely hidden process are linked to transmission of cultural capital; thus, the socially stratified nature of society is reproduced (Bourdieu, 1973). That is, cultural reproduction. Key to this process are primarily the family, and secondarily, education (Cincinnato et al., 2016). Students inherit capital from their parents; they inherit status, capital, social positions and connections from the social capital that has been developed by their families. This, in turn, enables distinction and esteem. Impacts of an individual's cultural resources related to success at school have been explicitly addressed by Bourdieu (1977) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) who illuminated socially differentiated educational attainment. As a result of Bourdieu's work, we are able to relate family strategies of reproduction to changes in the mode of cultural production and reproduction (see section 4.4.4).

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) explicitly examined the impact of a student's cultural capital on their educational success. They argue that embodied cultural capital strongly influences education practices and is largely determined by social background (parent's educational level). A benefit of Bourdieu's theory was that it reinterpreted inequalities in educational achievement as the outcome of socially determined differences in cultural capital (Cincinnati et al., 2016).

Bourdieu (1973) suggests that education perpetuates the dominant culture in society, advantaging students from the dominant class and disadvantaging students from lower classes because of the acquired (insufficient) cultural capital from their family. Students from the dominant class acquire educational qualifications more often leading higher earning jobs in a disguised, supposedly neutral, process. This is because cultural *capital* is not seen as a resource to acquire (as economic capital is) but instead as something that a person *has* or possesses. Yet Bourdieu determined that it is not just about class, it is about distinction too – ways of speaking, manners, clothing and taste that determine position.

DiMaggio (1982) challenged Bourdieu's theories with a *cultural mobility* hypothesis. DiMaggio (1982) does not discount the relevance of cultural capital influencing opportunities; however, he disagrees with the proposition that cultural capital is inherited from parents and social background. Rather, he says, cultural capital is *partially* determined by social background; however, investments in cultural capital result from individual agency. That said, there would be alignment between DiMaggio and Bourdieu's perspective about a Māori students' decision to participate in TE for educational attainment, reflecting that cultural capital is a malleable resource. The volume of cultural capital stock (e.g. educational qualifications) can be increased in order to achieve upward mobility of social class, which may be one key motivation for adults who participate in tertiary education. Bourdieu (1977) believed that people can move within the *field* if they gain or acquire the necessary capital to enable them to do this, illustrating that agency can be viewed as an emergent phenomenon of agent-situation transaction.

### 3.3.3.3 *Motivation for Adult Participation*

Bourdieu's theory (1977) focused on the practices in the field. It was important to question the practices and motivations of players in the field of TE which enable effective transitions for Māori students. Considering the question of when transitions to TE shift from being an individual experience to being a public education and wider social issue, I determined that it necessitates examining the relationship between self and society. Complementary perspectives I chose to explore this relationship were psychological, social-psychological and sociological. Miller's (1967) *Force Field Analysis* provides a rare combination of psychological and sociological perspectives applied in a very relevant manner for educational researchers. Miller (1967) draws on Maslow's (1943) *Hierarchy of Needs*, Lewin's (1951) *Theory of Force-field*, and social class theories, notably from Gans (1973) to illustrate how theories of social class at people's different stages of social and personal development link to motivations. Miller (1967), an American sociologist, believed that there had been (and I would add, still is) continued interest in the motivations for adult participation in voluntary education, attracting a significant amount of research around this issue.

Miller (1967) proposed that both positive and negative psychosocial forces, when combined, elucidate the reasons, strength and origin of motivation for engagement with post-compulsory education. Rather than prior educational achievement, force-field analysis points to socioeconomic status entirely as the basis for variation of participation between people in different social classes. In Miller's (1967) analysis, education is promoted as the foremost means of achieving mobility and status within four chief areas: vocational, personal and family, citizenship competences, and self-development. In other words, the force-field analysis looks at the balance of the forces that are driving and resisting change and again, emphasizes the dialectic of self-society.

Though very influential, Millers' (1967) theories about adult motivations for engaging in post-compulsory education have been advanced by others. For instance, Knowles' (1980; 1984) proposed adult learning differed from pre-adult learning, coming up with six assumptions about adult learners. In Knowles' (1984) theory, one of his six assumptions is that, "the most potent motivations for adult

participation in post-compulsory education are internal rather than external” (p.12). According to Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner (2007), Knowles’ theory gave adult educators a distinct identity from other areas of education, especially childhood educators because the European art and science of helping adults learn (andragogy) was contrasted with pedagogy, having implications for designing programmes for adults.

Another theory about motivations for adult participation in post-compulsory education was presented by Howard McClusky (1963; 1970; 1971). Considering how internal and external factors operate to (de)motivate adult learners, McClusky’s theory of margin was based on the belief that during adulthood, adults continuously seek to balance the amount of energy needed and the amount of energy available (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). McClusky conceived this balance as a ‘P-L’ ratio where ‘Load of Life’ (L) uses energy and ‘Power of Life’ enables dealing with the load. The ‘Margin in Life’ is the ratio of load to power; therefore, more power means a greater margin for participation in adult education (McClusky, 1970). As motivations for adult participation in learning frequently have the purpose of enabling adults to change roles, responsibilities and physical and mental development, Merriam et al. (2007) suggest that McClusky’s theory is useful in understanding the link between changing social roles and learning. Motivations for the Maori participants in this study to transition into tertiary education programmes were diverse and varied and are further discussed in the findings in section 6.2.5.

To answer the seemingly simple but seriously complex question at the beginning of the transitions section, ‘What is a transition?’ key concepts of transitions were reviewed. Knowing how the field of theorising and understanding transitions in education has moved over time provides a background and a window into how and why the notion of ‘transitions’ has become so prominent in the field of education. Meanings of transitions in this study encompass main ideas found in the literature including continuity, discontinuity, re-patterning, process, change, transformation, dynamic, temporal, socio-cultural contexts, spacial, life changes and environment. All are integral notions to understanding the meaning of tertiary education transitions for Māori, where transition experiences are a result of

overlapping intersections of structures and agents. Māori tertiary education students create their identity not independently of society; **rather**, they are continuously being shaped throughout their dynamic and interactive process with the tertiary education institutions they encounter and the wider socio-cultural context.

### 3.4 Summary

In this chapter, two significant areas of literature were reviewed, critiqued and analysed to provide a background for this research context: a) historical and contemporary factors that have impacted upon tertiary education opportunities and identity for Māori; and, b) how concepts related to understanding transitions in education has moved over time as applied to Māori tertiary education transitions.

A key theme is that individuals require agency to articulate their own identity positions, values and beliefs. If TE policies are to be effective, they must consider the diverse social, political, economic and cultural realities within which contemporary Māori live. Whereas historical Māori identity was based on tribal structures and protocols, contemporary Māori identity is more based around personal choice. Durie (1997) suggests that to live in two separate cultures of the modern world, Māori must be effectively bi-cultural and navigate different cultural values, beliefs and behaviours. Maaka and Fleras (2005) further suggest constructing a 'supra-Māori identity' to include pan-tribal and multiple realities of present-day situations.

Identity is socially produced and culturally constructed, fluid, responsive to relationships, and open to multiple interpretations by others (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Murphy and Hall (2008) interpret identity through sociocultural explanations of learning, suggesting that identities are in a constant state of change through processes of 'being and 'becoming'. Through the medium of language and communication with other people we have (or want to have) a sense of belonging with; hence, identity is relational and spiritual. In this sense, identity and learning are fundamentally connected. Identity is constructed through congruence with cultural values, but for Māori in tertiary education environments,

availability of positive Māori cultural values norms has been rare; this may have affected transition experiences for some students.

For understanding barriers and enablers for Māori students who transition into TE environments, the importance of agency and structure debates cannot be underestimated. In this sense, the principle of agency is not applied in isolation of historical and social contexts and inter-relations (Tomlinson, Baird, Berg & Cooper, 2018). An individual does not create their self (identity) independently from society; rather, individuals are continuously being shaped throughout their lifespan through a dynamic interactive process with society. Reciprocally, an individual has agency and can instigate particular actions which may result in changes to the social structure. For that reason, this study adds to those of Dunlop's (2014) third set of transitions studies as 'development in context' as this research emphasises the inter-relatedness of interpersonal and sociocultural effects on Māori students' transition experiences.



## Whakataukī

*He tina ki runga, he tāmōre ki raro*

*In order to flourish above, one must be firmly rooted below*

## Chapter Four Theoretical Framework

### 4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter (section 3.4.4) I introduced the agency-structure debate, noting that this debate focuses on what the social world is made of – what “causes” the social world, and what are the effects of the social world? Before addressing the methodology and methods of the present research in following chapters, I first investigate the nature and form of the social world, in relation to educational transitions.

This chapter offers my social ontological and epistemological perspectives through the choice of both critical and interpretive paradigms evident in this study. The relevance of Critical Social Theory (CST), Kaupapa Māori Theory and Bourdieuan theory are explained. Rather than an implicit commitment to an ontological and epistemological position, I have therefore made explicit from the outset, my social ontological and epistemological perspectives, through the choice of co-existing critical and interpretive paradigms evident throughout this thesis.

I want to assure readers of my awareness that, while immersed within critical, self-reflexive and interpretive paradigms, I am wary about assumptions and pre-dispositions guiding my thoughts and interpretation of literature. I know some, but not all, of my biases. Therefore, I make my researcher position transparent (also see section 5.4) and leave it to readers to find their own truth within the pages contained here.

### 4.2 Ontology

Ontology is a term used in philosophical and non-philosophical contexts (Lofgren, 2013a). In a philosophical context, ontology is the study of what exists, what is real, what the fundamental parts of the world are and how they relate to each other (Crotty, 1998). Philosophical ontological questions may be, for example, is a

university (physical) more real than learning (concept)? In terms of what exists, what is the relationship between a university and learning? Two branches of philosophical ontology have developed over time – ontological materialism and ontological idealism (Crotty, 1998; Lofgren, 2013a). Ontological materialism views material things (particles, energy, chemical processes) as more real than the human mind, that is, reality exists regardless of human observers. Conversely, in ontological idealism, the human mind and consciousness are more real than material things, that is, reality is constructed in the mind of the observer (Lofgren, 2013a).

However, in a non-philosophical context, ontology is used more narrowly, to describe what may exist in a determined field, including the relationship and hierarchy between these parts (Crotty, 1998). Naming parts and processes and grouping similar ones together into categories within a system is the prime interest, not discussing if the parts within the system are more real compared to the processes taking place within the system (Lofgren, 2013a). In social ontological perspectives, the point is to understand society and its different parts and processes to describe underlying structures affecting individuals and groups. My social ontological perspective framed the present study as I aimed to understand and describe underlying structures (social system, how TE is organised in Aotearoa) and how that consciousness affected Māori students' transition experiences into TE institutions.

### 4.3 Epistemology

Similar to ontology, epistemology is a term used in philosophical and non-philosophical contexts. In a philosophical context, epistemology is the study of knowledge in general (Lofgren, 2013b). Philosophical epistemology is interested in what knowledge means, how people get to know things and the basis for true knowledge (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Some say knowledge is a justified, true belief. This means that a person must justify the claim, the claim itself must be true, and the person must believe in it (Lofgren, 2013b). Imagine someone says, "I *know* that Māori students need support to make an effective educational transition". For this to be true knowledge, it must be possible to justify that claim; it must be a fact and the person making the claim

must actually believe that Māori students need support for effective transitions. In order to justify a claim (or belief), good quality, logical and reasonable evidence is essential.

Empiricism and rationalism are two major branches of philosophical epistemology that have developed over time, where for empiricism true knowledge is viewed as primarily founded on input from our senses (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lofgren, 2013b). To justify and prove claims, empiricism places importance on referring to experience and observations, so although ideas or traditions are important, they are not the *primary* source for knowledge. Conversely, rationalism relies on reason (rather than experience and observation) as the primary basis for justifying beliefs and claims (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lofgren, 2013b). In this way, the rational and logical human mind is the source for new knowledge (rather than the material world around us). According to this branch of philosophical epistemology, research results become substantiated primarily by reasoning.

Epistemology in a non-philosophical context has a significant impact on the endeavour of most education scholars, given the importance of this concept for discussing the limits and possibilities of creating and reporting new knowledge (Scotland, 2012). According to Lofgren (2013b), epistemology is used by non-philosophers as formal epistemology (often seen in computer and maths fields), genetic epistemology (largely based on Jean Piaget's work), and social epistemology (Goldman & Blanchard, 2018). In my research, social epistemology is most relevant because it is about the social context for creating new knowledge; it is studied in sociological, psychological and educational fields. Social epistemology focuses on human and social aspects such as historical, social and cultural factors of knowledge production.

#### 4.4 Interpretive and Critical Paradigms

Every research paradigm is based on ontological and epistemological assumptions; therefore, differing assumptions of reality and knowledge underpin particular research approaches. Whereas a scientific paradigm seeks to generalize, an interpretive paradigm seeks to understand and a critical paradigm seeks to emancipate (Scotland, 2012). Within research, each paradigm realizes its aim

through choice of methodologies and methods, which reflect ontological and epistemological assumptions. Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that methodology explains how the researcher goes about finding out whatever they believe can be known. In this study, I used a Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) which fundamentally seeks to understand (an interpretive paradigm) but also to emancipate (a critical paradigm). Therefore, both interpretive and critical paradigms co-existed in this study; one did not preclude another (overtones of epistemological pluralism). Each paradigm is now discussed in terms of relevance for this research.

#### *4.4.1.1 Interpretive Paradigm*

An interpretive paradigm has an ontological position of relativism and an epistemological position of subjectivism (Scotland, 2012). This is to say that reality differs from person to person because our realities are mediated by our senses (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Relativism is the view that reality is subjectively experienced – there are as many realities as there are individuals (Crotty, 1998). The world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it; without our consciousness, the world is meaningless (Grix, 2004). Crotty (1998) explains, “We need to remind ourselves here that it is human beings who have constructed it as a tree, given it the name, and attributed to it the associations we make with trees” (p. 43). This quote emphasizes the belief that without someone to call it a tree, it is not a tree. Therefore, meaning is not ‘discovered’, it is constructed through the interaction between consciousness and phenomena (Crotty, 1998). Different people may construct meaning of the same phenomena in different ways.

Different students may construct meaning of their transition experiences in different ways. Pring (2000) proposes that truth is a consensus formed by co-constructors. In the present study, the meaning of the transition experiences of the Māori students was interpreted and formed by us together into a consensus of the truth. According to Scotland (2012), “the interpretive paradigm does not question ideologies; it accepts them” (p.12). The interpretive paradigm accepts that knowledge is culturally derived and historically situated.

To further explain an interpretive paradigm, knowledge and meaning are constructed by individuals and their world within a social context (Crotty, 1998).

In this sense, the social world is only understood by those participating in it; thus, an interpretive methodology aims to understand phenomenon from an individual's perspective, as well as through knowledge of historical and cultural contexts (Cresswell, 2009). An interpretive paradigm is directed at eliciting individual constructs through interaction between the researcher and participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) using broad research questions, and yielding insights and understandings of action and behaviour from the participants' perspective. Whilst making hidden social forces and structures visible, interpretivist researchers acknowledge that, "value free knowledge is not possible" (Scotland, 2012, p.12). Hence, it is important that a researchers make their agenda and value-system explicit.

Despite the nuances of individual meanings that an interpretive paradigm enables, there are limitations. When reality is subjective and differs from individual to individual, reaching a consensus can be tricky. Lastly, interpretive research tends to ignore external structural forces which influence behaviour (Cohen, et al., 2007, p.26). Taylor (1993) notes that individuals' understandings are, "structured historically in the traditions, prejudices and institutional practices that come down to us" (p.59). Participants might not be aware of ideology influencing their behaviour. If they do not fully understand the forces which act on their agency, their explanations of phenomena may be incomplete.

In spite of the shortcomings of the interpretive paradigm, the acceptance that knowledge is culturally derived and historically situated, and, that meaning is not 'discovered', it is constructed through the interaction between consciousness and phenomena were relevant to this cross-cultural research. I was a Pākehā New Zealander researching with Indigenous Māori TE students—we each had culturally and historically shaped knowledge systems influencing our interactions as we co-constructed meaning of their transition experiences.

#### *4.4.1.2 Critical Paradigm*

The interpretive paradigm has some overlaps with a critical paradigm which also takes the perspective that realities are socially constructed by individuals. A critical paradigm has an ontological position of historical realism and an epistemological position of subjectivism (Scotland, 2012). Guba and Lincoln (1994) propose that

historical realism views reality as being shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values. Language is used to shape and mould reality—a critical paradigmatic view is that language contains power relations which can be used to weaken or empower (Frowe, 2001).

Similarly, knowledge contains power relations from within a society; knowledge is socially constructed by the “social and positional power of the advocates of that knowledge” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 27). For instance, conservationists and logging companies have differing agendas and may not agree on what constitutes an ‘endangered tree’. Similarly, students and TE leaders may have different perspectives about the meaning of a ‘withdrawal’ or ‘drop-out’ from tertiary studies. Crotty (1998) argues that humans are born into a world in which meaning has already been made. We are born into a culture and come to inhabit a pre-existing system consisting of consensuses of knowledge that have already been reached. Moreover, these consensuses of knowledge are stratified and unequal.

The critical paradigm challenges this stratified and unequal reality as being alterable by human action (Crotty, 1998). The emancipatory function of knowledge is central to a critical paradigm and for this reason, research necessarily focuses on issues of social justice (a contested term) and marginalisation (Scotland, 2012). Similar to an interpretive paradigm, knowledge is not value free in a critical paradigm. Reality and knowledge are presumed to be shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values. Yet a critical paradigm is judgemental, considering how things *ought* to be. Therefore critical paradigms are directed at interrogating values, assumptions and challenging traditional social structures (Crotty, 1998; Scotland, 2012).

In a critical paradigm, research is unashamedly political – it aims to emancipate the disempowered. Therefore, in the present study, my starting point as a critical researcher was preconceived – finding out was the means, change was the underlying aim. This involved assisting to facilitate participants’ critical awareness of their situation (conscientization), then taking steps to “realize change through a praxis, which is repeated action informed by reflection” (Freire, 1970, p.48). Freire (1970) proposes that participants and researchers are both subjects who have a purpose of examining reality, critically analysing it, and recreating that

knowledge. Researchers do not carry out transformation *for* participants, but *with* them (Freire, 1970). Participants in the present research were involved in the research process, for example, shaping questions, analysing information and using their involvement in the research to reflect on changes to their self and their identity. Freire also believed that students are capable of disrupting, challenging and co-creating knowledge. CRM was a critical methodology enabling an ideological critique by exposing hidden ideologies within the TE system and revealing participants' places in a system (dis)empowering them.

A critical method of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and visual stories in an open-ended interview generated qualitative data to enable participants' realities to be critically examined from a cultural, historical and political stance. Interpretive paradigms often employ a method of thematic interpretation of the data; so too do critical paradigms (Scotland, 2012). However, in the present study, explicit values were placed on those interpretations consistent with a critical paradigm. In the present research, a critical paradigmatic approach required me to fully acknowledge the context (culturally, historically and politically) and to promote a relationship of equality between myself and the participants (as much as was possible given the context where power differentials exist between researcher and participants). In addition, the research agenda was to create change to enhance the lives of the participants and future Māori students who transition into TE environments in future.

Yet, this agenda of change is commonly problematic for critical researchers as it is often not supported by existing organisations. Funding for critical research is rarely favoured by existing policy makers (Scotland, 2012). Michael Peters (2011) discussed with Henry Giroux how neoliberal and new conservative forces are transforming American universities into anti-democratic public spheres. The same might be true in Aotearoa (Bowl, 2018). The right to work in an autonomous and critical fashion may be in jeopardy as control of research funding does not favour critical research aiming to empower minorities and seek social justice.

Research in a critical paradigm does not guarantee emancipation. Changes in participants' lives may be insignificant. Even if or when a participants become critically aware of their situation, it may not always be possible to make changes

(Scotland, 2012). A shortcoming of the critical paradigm is the way participants are stereotyped in two ways. Primarily, participants are labelled as belonging to a particular marginalised group.

In the present research, all participants identified as 'Māori'. Yet this superimposes homogenous notions of identity on a group which actually comprised a diverse range of individuals from various iwi and hapū. The other stereotype of participants is that they enter the research needing to be 'conscientised' – a critical paradigm does not acknowledge that different participants enter the research with varying levels of conscientisation. Ironically, the critical paradigm may be accused of maintaining the status quo as it, "naively assumes that populations blindly do the bidding of powerful regimes further enslaving themselves in the process" (Scotland, 2012, p.14).

Despite these limitations, a critical paradigm seeks to emancipate and although the utopian aspirations may not be realized, a more equal and democratic society may emerge. In this study a critical paradigm gave rise to two critical theories guiding the present research. These are the critical social theory (CST) and Kaupapa Māori (KM) theory, both now discussed.

#### 4.4.2 Critical Social Theory (CST)

Critical Social Theory (CST) (and also CRM) have 'unseen' roots in critical theory; thus, I provide a brief outline of critical theory development. According to Baum (2015), the critical theory of the Frankfurt School envisioned a society that would foster freedom and meet the needs of *all* members of society. The first generation of the Frankfurt School critical theorists comprise seven theorists; two prominent figures are Horkheimer (1982) and Adorno (1984). First generation theorists followed Marxism, focusing largely on class domination in capitalist societies, refining the theory to meet changes in 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism.

Members of the second generation of critical theorists were influenced by Habermas (Corradetti, 2016). [Habermas, in turn, was influenced by European Marxism and American pragmatist John Dewey's work (Murphy & Fleming, 2010)]. Habermas (1987) laid out theories of 'communicative action' and 'rationalization of society' in visions of a utopian society. His vision of a utopian society was free

from domination, more democratic, and consolidating a stronger civil society achieved through communicative rationality with purposeful language (Flyvbjerg, 1998). Johnson (2005) further elaborates that Habermas's theories of communicative action and discursive ethics describe how societies may move towards this utopian vision.

Critics (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Johnson; 2005) of Habermas argue that his vision failed to understand realities of power in society. Basic flaws of Habermas's (1987) vision lay in mismatches between ideal and reality, between intentions and their implementations. In this regard, contemporary scholars are left with gaps within the notion of critical theory, notably with issues such as racism, sexism, and colonialism. Edward Said (1994) asserted that regardless of its considerations of domination in modern society, Frankfurt School critical theory is, "stunningly silent on racist theory, anti-imperialist resistance, and oppositional practice in the empire" (p.278). Baum (2015) believes that these shortcomings of the Frankfurt School critical theory are what triggered many contemporary scholars to turn to an alternative approach—that of critical social theory.

Critical social theory (CST), which originated from a merging of both critical theory (Habermas, 1987) and social theory (Coleman, 1990), aims to further challenge mainstream social theory and science, attacking their basic presuppositions (Browne, 2000; Calhoun, 1995; Kellner, n.d.). According to Leonardo (2004), CST has the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory task of constructing knowledge. CST approaches this goal by promoting the role of critique in the search for quality education. The CST movement highlights the relationship between *social structures* and *people* in education, how they produce each other, and ultimately, how CST can contribute to the emancipation of both. In CST within education, criticism operates to foster capacity to question, de-construct and then re-construct knowledge in the interest of emancipation (Calhoun, 1995; Leonardo, 2004). A critical social theory approach applied in education advocates for liberation through reflection and action to transform conditions leading to oppression. In brief, underpinning assumptions of CST are outlined by Browne (2000, p.82) as follows:

- No ahistorical, value-neutral, or foundational knowledge can be known outside of human consciousness
- All knowledge is fundamentally mediated by socially and historically mediated power relations
- Every form of social order entails domination and power
- Language is central to knowledge creation and formation of meaning
- Mainstream research generally reproduces systems of race, class and gender oppression
- Facts cannot be separated from values or ideologies
- By explaining and critiquing, CST serves as a catalyst for enlightenment, empowerment, emancipation and social transformation.

Brazilian education theorist, Paulo Freire believed that marginalised people had to remove themselves from their own oppressive consciousness. Freire (1970) advocated in his seminal book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) for the oppressed to use philosophical and pedagogical means to critically analyse and transform their reality. Freire's theory was one of hope (Freire, 1970; 1985; 1996). He suggested that education and literacy was the means for oppressed to form a critical consciousness, which, he said, is necessary to recover an individual's humanity and to transform oppressive social conditions. Alongside the process of the oppressed re-humanising themselves, comes their responsibility of re-humanising and liberating their oppressor, which also takes away the oppressor's power to dominate. In turn, the humanity of the oppressor is restored (Freire, 1970; 1996).

Freirean philosophy is underpinned by the notion that social phenomena must be understood in terms of their history and context – this is the basis of CST. From a critical social theorist viewpoint, effective education occurs when the history and context are clearly understood by all involved. Leonardo (2004) highlights that CST is centred on the function of criticism and its ability to advance research about the nature of oppression and emancipation. By putting critique at the centre of knowledge production, ideas may be questioned through highlighting their contradictions. Principles of CST helped to explain the present study's research question, which explored Māori student 'voice' (*people*) in the context of TE environments (*social structures*).

#### 4.4.3 Kaupapa Māori Theory

An alignment exists between CST and kaupapa Māori theory. According to Linda Smith (1999; 2005; 2012) and Graham Smith (1997; 2000; 2012), notions of critique, power and knowledge connect with kaupapa Māori theories and methodologies. Graham Smith (1997) draws from Freire's (1970; 1985) use of the term 'praxis' to describe the juncture between action and analysis, intentionally co-opting Freire's words into his work. G. Smith (2000) also writes about the influence of Habermas on his ideas about kaupapa Māori. Thus, G. Smith (1997; 2000) developed a political response to society's problems by likening Habermas's utopian vision to *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) with the belief that the 'big vision' provides motivation and drive during a struggle.

These theories offered G. Smith (2000; 2003) perspectives on the possibilities for conscious transformation of society, that is, the hope for a future better than the past, which has a mobilizing-action effect. Therefore, in Graham Smith's view, kaupapa Māori has at least two elements of influence – CST and Māori legitimacy (cultural and political). Graham Smith (1990) first identified six fundamentals of kaupapa Māori research in an educational context. Subsequently, these principles were built upon by theorists Linda Smith (1997; 2000), then Leonie Pihama (2001) and later, Taina Pohatu (2003). Kaupapa Māori research attracted a growing interest from New Zealand researchers and others (Bishop, 2005; Jenkins & Jones, 2000; C. Smith, 2002). The kaupapa Māori theory principles are summarised below. (See Appendix 1 for how I applied these kaupapa Māori ethical principles during this research).

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Taonga Tuku Iho                         | – principle of cultural aspiration              |
| Whānau                                  | – principle of extended family structure        |
| Tino Rangatiratanga                     | – principle of self-determination               |
| Kaupapa                                 | – principle of collective philosophy            |
| Āta                                     | – principle of growing respectful relationships |
| Ako Māori                               | – principle of culturally preferred pedagogy    |
| Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga | – principle of socio-economic mediation         |
| Te Tiriti o Waitangi                    | – principle of Treaty of Waitangi               |

This research consciously participated within the cultural aspirations, preferences and practices of the research participants through an informed Kaupapa Māori perspective, which began by building the co-researcher relationship with manaakitanga (respect), kotahitanga (unity of purpose) and ako (reciprocal learning and teaching) (Bishop, 1998; L. Smith, 1999). As such, CST and kaupapa Māori theory were both central to this research.

#### 4.4.4 Bourdieuan Theory

In this thesis so far, it may be apparent to the reader that different parts of the research problem have been theorised in different ways through links to ideas from Bourdieu, Dewey, Gramsci, Foucault, Freire, Bronfenbrenner and other theorists. I have drawn on a variety of theoretical approaches in order to build an analytical framework. Here, I make explicit the purpose of comparing many theoretical ideas in the formation of a coherent conceptual approach in this thesis.

Drawing upon the metaphor of this thesis as *he rākau* (a tree), the seeds could be considered critical social theory and the roots as Kaupapa Māori theory, while the central trunk of the tree is Bourdieuan theory. Bourdieuan theoretical branches reach out wide, entangling and overlapping with other theoretical branches alongside and in competition, however, the central core of the theoretical framework can be considered Bourdieuan. As such, other theoretical ideas are predominantly compared to Bourdieu's central concepts. I devote this section to discussing the relevance and significance of Bourdieu's theory to this research context by offering a précis of Bourdieu's key works and outlining the usefulness of Bourdieu's theories.

Bourdieu's earlier cultural and anthropological studies were strongly influenced by educational inequality and structuralist thought (Bourdieu, 1977; Callewaert, 2006). His work studying Algerian society in transition (Bourdieu, 1977) was a critique of the classic theories of modernization (Callewaert, 2006). Inherently, Bourdieu's ideas sprang from opposing then-prevalent views of the spirit of capitalism as universally human; thus, different societal structures are pathologically deviant from capitalism (though instilling the 'correct' view in people can remedy this and inculcate capitalism).

In response and in opposition to this, Bourdieu (1977) proposed his *Theory of Practice* suggesting that in times of turmoil or transitions, it is material conditions that will determine whether individuals need their *old* or *new* self; therefore, the spirit of capitalism is not universally human.

Bourdieu's theory of practice ultimately proposes that despite factors of gender, class, ethnicity, culture, education and the historical time period influencing an individual's *habitus*, their *practice* – what they do in everyday life – is dynamic, fluid. Practice results from relationships between an individual's *habitus*, different forms of capital, and the *field* of action. Bourdieu's theory of the *habitus* contains the meaning of the social environment in which we live, where that social environment is the product of our position in the social space and of the *practices* that social beings who inhabit that space carry out. The social environment is multi-dimensional and reflective of the social order in terms of economic, cultural, symbolic, educative and historical factors around which social order is defined. The *field* is the setting in which social positions are held, for instance in this research the tertiary education system could be considered a *field*, as could a particular classroom, or an online programme.

Bourdieu shows in his later work of *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu, 1988) that education (and in particular the élitism of universities) is predominantly a state-guaranteed social distribution of *cultural capital*. This is based on his analysis of the relationship between the social structure of society and the lifestyle and taste of different classes presented in his book, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Bourdieu, 1984). Those with large amounts of *cultural capital* (non-economic social assets, such as education which promotes social mobility beyond economic means) are most likely to determine what constitutes 'taste' in society. Conversely, groups with low volumes of cultural capital accept this 'taste' as valid and natural, and also accept that there is a 'distinction' of high and low culture restricting conversion between various forms of capital (economic, social, cultural). Such acceptance of a dominant form of taste illustrates a form of *symbolic violence* which Bourdieu proposes denies the oppressed classes with means of defining their own world, further disadvantaging those with lower levels of overall capital.

What was conceptualised as a complex theory by Bourdieu himself has at times been represented in literature by others (e.g., Boudon, 1973) as a simpler culturalist theory; i.e., a theory positing that middle class children are relatively privileged as, unlike children from working class homes, cultural practices in middle class homes and those of school are fundamentally consistent. Owing to family socialization of the norms and tendencies to guide behaviour and thinking, middle class children gain the class *habitus* of the dominant group. This *habitus* is legitimized by schools and certified by 'objective' credentials, thereby concealing operations of class privilege and ensuring status and positions become 'naturally' theirs.

This slightly simplified explanation is the story of social and cultural reproduction which can be understood from Bourdieu's (1974) complex theory. Yet, Nash (1986) argues that Bourdieu's theory is often overlooked in two aspects: firstly that Bourdieu's theory does indeed recognise school (not just family socialization) as a site for the generation of *habitus*, and secondly, does indeed contain a viable theory of agency (see section 7.3). Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the interrelationship between agency and structure was another key useful aspect of Bourdieuan theory for this research context.

Central to Bourdieu's later ideas surrounding education is the exploration of the relationship between higher (tertiary) education and social class structure (Bourdieu, 1977; Swartz, 1977). Bourdieu focuses on understanding the many ways that cultural phenomena and practice relate social structure to power. Adopting Bourdieu's theory requires an acceptance of concepts such as *cultural capital* as "knowledge, disposition, skills comparable to economic goods that are produced, distributed, and consumed by individuals and group" (Swartz, 1977, p. 547). Additionally, there must be an acceptance that academic performance is linked to cultural background, that education *can* and *does* make a difference, and that the selective process of education is tightly linked to social or class structure.

One of Bourdieu's key arguments is that education maintains (rather than reduces) social inequality through its function of transmitting privilege, allocating status, and instilling respect for the current social order. In this way, Bourdieu demonstrates that the frequently changeable and conflicting educational

investment tactics of different class groups expose that stakes in education are not the same for everyone. Equally, Bourdieu's theories surmise that it is possible for individuals who seek upward mobility beyond economic means to do so through the acquisition of more cultural capital. In other words, rather than viewing agency as residing in individuals who critically shape their response to problematic situations, agency can instead be viewed as an emergent phenomenon of agent-situation transaction (Biesta, Priestly & Robinson, 2015) . In this sense, and in relation to the present research, it is possible to recognise potential for increased agency for Māori students for effective transition experiences.

#### 4.5 Summary

In this chapter I deliberated on how the world is constructed and what the effects are of the social world in relation to educational transitions. I made explicit my social ontological and epistemological perspectives, clarifying why I chose both critical and interpretive paradigms as theoretical frameworks for this study. The influences of Paolo Freire and Graham Smith were explored in connection with the relevance of CST and kaupapa Māori Theory to this study.

This chapter offered my social ontological and epistemological perspectives through the choice of both critical and interpretive paradigms evident in this study. The relevance of Critical Social Theory (CST) and Kaupapa Māori Theory were explained in light of the participants with whom I was working. I gave a précis of how and why I considered Pierre Bourdieu's theories an appropriate fit for this research. This chapter made my research position transparent (also see section 5.4) so that readers may be made aware of the assumptions and pre-dispositions guiding my thoughts and interpretation of literature.



## Whakataukī

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!*

*What is the most important thing in the world? Tis people! Tis people! Tis people!*

## Chapter Five Methodology

### 5.1 Introduction and Research Questions

This exploration was carried out using a Collaborative Research Methodology (CRM) approach to knowledge production in the hopes that Māori students' transitions experiences may be effectively understood. The over-arching research question was:

- What do effective transitions to tertiary education look like for Māori students?

With that purpose in mind, the following subsidiary research questions provided focus:

1. What are the transition experiences for Māori students into tertiary study?
2. What are the transition barriers for Māori students into tertiary study?
3. What are the transition enablers for Māori students into tertiary study?
4. What do Māori students say defines an effective transition into tertiary study?
5. What are the differences, if any, in transition experiences into a university, or a polytechnic or a wānanga?
6. What does educational success in a TE context mean to Māori students?

This chapter describes the research methodology and methods used. Discussion includes arguments for qualitative research, a Culturally Responsive Methodological approach, and explanations of my researcher positionality. The research drew strongly on the principles of Kaupapa Māori theory. I selected a longitudinal approach because it related to the notion of transition as a process and spoke to the importance of developing trusting and reciprocal relationships. I was a non-Māori researching across Māori spaces; there were insider-outsider dynamics to be considered. I also considered the subjectivity-objectivity debate

surrounding researcher position in relation to people of interest in the research inquiry, concluding openly that my researcher positionality was subjective.

I indicate how ethics were considered and applied during this research. Next, I detail the research methods in order for readers to understand how participants were recruited and what procedures were used to collect and analyse data. The kumara-vine sampling method for recruiting participants is explained along with the criteria used for participation. I outline the intertwined process of data collection and analysis conducted *with* participants. Following that, I document the process of conducting repeated semi-structured interviews, focus groups, e-mail conversations, research notes, school tracking forms and visual stories. All added to the pool of data for analysis. I chose a thematic analysis to explore participants' world of beliefs, constructs and emotional experiences as this method showed the closest alignment to the research question. An explanation of the coding, categorizing and thematic analysis process is provided.

## 5.2 Qualitative research

This study was conducted using qualitative research. Qualitative research was appropriate because the research intended to describe and understand intangibles such as participants' experiences, ideas, beliefs and values. These intangibles were understood subjectively by me as a researcher together with Māori students who transitioned to TE environments. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explain that qualitative research practice includes interpretation of "phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (p.3). Qualitative research offers a methodological approach to the discovery of reality through personal experience. Babbie (1986; 2001) terms this 'experiential reality'.

Traditionally, in quantitative research, research design/data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation stages are usually denoted in three distinct (linear) stages. Qualitative research facilitates these stages to be iterative. Hartas (2015) endorsed a qualitative research design as particularly appropriate for interpreting a phenomenon (such as 'transition') because it is predicated on the interpretation of change over time, paying attention to social contexts (Holland, Thomson, & Henderson, 2006; Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Strengths of qualitative

research are in capturing context, describing an experience, identifying motives and, highlighting relationships (Babbie, 2001).

In an interpretive paradigm, research is deemed valuable if it offers credible and justifiable accounts (internal validity/credibility), is useful for somebody in another context (external validity/transferability), and the research process and findings can be replicated (reliability/dependability) as explained by Ritchie and Lewis (2003) and Cohen et al. (2007).

In a critical paradigm, research needs to fully acknowledge its cultural, historical and political context, and promote dialogical relations of equality between research and participants. Furthermore, the research agenda is adopted to create change or reform to enhance the lives of the participants, what Cohen et al. (2007) term, 'catalytic validity' (p. 139).

Qualitative research comes under attack for "problems" such as its perceived lack of scientific rigour and accuracy, weak justification of methods, lack of transparency in data analysis procedures and claims of research findings being simply personal opinions subject to a researcher's bias (Noble & Smith, 2015). One technique for strengthening reliability is to ask people for the same information more than once. In the present research, I employed this strategy during repeated interviews. For instance, I re-visited the question of what educational success in TE personally meant to participants repeatedly during interviews. This helped to determine if there were variations in a participant's responses over time and if there were any similarities among participants' replies, and strengthened the reliability of the information.

Cooley (2013) questions whether it is possible for qualitative research to contribute to theory building because of its specific and non-generalizable analysis. It would not be prudent to generalize the experiences of the 20 participants in this research to another group, not least because of the disrespect to both groups by making sweeping statements about groups' diversity of experiences, beliefs, and interactions. In this thesis, it is not my intention to ignore criticisms of non-generalizability. However, relinquishing the ability to communicate the relevance of these students' transition experiences into TE to other Māori students would be a loss. Where similarities exist, connections can be

made and theory can be developed to be investigated elsewhere, leaving it to the reader to determine the appropriateness of the findings to their situation.

Qualitative research highlights the social construction of reality (Cresswell, 2014). In social constructivism, there is the perception that knowledge and learning are social in origin; knowledge is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivists believe that social reality does not exist outside of the collective understandings that people make of it; in other words, social constructs are simply produced by the interactions between individuals in that social context. Given this focus, probing perceptions of both my own and the participants' transition experiences (and of their contexts) was a valid method to investigate social constructs, such as 'transitions in education'.

Qualitative research methods are especially well suited to Māori ontology because they support more equal conversations, where power dynamics can be negotiated (Barnes, 2009; L. Smith, 1999). Linda Smith (2005) advocates qualitative research for Indigenous communities:

“...it is the tool that seems most able to wage the battle of representation; to weave and unravel competing storylines; to situate, place and contextualise; to create spaces for decolonizing; to provide frameworks for hearing silence and listening to the voices of the silenced; to create spaces for dialogue across differences; to analyse and make sense of complex and shifting experiences, identities and realities; and to understand little and big changes that affect our lives” (p. 103).

In the case of a Pākehā researcher working with Māori participants, worldviews hold relevance to the research because they guide action and provide an interpretative framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Moana Jackson (1987) maintains that despite Māori and Pākehā co-existing in the same society, they continue to display opinions and perceptions that are frequently at variance.

I chose a qualitative research approach in order to allow me as a researcher to keep an open mind and to embrace respectful relationships and tikanga—ways of

doing what was right in a given context centred on Māori values and customs. Qualitative research was suitable to explore the research question of what effective transitions look like by enabling a deeper understanding of intangibles such as beliefs, ideas and values and tangibles such as body language through direct observation and how these evolved over a period of time.

### 5.3 Longitudinal Design

Longitudinal studies with people participating in a research study over a considerable period of time are useful to evaluate change. They become particularly important if time-related phenomena (such as transitions) are part of an inquiry as they facilitate studying a broad spectrum of situations characterizing contemporary social life. Moreover, longitudinal studies are crucial for, “identifying and characterizing trajectories, turning points, and interpretive stances that cover both short and long periods of times” (Hermanowicz, 2016, p. 491).

Ideally, I would have liked to follow students for three or four years. That was the length of the programme in which many students were enrolled. I tried to balance the ideal length of time to track students with the time and expense constraints of being a doctoral student; therefore, I chose a period of two years as a relevant and practical time period. This spanned four and five semesters (including summer classes for some students).

A strength of longitudinal designs is tracking the same people over the period of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; 2005). In this study, I asked participants at the outset if they could continue to be part of the study whether or not they remained in their programme of study, which all agreed to do. Of the 20 students, five withdrew from their studies during this research. Of those five, one remained in this research project; four did not. One cited “moving to another city” as his reason for exiting this research, another cited “too busy” as her reason, a third cited “pregnancy and new baby” and a fourth cited “finances and family obligations”. Participant attrition is a known challenge in longitudinal studies (Gustavson, von Soest, Karevold & Roysamb, 2012).

#### 5.4 Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM)

Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) is well suited to a longitudinal design. In this section I explain the value of CRM for this study based on how and why it differs from other forms of inquiry. CRM offers participants and researchers benefits explained in the context of this research. Importantly, in order to ensure that the research outcomes reflected Māori ways of knowing, doing and understanding in valid and relevant ways, it was vital to draw upon kaupapa Māori principles to guide the research process.

However, this research is not considered as 'kaupapa Māori' research as I do not whakapapa (have a bloodline connection) to any Māori ancestry. Cram (2001) believes it is essential for kaupapa Māori researchers to write about their communities from the perspective of an *insider*. It was therefore inappropriate to use a kaupapa Māori methodology. CRM is a methodological framework that, "challenges all forms of traditional research paradigms that devalue or dehumanize research participants" (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013). CRM was an appropriate methodology that enabled me to incorporate key principles of kaupapa Māori theory as well as CST.

There are three key dimensions of CRM. The first is establishing respectful relationships with participants within dialogic encounters (Bishop et al., 2009). CRM's main objective is maintaining the integrity of both the participants and the researcher(s) and their respective cultures to co-construct something new (Berryman et al., 2013). The second dimension of CRM draws from the work of Césaire (2000) and Freire (1970) and involves the deconstruction of Western colonial traditions of research (Berryman et al., 2013). The third dimension is cultural and epistemological pluralism, drawing from the work of Biermann (2011). Each of these three dimensions (respectful relationships, deconstruction of colonial research traditions and cultural and epistemological pluralism) is further discussed.

#### *5.4.1.1 Respectful relationships*

Adopting a CRM necessitates researchers to cultivate relationships during which they will intimately come to know the 'other' with whom they wish to research. This can only occur when a relationship is reciprocal (Berryman et al., 2013). Therefore, CRM challenges traditional concepts of researchers being objective, neutral, impartial, removed and 'distant' from the research participants. CRM resists research conventions where researchers single-handedly control and utilise power over the participants. Both researcher and participants work together forming an empowering pathway toward mutual respect and freedom from domination (Berryman et al., 2013).

#### *5.4.1.2 Deconstruction of western colonial traditions of research*

CRM has commonalities with decolonising methodologies in terms of resistance to western colonial research traditions, but, differs by more broadly identifying oppressor/oppressed relationships—not just those grounded in colonizing histories, but others, such as special needs populations (Berryman et al., 2013). CRM is not always, but can be, about change and transformation. Focus is on researchers honouring and supporting the 'other' with whom the research is being done. In this way, CRM offers a useful approach for doctoral and emerging researchers because it gives an ethical foundation to form culturally-specific methods informed by dialogical and respectful relationships.

#### *5.4.1.3 Cultural and epistemological pluralism*

CRM proposes that researchers approach their work as 'situated practice', consciously focusing on how participants make meaning (Berryman et al., 2013; Arzubaga, Artiles, King, & Harris-Murri, 2008). Researchers must contemplate what knowledge is, how it is produced, who has power to produce it and who benefits from the knowledge created? The last question, in particular, led me to realise that research can act to support those marginalized in their struggles for knowledge and power. By considering who or what controls knowledge, a researcher begins uncovering politics of access and avenues of control of knowledge dissemination like government and social media (Berryman et al., 2013).

CRM necessarily places researchers in the domain of emancipatory research. Thus, CRM demands researchers to not just be clear about their own epistemology, but also to see beyond their own limited awareness of knowledge production to understand how others view the world. Biermann (2011) argues that adopting an alternative view of how knowledge is produced, validated and disseminated involves a process of intellectual decolonisation to challenge boundaries of disciplines. Any CRM researcher must also become comfortable in uncomfortable spaces. If we fail to do this in our research, we continue to perpetuate colonial power structures.

Having plural worldviews means not ignoring others' worldviews and imposing your own, but instead, trying to learn from others. As Dei (2011) argues, no one body of knowledge can have superiority over another. As Kincheloe and McLaren (2011, p.303) state, "the reigning conviction that knowledge is knowledge only if it reflects the world as it "really" exists has been annihilated in favour of a view in which reality is socially constructed or semiotically posited". Socially constructing reality and acknowledging connections between knowledge and power in society calls for adopting plural worldviews.

CRM stresses the importance of personal experiences and how to establish long-term meaningful relationships of interdependence to undertake culturally responsive and socially responsible research (Woller, 2016). CRM proposes that researchers can set up dialogic spaces where the first thing they do is to interrogate who they are as a person and what subjectivity they bring to the research (see sections 1.1 and 5.4.3). Part of the process of CRM was for me to understand *who I am* and to be *conscientized* to my role in this project. As Liu (2017) describes, "knowing the self is often provoked and deepened by knowing others, and the conscientized self is always embedded in a dialogical relation" (p.230). Berryman, SooHoo and Nevin (2013) offer five 'CRM Principles and Questions to ask Self' (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013, pp.22-23). Table 2 explains how I used each guiding principle in this research.

Table 2: Use of CRM Guiding Principles in this study.

| CRM Guiding Principles  | How I used each CRM guiding principle in this research   |
|---|--|
| 1. Do the work before the work.   | I found out about the students whom I wished to research with, what they were studying, why they chose to enrol, their backgrounds etc. I gained an understanding of where first year Māori students sit within a wider education, political and social agenda.  |
| 2. Arrive as a respectful visitor.  | I realised the importance of participants to “feel” me as well as see me. I let them know who I am as a person. I listened, and waited to be invited, I used all of my senses, paying attention to body language and cultural cues. CRM emphasizes working <b>with</b> people, and not <b>for</b> or <b>on</b> people. We learned alongside each other, co-constructing new knowledge with other people who trusted me and whom I trusted too.   |
| 3. When I was asked to respond...   | The students wanted to know who I was, where I was from and what I brought with me. After sharing that, I was upfront about the research ideas. I asked for their ideas, what they thought, and listened respectfully. Also, I learned that our research agenda changed; in fact, it had to change in response to that listening, that respectfulness. I was patient (sometimes that was hard for me!) but I remained flexible and prepared to change as needed.   |
| 4. When I was asked to stay to co-construct the research...   | The students and I learned together. We owned our learning, together. There were laughter, tears, and several cups of tea and loads of dishes! That was relationship building. I was open to a new relational consciousness, both with myself and my research but mainly with my research participants. The research was owned by the participants and in our research space, the participants (and their whānau) were celebrated. There were dual benefits to me and the participants.  |
| 5. Beyond the research – understand that the relationship and the responsibility to the group remain. | <p>I have come to learn that even after I finished collecting and analysing data with the participants, and long after I submit this thesis, our relationship continues. I never believed that was what I was walking into, but they are relationships that I value immensely. These relationships don’t just stop because they research has finished.</p> <p>CRM is very different from the way I learned to become a researcher during my Master’s study (Amundsen, 2005). I had studied in a research paradigm where I would “go in”, tell the participants what I wanted to do, ask them for their information, walk back with my research under my arm, write it up and never see the participants again.</p> |

In sum, as typical of CRM research this study did not necessarily happen in a particular way. It was non-linear, iterative, quite messy, interesting and rich (Berryman et al., 2013). CRM repeatedly comes back into a reciprocal learning conversation (ako), where both researcher and participants are teachers and learners. When findings, questions, wonderings were taken into that reciprocity of ako, new knowledge was constructed, we learnt together and moved forward together.

## 5.5 Researcher Positionality

This section overviews the significance of researcher positionality for the research outcomes and discusses my researcher positionality in three parts: first, as a non-Māori researching with Māori student participants; second, as a partial insider but mainly an outsider; and third, as a subjective (rather than objective) researcher. Not only does researcher positionality play a role in how information is gathered, it also affects research conduct (Hoogendoorn & Visser, 2012; McDowell, 1992; Rose, 1997, Visser, 2001). Researcher positionality profoundly determined the opportunities that were available to gather data and work with participants to identify research outcomes.

As a non-Māori, Pākehā researcher embarking on a study with Māori participants there were key considerations such as cross-cultural research processes, notions of insider-outsider dynamics, colonizer-colonized histories and researcher subjectivity. In addition, I was a staff member at one of the institutions in which data were collected; participants were students. All these aspects had implications of *power dynamics* (Barnes, 2009). Fisher (2012) explains that when researchers identify their position, researcher-participant connections can be better understood. Not only that, readers can better understand the degree to which researcher reflexivity is present in the research process (Davies, 2008) as well as perspectives from which data are interpreted (Kawharu, 2016).

Researcher reflexivity is important to understand; there have been critiques of research which positions research participants as 'other' in comparison to the researcher. This potentially perpetuates colonizing representations of power if a Pākehā researcher positions Māori participants as 'other'. Guba and Lincoln (1982)

suggest that reflexivity is the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the “human as instrument”. In my case, because there were no whakapapa (genealogical) connections to my participants I relied on creating, building up and maintaining relationships of trust between myself and my participants, and seeking high levels of researcher reflexivity in my research design. From the start, this research was conceived as a partnership between researcher and participants. I was uncomfortable saying “my” research because I always thought of it as “our” research journey together. A tension existed with being a PhD student where the thesis is “mine”.

#### 5.5.1 Non-Māori researching across Māori spaces

This study occurred in an ‘inter-cultural space’ (Fisher, 2012) where University values and ethics were sometimes in tension with the kaupapa Māori cultural space in which the participants and I wished to operate together. This gave rise to a number of questions surrounding how a doctoral Pākehā researcher could work respectfully, sensitively and mindful of producing benefits for the research participants who were Māori. Consideration of these questions and of specific steps I took to carefully (and painfully) navigate the ethics are detailed in a separate article (Amundsen, 2018) and in collaborative articles with others who experienced similar challenges in their research contexts (Amundsen & Msoroka, 2019; Amundsen, Msoroka, & Finsen, 2017; Msoroka & Amundsen, 2017).

In short, as a Pākehā PhD scholar undertaking research with Māori participants, I was cognizant of and responsive to the impact western research has had on Māori in the past. I sought ways to analyse, understand and address the unequal relations of power (L. Smith, 2016) that have structured Māori education and research experiences. Indigenous researchers have demonstrated that research practices among Indigenous communities must begin with the intention to provide benefits to the researched and address prevailing ideologies of cultural superiority within social, economic and political institutions (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mahuika, 2008; Morelli & Mataira, 2010; Rameka, 2012; L. Smith, 1999; Walker, 2016). This raises questions for a non-Indigenous researcher about which research provides benefits, which does not, who benefits, and how to

engage with Indigenous methodologies. Briefly, I consider three suggestions found in the literature for a Pākehā researcher to consider when researching with Māori.

First, Paul Spoonley (1999) focused on those working cross-culturally in the New Zealand context and argued for the importance of researchers to responsibly answer: a) what is the purpose of the research?; b) are the researchers the right people to be doing it?; and c) will the research be compromised by any conditions imposed by organisations? (E.g. Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education Commission, University).

Second, building on Spoonley's (1999) work, Carpenter and McMurchy-Pilkington (2008) noted four chief aspects Pākehā must consider when researching with Māori: a) research as a partnership; b) issues of accountability; c) the requirement for researchers to take responsibility for their actions; and d) benefits of the research outcomes. Rameka (2012) points out that if research is designed and conducted by people who do not understand Māori obligations and ethics, it can be extremely problematic.

I considered Spoonley's (1999) and Carpenter and McMurchy-Pilkington's (2008) questions carefully and found overlaps between them and a third suggestion, that of Bishop and Glynn's (1999) Initiation-Benefits-Representation-Legitimation-Accountability (IBRLA) framework. Ultimately, I drew heavily upon Bishop and Glynn's (1999) IBRLA questions to guide this research, as explained later in section 5.6 (Ethics). I was a Pākehā researching with Māori participants. Fundamentally, I had to accept that I could only ever be working in this space through invitation from Māori participants.

### 5.5.2 Insider, Outsider, Somewhere Between

Throughout this study I reinforce my social origins and consciousness of my Pākehā identity researching in a Māori context. Within any cross cultural research, to some degree there is always a degree of insider/outsider positionality (Cohen, Hoshino-Browne, & Leung, 2007; Mullings, 1999; Peterson & Pike, 2002; Pio, Tipuna, Rasheed, & Parker, 2014; Sikes, 2006). An insider is a member of the group being researched and an outsider is a non-member of the group being researched (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002; Moore, 2012). The degree to which a researcher is an

insider or an outsider may be based on their common lived experience, or their status as a member of that group (Gair, 2012). Greene (2014) cautioned that outsider researchers always face difficulties in gaining access as they “may not have contacts within the social group and possess less knowledge of how membership is attained” (p. 4) and, therefore, they may not be accepted.

It is common for researchers to be part of the social group they are investigating before they even begin the inquiry (Moore, 2012). In a broad sense, I shared with my participants a common lived experience of transition experiences into TE (four times from previous occasions as a student). Yet I could not be considered a member of the group of 20 Māori students who participated in this research. Kenneth Pike spent his career addressing the problem of how someone can enter an unfamiliar culture and learn to communicate and dwell among the people there (Peterson & Pike, 2002). Using labels of *emics* (containing meanings of specific, local, subjective, ideal, insider) and *etics* (containing meanings of general, universal, scientific, actual, outsider) Pike’s work problematizes the insider/outsider debate often present in cross-cultural research settings. Pike argues that emic and etic are often seen as opposing dichotomous terms and as such, offer distinct (dis)advantages for researchers who are either insiders or outsiders.

Other researchers suggest that the insider/outsider researcher position is surely better understood as stages in a dialectic process. For instance, Allen (2004) believes that a researcher’s status as an insider or an outsider may fluctuate during different points of the research. Although I do not disagree with this stance, in my case the status was less a fluctuation but more having co-existing dynamics. Fraser (2010) discusses the intimacy and the insider knowledge as both a ‘strength and challenge’ of collaborative research projects. In this research, I was an ‘insider’, an ‘outsider’ and ‘somewhere in between’ in an ongoing and inconclusive dynamic situation.

#### 5.5.2.1 *Insiders*

Insider researchers hold privileged positions in terms of having participants’ trust and belief that the researcher will understand the participants’ perspectives (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015). Familiarity of an insider status is valuable for designing

research questions, interview schedules, accessing and recruiting participants as well as data collection, analysis and dissemination (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015). Insiders may be more understanding of their participants' lives than outsiders which strengthens ethical research conduct and can facilitate marginalized participants' voices as a priority for research agendas (Bridges, 2001; Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Gair, 2012; Griffith, 1998; Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; LaSala, 2003; Miller & Glassner, 2004). In this research, as evidenced by invitations to 'be' in the participants' world, raw and honest stories were shared with me, with participants placing trust in me to represent their voices (see Findings section) and deliver benefits to them through this research process. Over time, and as the relationships deepened, I gained a sense of their acceptance of me as someone 'on their side'. This gave me a strong sense of belonging and of being an 'insider' among this group of Māori participants and associated community.

Yet, numerous challenges face insider researchers. Participants may place high expectations on insider researchers due to shared positions, obligating the researcher to handle data (and co-created knowledge) in certain ways (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; Kanuha, 2000; Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1997). Boundaries between researcher and participants may blur causing some participants viewing researchers as a friend or counsellor, sharing more than they are comfortable with (Birch & Miller, 2000; Watts, 2006). A challenge for insider researchers during data analysis is the risk of overlooking key information which they take for granted (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; LaSala, 2003). Lastly, Bridges (2001) notes that any degree of commonality does not necessarily guarantee that an insider will understand participants' perspectives any more than an outsider, especially if there are other situational characteristics (personal, social, cultural) that outweigh information being disclosed.

#### *5.5.2.2 Outsiders*

Being an outsider holds advantages. Outsiders may ask 'naïve' questions, allowing topics to be explored in more depth, making observations or concluding valuable insights that insiders might not (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; Hellowell, 2006; LaSala, 2003; Morrow, 2005; Tang, 2007). In addition, participants may feel that they can 'open up' to an outsider without fear of any insider repercussions. Being an

outsider in this cross-cultural research required bridging the distance between me and the participants in an ethical and culturally sensitive way to safeguard the wellbeing and mana of the students.

Contrarily, the most common challenge faced by outsiders is inability to understand or accurately represent the experience of their participants. This is notable when research is conducted with participants who are 'othered' or socially marginalized (Bridges, 2001; Pitman, 2002). Participants may feel that they cannot truly 'open up' to an outsider because they will never fully understand and cannot really know their reality.

Although I conducted the research process as much as possible in partnership with the Māori student participants, there were always dynamics of me as an outsider. However well prepared, any Pākehā researcher who enters into an exercise such as this with Māori participants must have an acceptance of outsider dynamics. I believe that through creating respectful and trust-based relationships with the participants, strong guidance from cultural mentors, comprehensive reading and extensive consultation, and some advantages of being a partial insider, this research has obtained as good an insight as any Pākehā staff-member outsider may get.

#### *5.5.2.3 Somewhere Between*

As the research progressed, my researcher position was not so neat; the simplistic insider/outsider dichotomy became less helpful to view my researcher positionality. Another kind of researcher positioning discussed in the literature is, 'somewhere between the two' (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Kawharu, 2016; L. Smith, 1999). This researcher position related most closely to my situation where a range of insider/outsider inconclusive dynamics co-existed during the research journey.

In articulating my not so neatly positioned perspective of whether I am an insider or an outsider, I conclude that my researcher positionality was "somewhere between". Overall, I was an 'outsider-insider'. Ultimately, irrespective of my insider or outsider status, I understood that building a relationship of trust was paramount to locate the research power over issues of initiation, benefits, representation in participants' hands as much as possible. Woller (2016) noted, "A

particular challenge for non-Māori researchers is to understand how the “power over” these particular issues [Bishop’s IBRLA framework] operates in Māori contexts, and position oneself accordingly” (p.51). Although I was located on the periphery, I was invited into conversations where information was shared because the power of deciding when and what was shared was firmly located with the participants.

### 5.5.3 Subjectivity

This section discusses the place of subjectivity versus objectivity in relation to the role of a researcher. In my research, objectivity was not feasible. An objective perspective is one that is not influenced by emotions, feelings, personal thoughts, or opinions and is based on a presumption that a stable, unchanging reality exists; therefore, reality can be studied with empirical methods of objective social science (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Selecting a qualitative methodology enabled me to acknowledge that my researcher position was subjective.

By embracing and embedding a CRM and a participatory focus in the study, the traditional distant, neutral, ‘objective’ researcher role was minimised. Instead, the subjective researcher-participant relationship was pivotal to co-creating and co-constructing meaning and a narrative story (Bignold & Su, 2013; Bishop, 1998; Rameka, 2012) of the transition process together. With this in mind, I continuously reflected on the values and goals I brought to the research and how these might affect the research process and outcomes. Subjectivity (both mine and that of the participants) guided everything from choosing the topic of the study, to determining the research questions, to designing the process and interpreting the data. In other words, both our sets of values influenced how we studied this world together.

Ratner (2002) notes that researcher subjectivity dismisses the possibility of objectively understanding a social and psychological world. Subjective researchers do not see or discuss the world itself, rather they only see and discuss whatever their values prescribe. Thus, if a world *does* exist beyond a subjective researcher’s values, “it can never be known as it is, only as values shape our knowledge of it” (Ratner, 2002, p.2). Packer (2011) advocates for qualitative researchers to

abandon the illusion of objectivity and openly acknowledge that knowledge is a joint production between researcher and participants. That was the case in the present research.

The role a researcher's personal values in relation to research conduct has undergone change in the field of social science research as the western world has progressed (Msoroka & Amundsen, 2017; Davies, 2008; L. Smith, 1999). While paradigms of thought shifted over time from positivism, to anti-positivism, to critical theory, to post-positivism and now in addition, to a globalised neo-liberal paradigm, many paradigms co-existed and still co-exist today. Beliefs about a researcher's personal values in relation to research conduct may vary from person to person. My researcher values, along with those of the participants' defined 'the world' of transition experiences into TE for Māori students. CRM involves a re-framing of the concept of 'researcher bias' as, "a gift in which researchers bring their unique subjectivities to any project" (Berryman et al., 2013, p.18). Therefore, I openly acknowledge that my researcher positionality was subjective.

## 5.6 Ethics

As a PhD student, I was deeply aware of the University of Waikato's ethical framework in which I was required to operate. An ethics application for this study was submitted, and although it initially received challenges based on my interest as a non-Māori in adopting a kaupapa Māori approach, these were worked through until approval to proceed was received. This part of the research process triggered my search to find a culturally responsive methodology since I could not directly use a kaupapa Māori approach, nor could I disregard kaupapa Māori principles. Ultimately, my research received Ethics Approval as per the UoW's Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee (Ethical Application FEDU010/15 – See Appendix 2). From the outset I had, and continued with, support from cultural mentors to guide this research, keeping both me and the participants 'culturally safe' (Irwin, 1994).

Fundamentally, ethics is about relationships and respect (L. Smith, 1999). The 'kete' (basket) of Kaupapa Māori ethics, my own 'kete of ethics' and the UoW's ethical framework 'kete' have similarities, yet all have their own unique elements.

Intricacies and overlaps of how each three 'kete' of ethics were embedded and applied in every aspect of my research process are explained in Appendix 3. I have learned that it is essential for Pākehā to position ourselves as visitors in someone else's cultural space, as partners in the Treaty of Waitangi, and as co-constructors of knowledge (Ford, 2010; Glynn, 2012; Glynn & Berryman, 2015; Woller, 2016). I used Bishop and Glynn's (1999) IBRLA questions as my ethical compass. The IBRLA framework proposes five chief principles: Initiation, Benefits, Representation, Legitimation and Accountability. My application of these principles to the present research is explained here.

**I** Initiation: Whose concerns, interests and methods of approach determine/define the outcomes of the research?

This research arose when the need for promoting Indigenous Māori voice in policy was identified during conversations between myself (at that time, I was employed by Toi Ohomai as a Learning Facilitator for student support) and current Māori students who were enrolled at both the polytechnic and the university (see section 1.1).

The seeds of this research are the initial group of Māori students who sparked the kōrero about protecting the pathway and improving transition experiences for future students who come after them. Alongside the initial group of Māori students who helped to establish the foundation and because of the professional location I was in (and the relationships I had developed) the seeds of this research took hold and set down their roots. Right from the start, my *kaiako* (manager) who is Māori, was involved and supportive. He guided the concerns, interest and methods of approach that would ensure the outcome of this research was rooted in Māori voice, and in the Māori participants who were enrolled at the polytechnic, the university and the wānanga.

**B** Benefits: Who will directly benefit from the research?

Despite it being the goal of this research, it is difficult to claim what difference this research made for either the Māori participants in this research or future students who come after them and what meaningful benefits may result. However, it can

be said that, in the long term, this research has been of benefit for the participants themselves, as well as for Māori culture, language and education policy aspirations through the contribution of the research findings.

The benefits could be seen in a ripple effect. On a micro level, there were benefits to the participants themselves—they expressed that they felt listened to, heard, acknowledged and understood. They indicated their positive feelings of having a voice about issues that really matter to them. Participants also explicitly discussed how their participation in this study empowered them with the strength to carry on with their studies.

On a macro level, this study will benefit Māori students in future because it has made staff and tertiary education institutions aware of what happens for Māori students, and how they can be better equipped to support them.

**R** Representation: Whose research constitutes an adequate representation of one's social reality?

At the level of policy making in TE contexts in Aotearoa, Indigenous voice has often been marginalised, or grouped in with other minorities as one voice. This research, although primarily conducted by a non-Indigenous researcher, actively recognises the struggle by Māori to gain access to representation at policy making level and is grounded in 'Māori student voice'.

I went to great lengths in this research to ensure that Māori student voices themselves were heard—I went back and checked with the participants *numerous* times about what they had told me, and how it was going to be presented in this thesis – that was part of the research design. For instance, the stories in the Findings section (see 6.2.1) are told by Watene (UoW), Hemaima (Toi), Lorana and Dillon (Awanui) in their own words. Their stories were *their* voices – I met with participants over and over and repeatedly checked that what I was communicating through my interpretations represented the messages that they themselves wanted to convey.

**L** Legitimation: What authority do we claim for our texts?

I am not a poet, artist, singer or musician or film-maker who can use those mediums as a means for expressing Indigenous histories and spirit, an important form of representation for establishing Indigenous voice today. However, I intend that instead, awareness can be raised through the process of academic research and writing, albeit in a westernised context.

I had a lot of support from the Māori community behind me for this research which legitimated me and my involvement. From the get-go, there was the initial group of 'seed' students and my manager at Toi Ohomai, all of whom are Māori. Beyond that, I had the support of two cultural mentors and supervisors at the University of Waikato, Dr Lesley Rameka (also on my thesis supervisory team) and Dr Te Manaaroha Rollo (in the early design phase of the research) whom I constantly checked in with and who guided me when I was going off track. I was also fortunate to have the support of Dr Agnes MacFarland and Dr Vaughan Bidois in Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in Whakatāne. Without their support I would not have been able to gain access and represent the students at the wānanga.

Lastly, from the outset of the research and throughout the process, I consulted with key kaumatua and kuia from local iwi in the Tauranga Moana and wider Bay of Plenty region – I met with them at the marae and discussed the kaupapa of this research to gain their advice and ideas about what aims they would wish to meet in this research outcome.

**A** Accountability: Whom are researchers answerable to? Who has control over the initiation procedures, evaluations, construction, and distribution of newly defined knowledge?

I acknowledge a deep responsibility to the Māori participants, their whānau and communities, myself and my university, and as such, my researcher position as well as the methods of research are openly and clearly stated.

I built on existing relationships I had within the Māori community and created new relationships with the participants in this research. These relationships have continued well past the official data collection period because I kept going back to the participants, checking that I was representing them accurately, and showing

interest in their lives and their study progress. I could not shirk any responsibility to be accountable to them after all they had shared with me.

My thesis and other related publications must stand up to academic scrutiny; equally, I have had to personally stand up in academic and community domains to advocate for Māori rights to share in and determine education policies and systems.

## 5.7 Methods

### 5.7.1 Participants and Kumara Vine Sampling

#### 5.7.1.1 *Participants*

At the outset, I decided that approximately 12-15 students would be a practical and useful number of participants. I made a list of five first-year students I already knew who had indicated they would be interested in participating in this research project. I also listed five second-year students who had been instrumental in discussions shaping this inquiry but whom did not formally participate as they were not first-year students (see section 1.1 which discusses the group of students who planted the kākano for this research). Instead, I asked them if they might be able to put me in touch with any first-year students they knew who they thought might be interested. Owing to this networking approach, some students informally knew about the research before I approached them formally to explain what would be involved.

In keeping with an inductive approach of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), I could not be sure of exactly how many participants would become part of the study. The aim was to research with approximately four or five students from each of the three tertiary institutes, totalling approximately 12-15 students. A criterion for participation was that each student identify as Māori, be currently enrolled in any of the UoW in Tauranga, Toi Ohomai or Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi. In all, a total of 20 students participated in some capacity within this research project. Fifteen students participated in repeated interviews and focus groups; five students withdrew early on for various reasons (see section 6.2.1).

### 5.7.1.2 Kumara-Vine Sampling

My method of participant selection was carried out using a purposeful snowball strategy, or, what Grootveld (2013) has dubbed, 'kumara-vine sampling'. The kumara-vine analogy makes reference to when Māori spread news through their networks, akin to 'grape-vine'. This sampling approach was also practical because it offered the chance to draw on a pool of personal and professional networks: my own, my two supervisors' and those of the students with whom I had begun talking about this idea. I began with a small group of known individuals and asked these initial participants to identify others; this recruitment process 'snowballed' into a larger group. According to Sedgewick (2013), snowball sampling is a well-used type of non-random technique when doing exploratory research with a population that may be marginalized.

If students expressed interest in knowing more, I provided them with a Participant Letter, Information Sheet and a Participant Consent Form, which were previously approved in the Ethics Application (see Appendices 3-5). This information was shared by email and/or by paper given in person. Some participants passed on these documents to other Māori students (whom I had never met) and told them about the research. This was kumara-vine sampling in action. From my initial list of five first-year student names, three participated, two did not, but through their contacts other students came on board.

I asked two Toi Ohomai and one UoW-T staff members if I could inform their class about my research and ask for interested participants. A 'registration of interest' sheet was circulated and came back to me with 15 names listed. This was unexpected and more people than was practical. After three suitable people had opted in, I contacted the remaining people on the list to let them know that target numbers had been met, thanking them for being willing to participate.

By the time we were almost scheduled to hold the initial whakawhanaungatanga hui to 'open' the research process, there were a total of eight female and four male students from both Toi Ohomai and UoW-T. At this point, there were still no students from the wānanga in Whakatāne. I did not have any personal contacts at the wānanga and had hoped that some of the students might, but this was not the case. Researchers (Amundsen, Msoroka and Findsen, 2017; Broadhead & Rist,

1976; Cheah & Parker, 2014; Lund, Panda, & Dahl, 2016) have found that the problematics of accessing research sites and participants are largely under-stated in the education research literature. My challenge was to find participants from the wānanga. It was important to better understand the overall research question of what an effective transition to TE looks like for Māori students.

I realised that gaining access may involve going beyond typical methods. I had to find a key person (a guide, a kaiārahi) who would be willing to understand my research intentions and potential benefits for Māori students and be open to entering into a relationship with me in support of my research efforts. After some time, I met with a Toi Ohomai staff colleague who had previously been involved in a collaborative research project with a staff member from Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi; she personally introduced me to a person who became my kaiārahi.

The kaiārahi guided me through appropriate channels culminating in me receiving the required ethics consent from the wānanga and permission to invite students to participate in the research. The kaiārahi introduced me to four potentially interested students. Two were male, two were female. I went to the wānanga for an initial 'cup of tea' and whakawhanaungatanga *hui* (meeting) to meet them and discuss the research and, if appropriate, to give them the information sheet and consent forms. All four discussed the idea collaboratively, weighing up the information they had heard, asking questions of me, of the research and to each other. After this process, they decided to invite me to research with them at the wānanga.

The researcher-kaiārahi relationship had to be negotiated collaboratively to create an inclusive research space, a 'boundary space' (Lund at al., 2016). The kaiārahi now placed trust in me to respectfully honour the *taonga* (gift) of the participants' knowledge; and I now placed trust into the kaiārahi's 'invisible hand' to influence access to meaningful knowledge. The process of building a mutually respectful relationship with the kaiārahi, although time-consuming, was vital for the success of the research project.

All above-mentioned participants from the three education institutions were non-school leavers and as the research unfolded during the first year, we decided it would be useful to hear perspectives from school leavers who had directly

transitioned into TE. In this way, a broader perspective of transition issues over time would be better understood with the integration of these three students. Consequently, at the beginning of the second year of the study, through the kumara-vine sampling method, existing students brought along three more school-leaver first-year students. These students participated for a shorter period of time, over the duration of one semester.

### 5.7.2 Data collection and analysis

Data collection and analysis were intertwined. In qualitative research, data collection and analysis is a simultaneous undertaking (Merriam, 1998). Therefore, these processes are discussed jointly. Welsh (2002) suggests qualitative research approaches are broadly categorised into three areas: literal, interpretive and reflexive. Literal aspects focus on specific use of particular language or grammar structures, whereas interpretive approaches emphasize meaning making. Reflexivity is concerned with ways the researcher contributes to the data creation and analysis. In this research I used a combination of literal, interpretive and reflexive aspects in thematic analysis. I embarked on a collaborative journey with participants individually and collectively to co-construct meaning of their transition experiences. In all, data were collected and analysed using the following methods:

- 54 individual semi-structured interviews in person (Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, 1-1s) of approximately one hour each, sometimes longer, rarely shorter.
- 14 focus groups ranging from groups of 2-12 participants lasting from 1-3 hours.
- 16 Visual Stories, including two posters.
- 14 School Tracking Forms (Names of places and years attended for an individual from early childhood, to primary, to secondary and to previous and current tertiary).
- 10 “Ko Wai Tēnei?” questionnaires (completed at the whakawhanaungatanga hui by participants to get to know each other, and for me to get to know the participants I did not already have a relationship with)

- 16 Researcher Journal note entries.
- Data Coding, Categorizing and Theming.
- Thematic Analysis.

Participant approval was fundamental to the validity of the content of the data; a collaborative process helped decide what data should be included and what could be left out. This extended to gaining participant approval of the transition experience stories exactly as written (see section 6.2.2). Fourteen students used their real name in this research; six students were anonymous. A factor that influenced their decision to use their real names was wanting to stand behind the messages being conveyed within the wider research endeavour. Participants were given an opportunity for acknowledgement for their work and role in this research; many accepted. Reasons varied for those participants that elected anonymity. Predominantly they felt that they had shared honest information which had the potential to be viewed negatively by someone important to them, for instance, they had discussed a lecturer whose class they had not enjoyed and therefore preferred not to be identified.

One of the guiding principles of CRM is “do the work before the work” (Berryman et al., 2013, p.22). The ‘pre-research’ work began in 2015 during which ideas and informal discussions were held between myself and the *kākano* group of students. Relationships were built, ideas were formed, and the research design was sketched. After ethics consent was received, data collection and analysis began in Semester A, 2016. I thought it necessary to get students’ perceptions early in the semester so I had to move quickly at this point. Since students were only being tracked *after* they had enrolled and started their programmes, parts of their transitions perceptions and experiences could only be discussed retrospectively, not as they were occurring.

Participants were recruited in March and April of 2016 with the first round of pilot interviews conducted in April and May 2016. In the research design stage, the intention was to alternate monthly between face-to-face meetings and phone or skype calls. However, once underway, students expressed their preference to meet in person to share their information. Data gathering efforts by phone or Skype were abandoned in favour of in-person meetings as per the students’

expressed preferences. Face-to-face meetings occurred, which were organized as either semi-structured individual interviews or small mini-research whānau focus-groups (named Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi hui), depending on what the students themselves felt comfortable with based on their schedules, availability and the nature of what they wished to share. Sometimes a participant could not attend; instead, questions were asked/answered through email.

### 5.7.3 Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Tuakana-teina

#### 5.7.3.1 Whanaungatanga

During initial stages, I encouraged participants to make connections with each other, facilitating a whakawhanaungatanga hui so they could meet each other and form a *kaikōrero whānau* (research participant kinship group) (Berryman, 2013). This idea was largely brought about by students' enthusiasm and interest in meeting and knowing the other research participants. After I met all the participants individually or in pairs (or, in the case of the Awanuiārangi students, all four at once) to explain the research process and answer questions about their part in the research, I held the first initial whakawhanaungatanga hui at the Tauranga Windermere campus. All participants were invited (See Appendix 6).

The hui was opened formally, using as much Te Reo as possible by me and participants, following similar protocols to a pōwhiri. Afterwards, we had *kai* (food) and morning tea together, which I provided. Following morning tea, we formally discussed the research, as well as getting to know the other participants (I facilitated ice-breaker activities and circulated the "Ko Wai Tēnei?" forms, see Appendix 7). General discussions were held around the issue of effective transitions for Māori students in the Bay of Plenty region; this was recorded and transcribed. Afterwards, we had lunch together and this was a time for informal *kōrero* and greater familiarization.

Students who participated in the whakawhanaungatanga hui gave feedback that they gained a lot of value from attending because they not only grew to understand the purpose of this research more fully, but they also made connections with other Māori students who they were likely to see again on campus; they reported that it added to their sense of belonging in a new place

(Curtis et al., 2012; 2017; Tomoana, 2012). My intention was to foster a *Kaupapa-whānau* (cultural learning community) atmosphere for the research project.

Unfortunately, none of the Awanuiārangi students was able to attend, as, at the last minute, the van booked to bring the students from Whakatāne to Tauranga was needed for a *tangi* (Māori funeral). Instead, I took morning tea and lunch and went to Whakatāne on a different day to meet with those students in a smaller hui and repeated the same process. This signalled the beginning of what transpired throughout the research process. As time progressed, it was too challenging to get a mutually convenient/practical location and time where students from all three institutions would be available to meet together.

For pragmatic reasons, three mini research whānau focus groups eventuated. One group comprised participants enrolled in the UoW in Tauranga (UoW-T Whānau); another group comprised participants enrolled in Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi (Awanui Whānau); and a third group comprised participants enrolled in Toi Ohomai (Toi Whānau). However, there were individual connections among the wider group, mainly between the UoW-T and the Toi students who had made networks with each other at the whakawhanaungatanga hui and who were more like to 'see each other around' as they shared the same campus.

At the end of the data collection and analysis phase, those participants who were available re-grouped for a final hui to reflect on the research, their role and experience of being involved, and collectively, the outcomes they wish to see from this process. Reflection on the research process itself is widely accepted in qualitative research (Flick, 2014) and is a key part of participatory research (Bergold & Thomas, 2012; Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008). Key principles of Kaupapa Māori research (Bishop, 1998; L. Smith, 1999) guided the values and aims of the data collection and analysis activities.

#### *5.7.3.2 Manaakitanga*

It was very important to me that all participants, especially the participants who I did not know before beginning the research, were at ease with the entire process. Therefore, I attempted to create situations that would help them feel relaxed and comfortable. In every case, I provided tea, coffee and kai which we drank and ate together either before or during the interviews. Meetings with students occurred

in a range of places, depending on where students felt comfortable, including libraries, cafés, students' homes, marae, outside in a park sitting on grass, classrooms and in small private meeting rooms at various campuses.

My efforts were part of researching in a culturally responsive manner by showing *manaakitanga* to the participants. Mead (2003) defines *manaakitanga* as nurturing relationships, taking care of people and being careful to look after others. Woller (2016) adds that treating people respectfully acknowledges that every individual has *mana* (personal prestige). Within Māori society, *manaaki* is the term used to express love and hospitality towards people. *Manaakitanga* means that a host has responsibilities to be welcoming, charitable and kind to visitors by speaking nicely to them, providing an abundance of food and a place to rest (Barnett, 2001). Participants gifted me their knowledge by sharing their experiences; I reciprocated their kindness by accommodating them in the very best way I could. Rameka (2007) suggests that *manaaki* links with a Māori view of self as fundamentally non-individualistic and in this way, collective responsibilities are expressions of associated social responsibilities to care for members of *whānau*, *hapū*, *iwi*.

Campus meetings were arranged to coincide with students attending classes. However, as much as possible, I tried to mitigate any travel costs for students; therefore, I travelled away from central Tauranga to other places throughout the Bay of Plenty region, including: Whakatāne (Awanuiārangi campus), Ohope, Te Puke, Waihi, Kawerau, Rotorua, Omokoroa and Papamoa. Some days involved a lot of cooking, planning, navigating, driving and great efforts of concentration and facilitation.

I used scholarship funds to support my travel costs as well as the costs for *kai* and *koha* (donation) for the participants. Walker (1997) explains that reciprocity is a central attitude to Māori *tikanga*. Thus, if a research participant gives a gift of knowledge to the researcher (that is, a *koha*), it is expected that the researcher reciprocates. Woller (2016) argues that though a researcher may have 'acquired' a gift of knowledge from participants, the knowledge belongs to those who gifted it; "they have shared their knowledge but not given up rights to it" (p.49). This is an interesting conflict of conceptual understanding with the UoW Ethics

Regulations which state that participants own their own raw data and the researcher owns their interpretation and analysis of data.

I had to spend time arranging and re-arranging via emails and texts times and places to meet. An Excel spreadsheet helped keep track of interview schedules, times, places and length, and receipt of checked transcriptions and approved narratives. Students encountered many unpredictable happenings necessitating us to re-schedule. These ranged from sickness, to panic over study commitments, to car failure issues, to child-care commitments, to sleeping in or forgetting, and sadly, to car accidents in two cases. However, it humbles me that in every case, participants willingly re-arranged another interview time with me and we were eventually able to meet up – this illustrates that they thought the research commitment to be important.

#### 5.7.3.3 *Tuakana-teina*

I viewed myself as the “teina” in our *tuakana-teina* relationship as the participants were the knowledgeable ‘older sibling’ and I was the ‘younger sibling’ learning from their experiences. Metge (1978) confirmed the origins and the ongoing value of the kinship pair of tuakana/teina older/younger sibling in contemporary society. For instance, among children, the teina, “fetches and carries for the older without complaint, while the latter treats him or her kindly, comforts him in distress and champions him against others” (Metge, 1978, p.89). In adulthood, teina behave circumspectly and respectfully towards their tuakana for, “the tuakana hold the mana of the whānau, the teina is the one who gives it substance, and that is, the doer...the opinion of the tuakana is more significant” (p.107).

In this study, I saw my relationship with the participants where I was the teina and they were the tuakana. Within the context of this research, I believe that as our relationship and trust deepened, many research participants regarded our relationship in this way too. However, it is possible that some participants may have viewed me as a staff member and themselves as a student within an associated traditional power relationships.

The majority of the interviews and focus groups were conducted throughout the course of four semesters over a period of close to 18 months (Semester A, 2016; Semester B, 2016; Semester S, 2016/2017; Semester A, 2017 and Semester B,

2017). I relished this adventure immeasurably and was grateful for the generosity that participants extended to me. I had invitations to eat together, to drink at the pub, of accommodation with people in their own home, and despite my protestations, I was given *taonga* (gifts); one student gifted me with a Christmas present, another with a waiata, and another with a graphic design (see Figure 19) to encapsulate this research.



Figure 19: Graphic Design of This Research Concept

As I went through the closing rounds of interviews, I experienced an overwhelming appreciation and humility about the people I encountered. I was moved by their lives and their stories and quite often, when we stood to shake hands, hug, *hongiri* or say goodbye at the end of an interview, tears flowed as we both knew what had passed between us. I was truly gifted with the trust, *aroha* and warmth of the *manaaki* from the relationships that developed between us and know without doubt that these relationships will endure beyond this research project. It was a reciprocal undertaking in which I (as researcher) and the students (as participants) listened, shared and empathized with each other. Our understanding of one another was based on integrity and trust, and I hope I enabled the participants to feel valued and validated throughout the research. Many said as much. These relationships built personal relevance and meaning and is what made this part of the journey immensely worthwhile.

## 5.7.4 Repeated Interviews and Focus Groups

### 5.7.4.1 *Semi-structured Interviews*

Repeated semi-structured interviews provided insights into the participants' world and their experiences. A benefit of semi-structured interviews is the ability for the researcher to explore unanticipated areas of interest that might emerge which is likely to result in richer data (Smith & Osborn, 2008). According to Brekhus, Galliher and Gubrium (2005) rich data impart intimate knowledge of the phenomenon of interest and are a hallmark of qualitative research because they lend credibility to the findings. Thus, thick description not only takes into account the physical and social context, but also illustrates people's behaviour and their intentions (Schultz & Avital, 2011).

Before and during each interview, participants were given information about the interview focus so they could prepare. During interviews I asked participants about their transition experiences. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to one hour and was recorded on an iPad and an iPhone as a back-up. Semi-structured interviews were augmented by prompts. However, participants were also asked to share anything else they felt was relevant to the topic of their transition experiences. In this way, participants had some control over where the interview led, enabling them to 'tell a story' instead of merely responding to pre-ordered questions. Furthermore, I asked questions that were not included in the guide as I responded to comments made by the interviewee (Denzin, 2001). I wanted the participants and myself to be able to re-read our interview transcripts, not so much as a method of data gathering, but as a method for producing 'performance ethnographies' about self and society (Denzin, 2001; Hamera, 2011).

Semi-structured interviews are more flexible than structured interviews or surveys and make use of everyday types of interactions. When I first began the interview process, I stuck closely to the interview guide (see Appendix 9). However, after completing the pilot interviews, which served an important function before the main study (Halberg, 2008) because future difficulties could be pre-empted and adjustments made (Kim, 2011), I noticed my interviews were very one-sided. Participants were being asked to share all this information with me and I was not divulging anything about myself. Linda Smith (1999) advises a researcher to 'be

your own person'. In later interviews, interactions became more 'conversational' and I noticed that as I shared more about myself, participants were also more likely to share at a deeper level – *ako* (reciprocity) in action!

Following each interview and during transcription, I made notes of follow-up questions or further areas to discuss at our next meeting. Bidois (2012) notes that "making sense of [participant interview] information and interpreting meaning from it is not an individualistic act. Instead, it involves continual dialogue between researcher and participant(s) where together a collaborative sense of understanding and co-constructed meaning is developed" (p.228). After each interview, as quickly as possible (within two weeks in the majority of instances), I transcribed every interview and emailed a copy to the participant prior to its being analysed to ensure that I had accurately transferred the spoken word to the written word.

In some cases, my emerging Te Reo skills prevented me from correctly spelling names of other whānau members; I encouraged all participants to correct these and any other mistakes. During the transcription stage, I noted key ideas I had drawn from the interview. Participants were given an opportunity to discuss and clarify these ideas at the next interview together. This was valuable as I reflected not only on the spoken messages, but also on the unspoken which I could recall from the fresh interview (layers of 'seen' and 'unseen'). Students conveyed unspoken messages in their tone of voice, pauses, laughter and in the way they seemed during the interview – relaxed or anxious, disinterested or passionate.

#### *5.7.4.2 Focus Groups*

Fourteen focus groups/hui were held. Essentially, focus groups are collective conversations (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011). All participants were invited to attend the first focus group named a 'whakawhanaungatanga hui' to indicate the intention of bringing about opportunities for this research to create a 'whānau' atmosphere. Ten students attended. However, as it proved logistically difficult to hold focus groups with students from all three institutions, future focus groups consisted of students who were enrolled at the same institution. In this sense, focus groups also operated as a research-whānau-of-interest (Berryman, 2013) to

maintain control over the research and decision-making processes as well as understand the outcomes within a Māori context.

Focus groups offer three overlapping and interwoven advantages for qualitative research: inquiry, pedagogic, and political functions (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011). Firstly, inquiry is probably the most commonly understood purpose of focus groups. This method emerged in response to *how* and *why* questions that remained unanswered using quantitative positivist methods. In my research, the primary goal of inquiry was to generate rich, nuanced and even contradictory accounts of how Māori students ascribed meaning to and interpreted their lived transition experiences. Secondly, pedagogically, focus groups draw on people collectively engaging to promote dialogue to achieve higher levels of understanding. This suited the guiding kaupapa Māori principles of the research practice. Thirdly, the primary goal of the political function is to transform the conditions of existence for particular stakeholders. Berryman et al. (2013) note that when researching with marginalized participants, focus groups can provide a legitimate forum for collective discussions. As earlier discussed in section 3.3.2, the student participants in this research were a group of students whose voices were marginalized among TE stakeholders (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012).

## 5.7.5 Visual Stories and Other Data

### 5.7.5.1 *Visual Stories*

Sixteen visual stories provided data that were explored and captured as part of one 'round' of semi-structured interviews. Percy (2017) describes visual representational activities as providing, "a conduit through which the participants could make sense of their experiences during the retelling section of the interview" (p.66). Participants were asked to reflect on their transition experience and draw their reflection in an artistic representation. I provided blank paper and coloured markers. As they drew their experiences, they narrated what they were drawing. I subsequently transcribed their narration as part of the interview transcripts to include in the pool of data for coding and analysis.

This activity was optional yet 14 students participated, enthusiastically. Kinchin and Miller (2012) explain that visual representations aid in overcoming barriers such as fear of incorrect language, inadequate vocabulary. Furthermore, Bagnoli (2009) suggests they provide researchers with insights to participants' thoughts and ideas. The process of visual stories is known to elicit a more concise representation of the key elements of the participants' experiences, potentially generating complex thoughts which may be challenging for participants to articulate or for the researcher to pick up through interview techniques alone (Crilly, Blackwell, & Clarkson, 2006; Percy, 2017). Visual stories offered the potential for creating "dialogue" in the minds of the participants and me (the researcher), as well as other viewers, by re-presenting reality in unexpected ways (Zorilla & Tisdell, 2016). In this sense, visual stories enabled a focus on adult education for critical consciousness in a 'non-formal' environment nested within a 'formal' education research setting.

Essentially, the method of visual stories offered a deep description and simultaneously allowed participants to more profoundly explore their own interpretations of their transition experiences. As such, I was mindful to avoid placing my own interpretations into the visual stories, therefore, the visual stories were not specifically thematically analysed, but rather data analysis was performed using the narrative which accompanied the story.

Visual stories were not only useful for eliciting data but they also contributed to developing dialogic spaces where participants could interrogate who they were, what subjectivity they were bringing to the research and become conscientized to their role (Berryman et al., 2013).

Linda Smith (1999) suggests that information sharing by participants creates obligations. Participants entrusted me with highly personal information, some of which was not always directly relevant to the research questions. Whilst I felt honoured by their trust, I also felt obligated to be sensitive and respectful about how that information was used (or not) for the research outcomes.

#### *5.7.5.2 E-Mails*

Twelve email conversations took place between myself and participants in lieu of being unable to meet face to face. Additionally, multiple administrative emails occurred in order to arrange meeting places and times, as well as my sending transcripts and reflective notes to participants for review which were also included as data for analysis.

#### *5.7.5.3 Researcher Notes*

Sixteen “Researcher Notes” were made after casual encounters with participants, either on or off campus to add new insights into the data and were also given to participants for their approval. These notes were brief, but contained key information about development in a participant’s personal life, potentially relevant to a transition experience. For example, in one casual encounter a participant told me that she had just found out she would soon need more chemotherapy treatment, but had decided to defer the treatment until after her end of year exams. Therefore, since our last meeting she had decided to enrol in a summer school paper in order to take the pressure off herself for the following year.

#### *5.7.5.4 School Tracking Forms*

Fourteen “School Tracking Forms” were completed by individual participants. During one of the earlier face-to-face interviews, participants completed a form and narrated what they were writing at the same time. The form was simple, asking students to note down names and locations of which pre-school or kōhanga reo (if relevant), primary school and secondary school they had attended and for

how long. Finally, they noted down if they had been enrolled in any other TE before their current course, and, if so, what they studied. This also included finding out how many years it had been since they had been in study, as I wondered if this information may have influenced their transition experiences.

#### 5.7.5.5 *Ko Wai Tēnei Questionnaires*

Ten “Ko Wai Tēnei?” questionnaires (Appendix 9) were completed at the Whakawhanaungatanga Hui by participants to get to know each other, and for me to get to know the participants with whom I just met. Three of the ten questions asked about their names, emphasising the importance of my understanding to get them correct. Seed-Pihama (2017) discusses the transformative potential of Māori *ingoa tangata* (personal names), noting they are an expression of Māori identity and *tino rangatiratanga*. Regardless, Māori names are still often mispronounced, demeaned and marginalised in places such as schools (Seed-Pihama, 2017). I wanted to make sure I learned all the participants’ names properly and was careful to make sure I pronounced them accurately.

#### 5.7.6 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis involved a process of coding, categorizing and theming. Deciding on an appropriate coding method for this study involved careful consideration. Before deciding on thematic analysis for this study, I created a list of possible coding methods and pilot tested three transcripts using: a) narrative coding and analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Reissman, 2008); b) case studies (Merriam, 1998); and, c) thematic analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

None was as insightful as thematic analysis for research question alignment because thematic analysis provides a flexible research tool, which can, “potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 5). The over-arching research question (what do effective transitions to TE look like for Māori students?) suggested the exploration of personal, interpretive meanings within the data. Thematic analysis of data (Smith & Osborn, 2008) offered research question alignment as themes could consist of ideas such as

descriptions of behaviour within a culture; explanations for why something happens; iconic statements; and morals from participant stories (Saldaña, 2016).

#### 5.7.6.1 Coding

Thematic analysis begins with first coding data, next categorizing codes into clusters or patterns, and then developing themes through analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2008). First, I started coding and formatting the data as I collected it, before all the fieldwork was completed. I wrote up field notes, transcribed interviews and focus groups, jotted down preliminary words or phrases for codes in my notes or on transcripts. I created analytic entries into a research journal for future reference. These preliminary notes were not necessarily accurate or finalised, they were just ideas and thoughts at that point.

In preparation for methodical coding and categorizing, I gathered all data pertaining to each individual participant and organized them into folders, both digitally and in ring-binders. Next, I formatted interview and focus group data using MS Word by dividing the text into separate stanzas when a sub/topic shift occurred. Coding occurred iteratively. At first, I inserted MS Word 'comments' to make notes in the right hand margin of transcripts. The notes included anything of significant interest, or were about statements the participants made or any other observation I made (See Appendix 9 *First Cycle Coding*).

Overall, I prioritized the participants' data when coding and categorizing as their perceptions were the focus of the study, not mine. When coding, I was guided by Richards and Morse (2013) who propose that coding is not just labelling, it is *linking*. "Coding leads you from the data to the idea and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea" (Richards & Morse, 2013, p. 154). The second iteration entailed re-reading data more slowly and carefully; this time noting down one or two-word, capitalized codes in the left hand margin (See Appendix 10 *Second Cycle Coding*). Consistent with the iterative and cyclical coding approach, I reviewed earlier data sets in light of any new codes.

Creating codes was a blend of 'pre-set' and 'emergent'. In other words, I began with pre-set codes—referred to as 'a priori codes' in the literature (Saldaña, 2016). Prior knowledge of the subject matter gleaned from literature reviews and professional work experience helped me to create these codes. While these pre-

set codes provided a starting point, other codes began emerging from reading and analysing the data— ‘emergent codes’ (Saldaña, 2016). The coding process was both inductive and deductive (influenced by my prior reading and thinking)!

#### 5.7.6.2 *Categorizing*

As I made the transition from the coding to categorizing, patterns began to emerge, alongside ideas about why those patterns might exist in the first place. Hatch (2002) characterizes patterns by: similarities (things that happen the same way); differences (they happen in predictably different ways); frequency (happen often or seldom); sequence (happen in a certain order); correspondence (happen in relation to other activities or events); causation (one appears to cause another). I kept in mind the role of a qualitative researcher to seek underlying patterns which may generate awareness of defining features or help to foresee future behaviours; however, I was intently aware of including and ‘listening to’ anomalies or outliers experiences as they arose (for example, see the case of Emere in section 6.2.6).

#### 5.7.6.3 *Theming*

I moved from coding, to categorizing to developing themes. Of course, I did not get this right the first time! I paid meticulous attention to verbal and non-verbal language cues, coded, re-coded, categorized, re-categorized so that there was ultimately a third, a fourth and even a fifth review of the data. In practice, a theme is really an *outcome* of coding, categorizing and reflecting analytically. Although I discerned some initial themes during data collection and iterations of coding, I re-examined these as interviews, focus groups and interactions with participants continued. Themes were the outcomes of categorizing sets of data into groups of repeating ideas or patterns as keys to the explanation of a phenomenon. Where possible, themes were associated with subsidiary research questions. An example from subsidiary research question one is given in Table 3. Table 4 presents how the final themes arose in the present research.

Table 3: Example of Consolidated themes into Core themes

| Theme Groups |             | Consolidated Themes                            | Core Themes  |
|--------------|-------------|--|--|
| RQ1          | Experiences | Connecting with being Māori/<br>Māori Identity | Being Māori<br>Belonging<br>Goals<br>Growth<br>Identity<br>Journey<br>Motivation<br>Change |
|              |             | Experiencing racism                            |  |
|              |             | Fixed goals                                    |  |
|              |             | Highs and Lows                                 |  |
|              |             | Identity quest                                 |  |
|              |             | Journey (highs and lows)                       |  |
|              |             | Knowledge/skills acquisition                   |  |
|              |             | Motivation –consistent                         |  |
|              |             | Motivation –fluctuation                        |  |
|              |             | Overcoming adversity                           |  |
|              |             | Personal growth                                |  |
|              |             | Process  |  |
|              |             | Process of change                              |  |
|              |             | Sense of belonging                             |  |
|              |             | Shifting goals                                 |  |

Table 4: Core themes (Experiences) into Final Themes

| Core Themes            | Final Themes              |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Being Māori            | <b>Identity</b>           |
| Belonging              |                           |
| Goals                  |                           |
| Growth                 |                           |
| Identity               |                           |
| Journey                |                           |
| Motivation             |                           |
| Process of change      |                           |
| Learning from mistakes |                           |
| Overcoming adversity   |                           |
| Support                | <b>Identity/Agency</b>    |
| First in family        |                           |
| Racism                 | <b>Identity/Structure</b> |
| Values                 |                           |

## 5.8 Summary

This chapter introduced the methodology used in the present study. It was a qualitative inquiry using a Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) in response to the context of the research question and how I was positioned as a researcher. Critical social theory and kaupapa Māori theory underpinned the methodology to a very real degree in philosophy and in practice. I also considered transitions theory for its methodological relevance to the present study. It helped to shape the longitudinal research design based on notions of transitions as a process (Peters, 2010). I made my researcher positionality transparent through discussion of me being a non-Māori researcher working with Māori participants as well as the insider, outsider and 'somewhere in between' co-existing dynamics. The subjectivity of this research was discussed in terms of social constructivist paradigms.

Throughout all my interactions, I endeavoured to operate ethically and empower the *mana* (pride) in participants to remain strong and vital through honouring my ethical obligations. Through processes of whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, I offered support as challenges arose and we celebrated student achievements. This exploration was about a bigger kaupapa than a singular piece of research. It was about adding to a movement of raising awareness of the importance of decolonization through reconciliation in Aotearoa to address racial inequities between Pākehā and Māori.

The research methods were detailed in order for readers to understand the participant selection criteria and 'kumara-vine' sampling process. Conducted *with* participants, data collection and analysis emerged as an intertwined process and methods of repeated semi-structured interview and focus groups were used. In addition, e-mail conversations, research notes, school tracking forms and visual stories added to the pool of data for analysis. A thematic analysis approach showed the closest alignment to the research question and was used to explore participants' world of beliefs, constructs and emotional transition to tertiary education experiences.

## Whakataukī

*Ki te kore ngā pūtake e mākūkūngia, e kore te rākau e tupu*  
*If the roots of the tree are not watered, the tree will never grow*

### Chapter Six Findings

#### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the methods used to seek answers to one over-arching research question:

What do effective transitions to TE look like for Māori students?

In this chapter, I describe the participants who were part of this study and present the themes emerging from the data collection and analysis. I report the findings in eight parts: 1) participants; 2) transition experiences; 3) transition barriers; 4) transition enablers; 5) defining effective transitions; 6) differences between transition experiences into a university, polytechnic and wānanga, and; 7) what educational success means to Māori students. In part eight, to address the over-arching research question, I introduce three over-arching themes of identity, agency, and structure. Lastly, a chapter summary is given.

## 6.2 Research Questions and Findings

### 6.2.1 Participants

This study was carried out in the Bay of Plenty region in Aotearoa New Zealand with students enrolled in BOPTeP (BOPTeP, 2014) organisations. During the course of the present research, the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic and the Waiariki Institute of Technology underwent a merger (see section 2.4). The new organisation, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology, was formed in May, 2016. By the end of the study, owing to the merger, all participating students were enrolled in one of three institutions – either Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi (n=5), the UoW in Tauranga (UoW-T) (n=7) or Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology (n=8). All students who participated in this study self-identified as Māori, meaning that one or both of their parents are Māori.

From the three participating institutions, 20 students were recruited: eight males and 12 females. Ages ranged from 16 to 54. Not all participants remained in the study. Permission was given by the five exiting participants to include information already shared. These five students participated earlier and then withdrew after one, two or three interviews. Of those five exiting students, three were ‘pilot’ participants during which interview questions were piloted and refined. Two of the exiting students withdrew from their programme of study. Of the remaining 15 participants, two participated for just one semester after joining the research part way through the second year of data collection and analysis. All others participated in the research for four or five semesters (if they enrolled in a summer semester course). Of the 15 remaining students, six completed the programme in which they were enrolled during the time of the research. Two students withdrew from their studies, but continued in the present research project. Seven participants were still mid-study when data collection and analysis finished.

Participants had a choice at the beginning, continuously throughout the research process and again at the end whether they wanted their names to be anonymous or to be acknowledged through the use of their real names. They were asked to tick a box on the Participant Consent Form (See Appendix 6). However, I informed them that they could consent to be part of the research without immediately

indicating their preference for anonymity or acknowledgement. This decision could be made at any time during the data collection and analysis stage of the research process. If they wanted to change their minds, they were given many opportunities to do so. At the final face-to-face meeting, I asked each participant to decide which box they wanted to tick (if they hadn't already done so) and I checked again whether anyone wanted to change their mind. Once the data analysis and thesis write-up stage was to begin, it was preferable for them to not change their minds, but it always remained an option until final publication. It was important to me that students were happy with this arrangement. The participants who wanted to be anonymous selected their own pseudonym if they desired. Fourteen students decided to use their real name and six students elected anonymity. The following two summary tables (Tables 5 & 6) provide demographic details of the participating students.


Table 5: Summary of Participant Information

| TE Organisation | No. | Name            | Pseudonym or Real Name | Iwi                                      | Gender | Age Bracket | No. of Semesters of Participation | Programme                     | School-Leaver Or Post-school Leaver | Year of Study at research start |
|-----------------|-----|-----------------|------------------------|--|--------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Awanuiārangi    | P02 | Dillon Te Kani  | RN                     | Ngāti Ranginui                           | M      | 44          | 4                                 | Bachelor of Humanities        | PSL                                 | 1st                             |
| Awanuiārangi    | P06 | Lorana Mitchell | RN                     | Tūhoe; Ngāti Awa                         | F      | 50s         | 4                                 | Bachelor of Humanities        | PSL                                 | 1st                             |
| Awanuiārangi    | P09 | Nigel Rapana    | RN                     | Ngāti Awa; Ngāti Pukeko; Ngāti Rangataua | M      |             | 4                                 | Bachelor of Humanities        | PSL                                 | 2nd                             |
| Awanuiārangi    | P13 | Waipae Perese   | RN                     | Ngāti Ranginui                           | F      | 50s         | 4                                 | Bachelor of Humanities        | PSL                                 | 2nd                             |
| Awanuiārangi    | P19 | Tuihi Carre     | RN                     |  | F      | 30s         | 1                                 | Bachelor of Humanities        | PSL                                 | 1st                             |
| Toi Ohomai      | P01 | Aubrey Te Pou   | RN                     | Tūhoe; Ngāpuhi; Te Whakatōhea            | M      | 32          | 4                                 | Diploma of Sport & Recreation | PSL                                 | 1st                             |
| Toi Ohomai      | P03 | Jamahl Ellis    | RN                     | Ngai Te Rangi; Ngāti Ranginui            | M      | 20s         | 4                                 | Diploma of Sport & Recreation | PSL                                 | 1st                             |
| Toi Ohomai      | P05 | Jordan Zingle   | RN                     | Ngāti Porou                              | M      | 16          | 2                                 | Level 2 Bridging              | SL                                  | 1 <sup>st</sup>                 |

|                       |     |                      |    |  |   |     |   |   |     |                 |
|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|----|--|---|-----|---|---|-----|-----------------|
| Toi Ohomai            | P07 | Luwina Wiwarena      | RN | Ngāti Awa                                | F | 17  | 2 | Level 2 Bridging  | SL  | 1 <sup>st</sup> |
| Toi Ohomai            | P12 | Awhina Te Whenua     | P  | Whakatōhea; Tūhoe;<br>Te Whānau-a-Apanui | F | 30s | 4 | Diploma of Environmental<br>Management (L5 & 6)                                   | PSL | 2nd             |
| Toi Ohomai            | P16 | Charvae Hawaikirangi | RN |  | M | 16  | 1 | L2 Foundation Studies   | SL  | 1st             |
| Toi Ohomai            | P18 | Tanisha McNeil       | RN |  | F | 30s | 1 | L4 Foundation Studies   | PSL | 1st             |
| Toi Ohomai &<br>UoW-T | P08 | Hemaima              | P  | Whakatōhea; Ngāti<br>Tūwharetoa; Tainui  | F | 40s | 4 | Diploma of Environmental<br>Management (Toi Ohomai)&<br>Bachelor Of Science (UoW) | PSL | 2nd             |
| UoW-T                 | P04 | Marie                | P  | Te Arawa;<br>Ngāti Tai                   | F | 28  | 5 | Bachelor of Teaching<br>(Primary)   | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P10 | Rob Herewini         | RN |  | M | 50s | 3 | Bachelor of Arts  | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P11 | Sophia Murray        | RN | Ngāpuhi Te<br>Whakatōhea                 | F | 50s | 4 | Bachelor of Social Work   | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P14 | Watene Moon          | RN | Ngāti Tai                                | M | 30s | 5 | Bachelor of Teaching<br>(Primary)   | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P15 | Pūtara               | P  | Ngāti Kahungunu Ki<br>Heretaunga         | F | 30s | 4 | Bachelor of Teaching<br>(Primary)   | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P17 | Emere                | P  |  | F | 23  | 3 | Bachelor of Teaching<br>(Primary)   | PSL | 1st             |
| UoW-T                 | P20 | Maia                 | P  | Ngāti Ranginui                           | F | 20s | 1 | Bachelor of Teaching (Primary)  | PSL | 1st             |

Table 6: Demographics of Participants

| Research Participants         | Age Group  | Gender           | TE Organisation                             | Programme of Study  |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|---|---|
| Total<br>N = 20               |  |                  | University of Waikato in Tauranga<br>N = 7  | Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) = 5<br>Bachelor of Arts = 1<br>Bachelor of Social Work = 1 |
| School-leavers<br>N = 3       | < 20s = 3  | Male<br>N = 8    | Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology<br>N = 8 | Level 2 Foundation = 3<br>Level 4 Foundation = 1  |
| Post School-leavers<br>N = 17 | 20 – 30 = 4<br>30 – 40 = 7<br>40 – 50 = 2<br>50+ = 4 | Female<br>N = 12 |   | Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi<br>N = 5  |



## 6.2.2 Transition Experiences

The first subsidiary research question asked:

What are the transition experiences for Māori students into tertiary study?

In almost every case, participants described their transition as journey of personal and/or identity growth—a process. This is consistent with findings in transitions literature (Ecclestone, 2010; Peters, 2010). Participants described their transition experiences as passing from one stage to another and sometimes returning; as a period of moving from one mind-set to another; as some form of travelling over some distance, usually taking a long time, and rarely linear. Ecclestone et al. (2010) note that the idea of transition does not necessarily imply unilineal change, but that is how it has been predominantly studied.

Two students thought their transition began *prior* to taking steps to enrol (that is, their transition included thoughts and actions before contacting the organisation or submitting enrolment forms) which is consistent with adult participation literature (Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Three students thought their transition began on the day they enrolled. Ten students thought their transition began on their first day of classes. Twelve students thought that their transition experiences also encompassed their past TE experiences (i.e., were not necessarily limited to the present programme in which they were enrolled). Eight thought that reaching the end of each semester or each year was a period of pause, recovery, reflection and preparation for the next 'step' in their journey (including those students who completed summer school). All 15 did not think their transition was finished yet.

For some, experiences of transition were emancipatory; for others, the transition brought anxiety, fear and stressful risk. Students valued the idea of potential for change, believing that whatever they were doing at the time they 'signed up' for their particular programme is not how things would always have to stay. When it came to their identity, unlocking deeper understanding about who they are, combined with thought of who they would become—self as a work-in-progress (Ecclestone, 2010) was a motivating reason for study. Three feared the anxieties and the risks of the journey, and some realised quite early in their studies that this

programme may not unlock the possible change or provide them with the knowledge they desired.

Sixteen students had experienced studying at tertiary level in more than one type of institution (e.g. a university and a wānanga, or a polytechnic and a university, or even all three). Going in and out of various TE programmes and organisations throughout life was seen by these participants as 'normal'. At least five students had not completed previous TE programmes in which they had been previously enrolled. Eight students had completed one or more bridging courses (Foundation Levels 1-4) before degree level study. Six students were enrolled in diploma programmes before subsequently enrolling in a degree. Six students were enrolled in their degree, and simultaneously enrolled in another TEO institution to do a shorter, lower-level course to supplement their learning within their main degree. These experiences certainly reveal the complexities of learning pathways.

Ecclestone et al. (2010) state, "the collective dimension to transitions, and the experience of transitions has often been neglected in the literature. And, it has also been largely neglected in policy..." (p.xxii). This study focused on individual Māori students' transition experiences. However, in paying attention to the diversity of each individual's transition experience, I do not ignore the collective dimension of transition to TE. One of the most unnerving transition experiences was collective in nature – experiencing racism against being Māori during their studies. Wilson et al.'s (2011) findings propose that institutional racism and marginalisation contribute to high levels of attrition in the first year. Institutional racism produces and perpetuates racial inequality through the norms, values, culture and normal practices of a given context. A range of existing social narratives exist for Māori which shaped and storied their transition experiences in and out of TE contexts.

Other collective experiences of transition to TE for participants were: a) experiencing Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology merger process; and b) sustained loss of housing, roading, internet and phone access during the Edgecumbe and Whakatāne floods in April, 2017. These types of collective transition experiences were included in the data collection and analysis process and serve as a reminder that individual transitions have collective dimensions.

This study sought to understand Māori student voices about their lived transition experiences. The next section describes the transition into TE experiences of three Māori students (one each from a wānanga, a polytechnic and a university). It was not pragmatic to include narrative stories of all 15. Three participants whose individual experiences overlapped greatly with others encapsulate broad themes common to many participants' experiences. Accounts given here draw upon interviews, focus groups, visual stories and personal recollections.

*Dillon Te Kani - Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi*

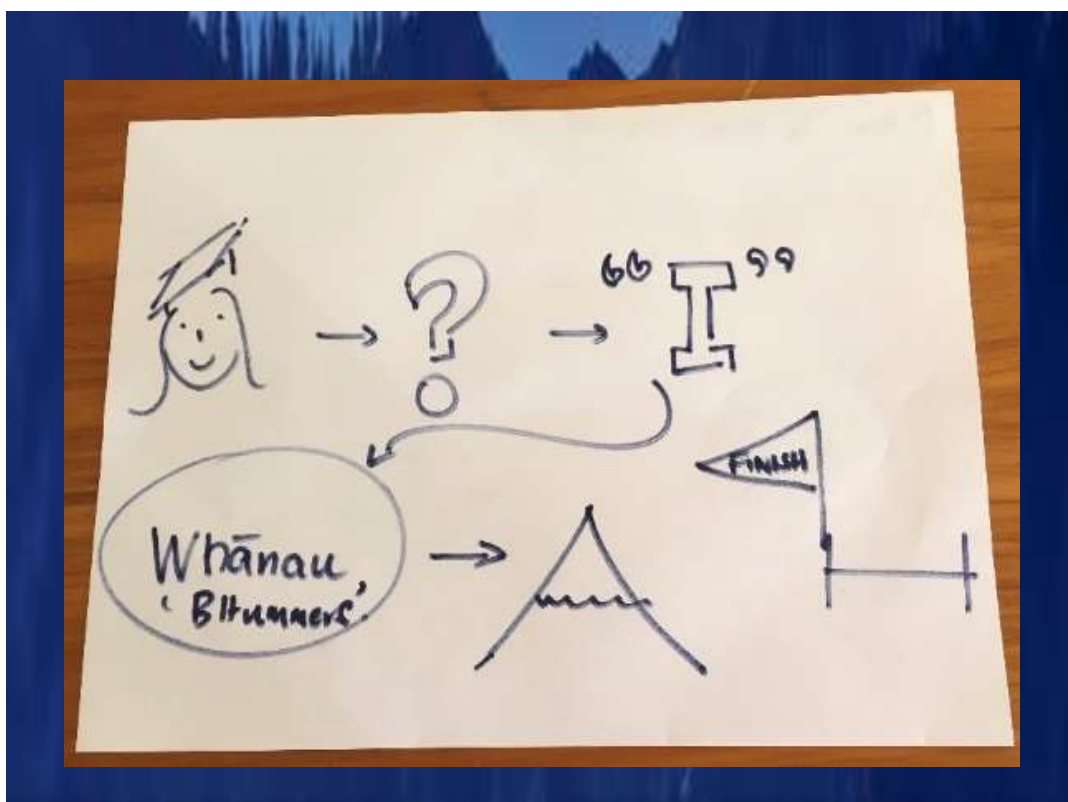


Figure 20: Dillon Te Kani's Visual Story 1

Dillon is a male student in his forties who lives in Tauranga. He is enrolled in Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi in the Bachelor of Humanities degree and travels to the Whakatāne campus to attend *noho* (block courses). Students enrolled in this degree affectionately nickname themselves “B-Hummers”. He is currently employed full time in Tauranga in the health industry and manages his study around work and family life. Dillon has undergone a wide range of workplace training/education during the past 15 years in his working life and he also completed a Certificate in Quality Assurance in the mid-2000s at the Nelson

Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT). Other than that, since leaving school Dillon has carried out very little formal TE. He decided to enrol in this degree because he wanted knowledge to fill a few gaps as well as to validate his existing knowledge (“I already know that stuff, I just didn’t know that was what it was called”). Dillon explained that he wanted to gain more confidence in what he was doing and to grow personally.

Dillon likens his transition experience to conquering a mountain. He created his first visual story (Figure 20) in December 2016 at the end of his first year of study in the Bachelor of Humanities degree when he had just one assignment remaining to submit. In his visual story, he notes that at the beginning of his journey, which started at the beginning of the year, it was all about him. He liked the idea of getting a degree. He had not studied for many, many years and there was some anxiety. But quite early in his programme, Dillon began changing his thinking to being less about himself, and more about whānau. Over the course of the year, Dillon’s thoughts about himself changed (personal growth, process of change, identity discovery, reconnecting to being Māori).

*Dillon:* “There was a bit of unknown and a bit of trepidation in terms of what is this all about. I came into the course for myself really, at the beginning, I didn’t know what else to expect, but then I had my eyes opened to a catch-phrase, “start together, finish together” and that’s where that comes from (*Dillon points to the word Whānau on the paper*). And then it was all about getting us *all* to the finish line” [Int 3, 2016].

When I asked Dillon what moved his thinking from “I” to “whānau” he recalled events during the last semester:

*Dillon:* “So there are a few things going on here. There’s the plight of the Indigenous people, and there’s last semester, particularly towards the end when the Standing Rock stuff was exploding. We supported Standing Rock with a haka, actually. We weren’t the first, but ours got quite a bit of air time on social media. It spread like wildfire after that so that was really

neat to be a part of that. You know, I guess it goes back to the whānau again”.

*Diana:* “Global whānau, almost”?

*Dillon:* “Yeah, a global society. So it has moved me from a position of self, to having a broader interest around my own people”.

Dillon explains that he felt he had to face the mountain before he could get to the finish line (overcoming adversity).

*Dillon:* “Yeah, I guess for me, a mountain stands for your rangatiratanga, and that is how I relate this to those nations at Standing Rock. It’s an expression of that rangatiratanga. Something that was kind of pointed out to me. When you do a haka, you stand like a mountain, you know, you identify yourself: “...this is my mountain, this is my moana...” *Dillon gets up and stands in the position of readiness for a haka (wardance), hands on his hips, legs apart and squat.* So when you do a haka, you should stand like a mountain, like this”.

*Diana:* “Wow! It sounds like it was really powerful for you being part of that”.

*Dillon:* “Yeah, yeah, it was. It was something to be proud of, showing our support for other Indigenous peoples. I see Māori as being leaders in terms of where we are and how we are integrated into society by comparison to other Indigenous peoples who haven’t fared as well as Māori. They are still fighting that struggle, but there are Indigenous peoples out there who are by far worse than Māori. It was quite a privilege to be part of that support, and to stand alongside our people, our nation. But yeah, just being able to contribute back to wider society, to give back”.

At the point towards the end of the last semester, Dillon felt that the finish line seemed like a mountain to climb – it felt very far away and almost unattainable, partly because of his struggle with moving between the “I” and the “whānau”.

*Dillon:* “We’ve had a few drop out over the course of the year which is a real shame, because the support is there...I guess when I was in this position (*Dillon points to the “I” on the drawing*) I probably wasn’t doing as much supporting as I should have been doing. I was beginning to, it was starting to resonate a lot more with me here (*Dillon points to the circle with “Whānau” inside*) and by the time we got late into the second semester, I was determined to get some of the others across the line.

I was paired up in a group with a young girl who had been struggling all year. We hadn’t seen her for a long time. There were three of us in our group and so I just kept badgering the others for their contributions, and we missed the deadline. I thought, well, this can end in one of three ways. They don’t stump up with any work and we don’t get a mark. Or, they don’t stump up with any work, but I do enough to get myself across the line, put my assignment in. Or, I will wait for the eleventh hour and keep badgering them for the work, and that is what I ended up doing! You know, it was a massive rush at the end, but I really held out for my partners in that group assignment. I was pleased. That was acknowledged, actually, by our tutor. She said, ‘good on you for holding up your mates’. I was really stoked with that”!

*Diana:* “Yeah, for sure! That shows your move from the “I”, doesn’t it? ‘Because you could have said, “well, I still want my marks” and handed it in, but you ended up moving towards supporting them as well”.

*Dillon:* “Yeah. I think we will have done enough to get it across the finish line. And if we don’t, well hey! I can still look at myself

in the mirror I suppose. I still have my own integrity as well...that kind of sums up my transition experience over the year, and particularly how I have changed over the course of the twelve months. And I am happy with that, yeah.”

Dillon compares his experience of studying at a wānanga to a mainstream organisation, as his partner is currently studying at a mainstream university. His experience of the wānanga’s kaupapa Māori values made his learning relevant and meaningful.

*Dillon: “Aaaaaand, would I have been on the same journey if I had gone into a mainstream tertiary provider? I don’t know, I think I would still be in this space here” (Dillon taps his finger over the “I” on the paper).*

*Diana: “You think you would still be in that “I” space? What makes you think that”?*

*Dillon: “I don’t think there would have been the right environment to create this (Dillon points to the “Whānau” on the page). I think this comes from a Māori place. I don’t know...and it’s quite neat, sort of drawing it, I suppose. Now I can see it” [Int 3, 2016].*

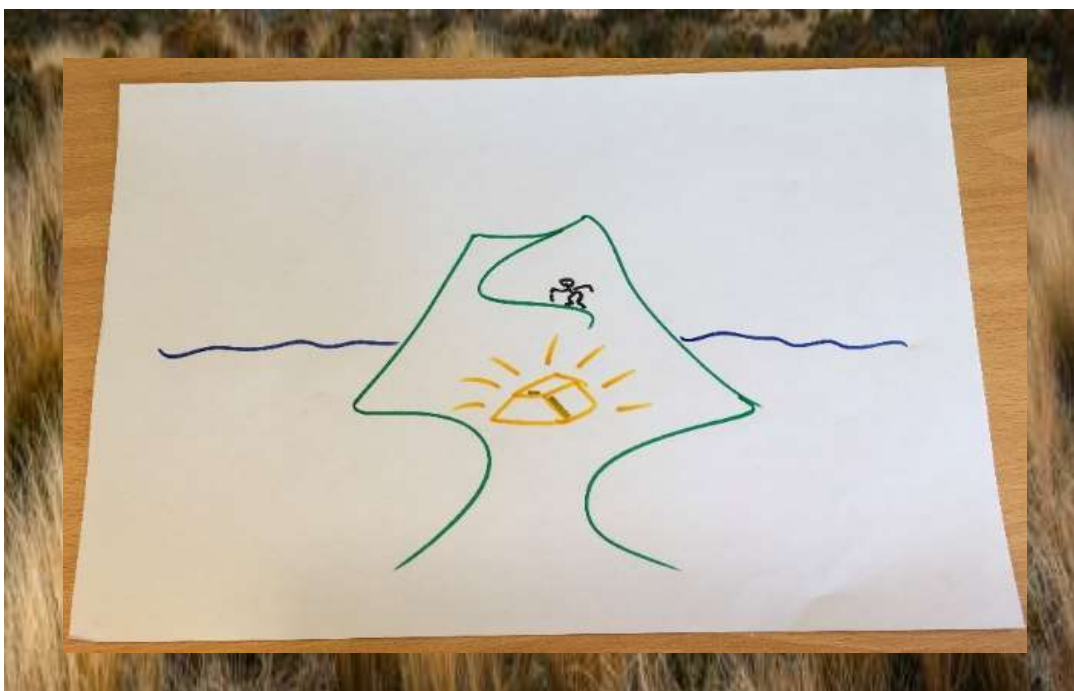


Figure 21: Dillon Te Kani's Visual Story 2

Dillon's goals shifted as he connected more to his Māori identity and gained a deeper understanding of the content of the programme in which he was enrolled. Half way into his second year of study during 2017, Dillon completed his second visual story (Figure 21). Again, he used the metaphor of climbing a mountain as being the challenge of his transition experience. He linked his thoughts to the Māori *whakataukī* (proverb), "Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei" (Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain). He also recalled his school days and remembered the school slogan:

*Dillon:* "You know, the Latin that is emblazoned on the monogram which is *quia sapientia pretiosior auro* and it's, ah, "wisdom is more precious than gold". I didn't quite know what to expect and, but, once I was on that journey, it couldn't feel more right for me. I even got to a stage towards the end of the year where things were getting difficult, and I thought about throwing my job in. And I'm on a pretty well-paying job at [workplace], but I guess the milestone for me last year was that this educational journey means more to me than a well-paying job at the moment. So I'm locked into this pathway up the mountain now, it's **the** priority for me, even over work."

Dillon's transition experience was a journey of personal growth and change as he conquered mountains, overcame adversity and tension between prioritising study, work and family or social commitments in order to get through a series of "finish lines" throughout his study. His student identity changed over time as he wrestled between making choices that may benefit him, or that may benefit other students (and wider society) as well. He also came to regard the new knowledge and personal learning he was gaining from doing his study as equally, if not more valuable than his work. He attributed these changes in his thinking to

studying in a kaupapa Māori organisation where the kaupapa Māori values created an environment which facilitated his personal growth and his re-connection to being Māori.

### *Hemaima – Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology*



*Figure 22: Hemaima's Visual Story 1*

Hemaima is a female student in her thirties who lives in Tauranga. She enrolled in the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in a two-year Diploma of Environmental Management programme. I met Hemaima during her first year of the diploma in my capacity as a staff member, although she began participating in the present research at the beginning of her second year. After completing the diploma, Hemaima enrolled as a third year student in the UoW's Bachelor of Science programme at the Tauranga campus. Therefore, during the data collection and analysis phase of the present research, Hemaima's transition experiences included being a second year Toi Ohomai student and then a first year UoW student.

Hemaima is married and has two school-aged daughters and is also involved in volunteer eco-restoration work locally. Furthermore, she is a talented musician and often called to perform in various music-related events. Hemaima has a

learning disability known as Irlen's Syndrome. At the outset, she asked me to exclude that information from this research. By the end of the research, because of her own personal journey and the way she re-constructed her identity narrative over time, she thought it important to include this information in our research. Irlen's Syndrome means Hemaima has faced struggles with balancing behavioural and neurological issues such as panic attacks, fight and flight extreme emotions, reading and light difficulties which necessitate being in natural light environments, and she is irritated by flickering, artificial and fluorescent lighting. This presents challenges for her in many study situations.

Identity that is socially constructed in one context may not always transfer to another context. For instance, Hemaima had spent two years coming to grips with her identity as a student in the context of the polytechnic. During this time, she gained an understanding of how her Irlen's syndrome was perceived by others—which influenced how she saw herself (self and society). When she enrolled in the university, she began to realise that her disability was perceived differently. "I had to face the fact that I have reading issues". She felt she had to come face to face with her disability in order to get through university.

*Hemaima:* "So the risk is that if I behave the way that I did in the diploma, that I would get absolutely no qualification at Waikato University because you can't do, "Oh, I didn't hand it in" or "Oh, I had a panic attack" or, "Can I have an extension?" You can't talk directly to your tutor. You've got no constant face-to-face contact, and our lectures are actually even...live videoed".

This quote also represents a critique of distance learning which she found did not suit her as well as face-to-face learning, perhaps representing her Māori cultural values. Hemaima has experienced a wide range of formal TE since leaving school, including a Diploma of Song Writing at Wintec in Hamilton, Art Makers course through Youth Corps, and later through part-time study, third year papers to attain of Bachelor of Media Arts at Wintec. Next she thought about becoming a primary school teacher.

*Hemaima:* “So I got a scholarship to study being a primary school teacher, but I dropped out because I was sitting in class and realising that I didn’t know much, and that all I’d ever done was go to school, and I needed a break”.

Quinn (2010) suggests that in terms of TE policy agenda, leaving early signifies a failed transition into university, but is often not experienced in that way by the students themselves. Hemaima’s perception of her withdrawal as part of an on-going process of reassessment, of finding out what she did and did not want to do is consistent with Quinn’s (2010) argument. Significantly, Hemaima did not view this withdrawal as the end of her engagement with TE nor did she view the experience as a ‘failed’ one, but actually as a helpful one to determine her life direction. This is consistent with arguments made by McGivney (1992; 1996; 2003) and Quinn (2010) that students do not necessarily transition through TE in a linear fashion. It is usually more of a zig-zag throughout the life course, thus withdrawing and changing directions is an on-going process or reassessment throughout the life course.

Hemaima later completed a Certificate in Small Business Management, at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa in Tauranga. During this time she experienced multiple deaths and sickness among her extended family and friends. Subsequently, she made a dramatic change away from her music and pilates-related self-employed business.

*Hemaima:* So, I then made a dramatic change, and decided that if I’m going to have to re-certify in stuff that I already know, I might as well look at a new career, and hence I’ve ended up on the Diploma of Environmental Management.

She enrolled in the two-year Diploma of Environmental Management programme at the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in 2015. She completed the diploma in 2016 and enrolled in the UoW Bachelor of Science in 2017 which allows for a student to pathway as a third year from the diploma into a degree.

Hemaima thought of her TE transition experience as a journey of swimming from one side to the other (Figure 22). The waves in her picture depicted Hemaima’s

feeling that she never quite fitted in with the other students and the tutors. Her transition experience began when she was climbing up a ladder getting ready to jump off (begin her diploma). No matter how high she climbed, she had a broken heart and she couldn't fix it (anxiety, adversity, grief). Despite her previous experiences in formal TE environments, she was anxious that she was not well prepared to 'handle' this study in such a radically different subject area. While Hemaima was climbing to the top of the ladder, she knew she had to be brave, feel the anxiety and fear and ultimately take the leap. During the first weeks of her programme, when she jumped off into study, into the unknown, she landed in a very deep end.

*Diana: "That's water?" Pointing to the blue coloured ink.*

*Hemaima: "Yup. Landed in quite a deep end. So I came down, and plonk, then you come up. And then it was just going like this. (Hemaima draws the waves on the top of the water). Up and down, up and down, all the way".*

*Diana: "But not down at the deep bottom, more towards the surface?"*

*Hemaima: "No, just like that. All year long, up and down. And then, probably finishing it, I went down deep like that (Hemaima draws a heavy purple block at the end of the waves towards the bottom which signifies what happened straight after she finished her diploma at the end of her second year) and now, I'm climbing back up the tree. It's like that, so you have these highs and lows... So whatever happened in here (Hemaima points to the waves and the water), at least I've gotten to this side, and so my heart feels mended...I suppose I feel a lot stronger and I feel like my heart is a bit mended. I don't feel broken any more".*

Hemaima drew two hearts – the heart at the top of the first ladder has a black crack line to indicate her feeling 'broken' at the beginning, whereas the heart at the top of the Nikau Palm is whole, mended. Hemaima often climbs and

reconnects to trees and nature when she wants to feel safe or happy. She feels it is a spiritual connection to nature and the mountains where she grew up; sitting up somewhere high gives her an overview of everything.

*Diana:* “You’re back up in your safe place, kind of your, good place?”

*Hemaima:* “Yeah, exactly. I can look at the world and have a view of where I might fly off to, or what I might do, or how I am going to weigh it all, but I definitely know that....I suppose the change is that I am happy to put a value on money, whereas I wasn’t prepared to do that back then” (*Hemaima points to the broken heart at the top of the ladder on the left*).

A pertinent part of Hemaima’s visual illustration is the dark purple thick line going down towards the bottom after Hemaima finished her Diploma. Towards the very end of her second year, she had to re-sit an exam for her Ecological Restoration paper, but couldn’t study because she was so sick (health, holistic well-being). Then she had a car crash and wrote off her car (finances, practicalities impacted on her). Fortunately, she was not seriously injured. However, the accident happened when she lost control of the vehicle on a gravel road on her way to her volunteer role helping Kiwi and Kōkako restoration efforts in the bush. She had taken on the volunteer role half way through her second year. Classmates and family told Hemaima to apply for a Conceded Pass (CP) because she had not done so well in her exam owing to her illness and being unable to study. It was a bitter pill for her to swallow.

*Hemaima:* “It is a bitter pill, and at the same time my friends in the class are saying, “let it go, just get a CP, let it go”, and the type of person I like to think I am is, “let’s see what we can do to improve it, let’s work together, let’s nut it out, let’s spend time together”. But I haven’t had any friends from the class offer, “let’s get your grades up so we can all finish with those 70% of grades all together”. So not only was I dismissed by my tutor, but I felt a little bit let down”.

Hemaima was expectant of collaboration that did not happen. Ultimately, Hemaima applied for a CP, which was awarded; however, she was really annoyed about it for a while, as illustrated by her thick and heavy purple line in the visual story.

*Hemaima: "So, I sacrificed, for ecological restoration of Otanewainuku forest, I sacrificed going to class and wanting to catch-up, I sacrificed money. Then, after that paper had finished, going to volunteer, my car lost control on the gravel road, and I've lost my car! And then, I have to look at this paper in Ecological Restoration that says "CP". Tears rolling down her check, half laughing, half crying. I didn't quite know enough about Ecological Restoration. I've got a CP on a paper, that in the last two years, I've spent the most amount of time outside of this course doing, so it was really annoying!"*

Hemaima's transition experience was a journey characterized by highs and lows as she changed from having a "broken heart" to a "mended heart". These were her two sides. The beginning and the end were experienced as periods of intense anxiety, with the middle feeling rocky because she didn't always fit in (sense of belonging). But when she reached the top of her 'Nikau Palm' tree, she was relieved to be in a safe, good and more knowledgeable place. She reflected that the journey was thoroughly worthwhile, despite the highs and lows and facing adversity. Now she was in a place where she was ready to take the next steps, and was heavily focused on using her new qualification to help her get a job and earn money.



*Figure 23: Watene Moon's Visual Story*

Watene is a male student in his thirties who lives on the outskirts of Tauranga city. He is enrolled in the UoW in Tauranga and travels to the Windermere campus to attend classes. Currently, he is a full-time student in the Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) degree, managing his study around his part-time job at a local bar. Directly after leaving high school in Tauranga, Watene attended the University of Otago for four years. However, he did not complete his degree at that time. Since then, he has not carried out any formal TE. Watene spent about eight years living and working in Canada in the hospitality industry and has recently returned 'home' to Tauranga. He lives with his parents. Three main reasons Watene enrolled in this programme were to: a) move into a teaching career and be able to use his social and people skills developed from years working in the hospitality industry; b) become a role model for younger people, and; c) pride – to succeed in getting the degree "this time".

Watene was asked to become a student ambassador for the UoW at the beginning of his second year (a paid position he took up) and he also became heavily involved in a Māori student support group (Mana Ake). Yet a third undertaking he entered

into at the beginning of his second year was to enrol in a free Te Wānanga o Aotearoa Level 4 Te Ara Reo Māori night programme in order to improve his Māori language skills.

Watene likens his transition experience to a feather containing meaning around empowerment, journeying through flying and earning the right to move up (rites of passage) (Figure 23). One of the high points for Watene occurred during his teaching practicum experience near the end of his first year. He had to teach an art lesson about personification to a class of 7-year old primary school students. Using the Māori legend of Mauao (see section 2.2) he prepared his lesson. Through this experience, he also began thinking about getting a tattoo done on his body to represent the story of Mauao and link to his first year as a teacher trainee.

*Watene:* “So I focused on Mauao, and the story behind Mauao, caught by the sun, so I got my kids to make the Mount as Mauao but drawing it with human features, that is personification. In the corner you have got the sun, he was caught by the sun...And I thought it would actually be a real cool tattoo as well, I haven’t got it done yet,...it’s got a Māori edge to it which I would be keen on, and like, it is going to get done because it represented my first year as a teacher. To me personally, that is what I look for in all my tats. They are all like personal meaning and I was like yes, that’s perfect. So anyway, that is where the sun part comes from”.

The idea of the feather metaphor also came from the motto at the school where he carried out his practicum, which was: “Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu” (Adorn the birds with feathers so that it can fly). This represents how Watene’s view of his transition experience is a journey: one of personal growth, a process of change, an emerging understanding of identity, as being Māori and as overcoming adversity.

*Watene:* “Adorn the birds with feather and it shall fly, and basically, train up these young fellas and they can take off on their own, right? And it is just like that kind of represents...that is what the feather is (because I can’t draw a bird) so that represents how I look back on last year. We talked about this

last year, the whole experience has been a journey, and it has been the journey that has been the most important part. It is really a self-discovery journey as well. I am so much more confident, different, (in good ways) *Watene laughs at himself...* to what I was at the beginning of the year. You discover things about yourself that you didn't know, or you didn't think you could do. The motto of our school last year really summed it up. You go in there, you do all those things and you come out and at the end and you're just like, whooosh! *Watene uses his hand to indicate a bird taking off and flying.* Yeah, I am not going to try flying *hahaha*. But you know what I mean, aye"?

Watene's experience was characterized by his consistently high motivation and shifting goals. At first, Watene thought he would like to get his degree and then teach in a Māori immersion school, but he changed to thinking he could make more difference in influencing people's attitudes about Te Ao Māori by teaching in a mainstream school. Then he saw an advertisement in the Herald for people to be prison assistants and considered how he could become a mentor and role model for Māori male prisoners. Later, he moved his thoughts towards doing further study at the end of his degree and enrolling in a Graduate Diploma. No matter what his thoughts were about goals at the end of the degree, these shifting goals helped him remain consistently motivated to attend his classes, complete his work and make the most of his journey (goals, journey, and identity).

*Watene:* "That's like from the motto, that feather, and so I have got my own feathers now from making it to the end of that first year, and the sun represents the lesson that I did on personification. I wouldn't say that it was a hugely successful lesson, and when I look back it reminds me of my first year of teaching...even if I don't end up teaching it's still been, this whole go-to-university-thing, this whole journey, I can tell it has been a milestone in my life, regardless of what I get up to from here on in. So that is why I want the tattoo. Even if I do these

three years and not become a teacher, it's a point in my life that I can feel myself shifting into a new phase. So that's what the feather and the sun are, that is what represents my experience last year".

Watene's current experience was strongly linked to his first experience of TE. He often made comparisons between his transition experience as a school leaver into Otago University at 19 years of age and his current transition experience where he felt much more ready and better prepared to take on study commitments (preparation, re-assessment, agency and cultural capital). He felt prepared to take on a more positive student identity.

*Watene:* "...because this is actually my second time at uni. The first time I went, I was straight out of high school and it was just a totally different mind frame for me in terms of motivation and stuff like that. I didn't plan, I just dealt with things as they came along, like assignments and stuff, rather than like this time. I'm **really** motivated this time and I look ahead as much as I can handle. I just plan better and get my head around it. More, what's the word? Prepared, yeah, more prepared." [Int 1, 2016].

Watene's transition experiences helped him explore his personal identity in relation to others, and to understand his identity as being Māori. This is not to say that personal identity and Māori identity are exclusive of each other; they worked together to form his identity. Watene's experience reflected the complexity of historical, contemporary and reclamation of Māori identity (see sections 3.3.3 and 8.2.1).

Interview 1, 2016: *Researcher:* "So, are both your parents Māori?"

*Watene:* Aaah, my Mum is, but my Dad wasn't brought up as a Māori, but he has Māori blood in him. It's interesting, his generation. He's said once or twice about when he was growing up, it wasn't cool to have Māori blood in you".

(Later) *Watene*: “Yeah, I found it really interesting how I came across to the South Islanders, especially when it came to, well most of the girls I dated down there were blonde haired, blue-eyed girls from Southland. *Laughs*. They don’t have many Māori down that way. I found that really interesting. **You get more of a perception of yourself through other people, right?**” (My emphasis)

Interview 2, 2016: *Watene*: “Like I said, I come from both worlds” (Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā).

Interview 3, 2016: *Watene*: “Because it all relates back to identity and sense of self. University is very much a Pākehā institution. I’m not saying it’s a bad thing, it’s not, but it’s a culture as well, right? So if you go there...well you’d know this as a teacher, Māori students feel like they leave their identity, leave their culture, at the door. So, I think if you have that **stronger sense of yourself** and why you are doing it, you won’t think about that kind of thing when you come into university, right?”

Interview 4, 2017: “When I was growing up, the term was ‘half-caste’, but now, since I have been at university, and this is what I mean about being strong in myself, you know, my new thing is, ‘I identify as...’ *pauses*, you know, half-caste can be kind of derogatory in a sense”.

*Researcher*: “Mmmm, it has a stigma to it, yeah, so what do you identify as?”

*Watene*: “Well, that’s it, I’m Māori! Else I wouldn’t be here doing this research! *Laughs!*”

For *Watene*, identifying as bicultural and as Māori gradually changed to being an identity of which he was proud. This is another instance of the interaction between self and society, as the social times changed.

Watene's comment about sense of belonging was echoed throughout the interviews and focus groups with many other participants. He attributed gaining a feeling of belonging as a key part of his transition experience and vital towards his motivation levels staying high (motivation, sense of belonging).

*Watene:* "... being made to feel comfortable and relevant maybe. Making that transition, you have got to find that sense of belonging, like you belong here, like you are allowed to be here. If you find that, then you can.... That is probably what last year was all about for me really, the whole year. And then **now**, now I **know** I belong here and that is why I am really pushing forward more. So, yes, maybe a sense of belonging and connection" [Int 4, 2017].

Throughout his first and second year, like other participants, Watene noticed a few students in his class whose attitude was unsupportive or ignorant of Māori culture. During one of the 2016 focus groups, Watene and other participants discussed their experience of some of their classmates.

*Watene:* "There's one girl in our class, she grew up in a Pākehā family, and different people have called her racist. I think she is just more ignorant. I think racists would hate other people just because of that, and I don't think she is a hateful person, I just think she is ignorant.

*Diana:* "Do you mean that through her ignorance there might have been some remarks you perceived as racist?"

*Watene:* "Exactly. At the beginning of the year, she piped up and said some things which were like, maaaaan, you don't want to say that! Some of the girls have called her racist. I don't mind her, I'm not going to hate her" [FG 2, 2016]

*Watene:* "Māori students do feel a resentment. No-one has come up to me and said that, but you pick it up sometimes. It's a fine line. It was more prominent down in Otago because...there was a marae in the middle of town and it got

burnt down one year. It was before I got down there, one of the other Māori students was telling me. There was a big spray painting saying, “enough is enough”. [Int 2, 2016].

In summary, the transition experiences of Dillon, Hemaima and Watene illustrate themes that were common among all the participants that included, but were not limited to: motivation, goals, identity, journeying and processes of change or personal growth, everyday racism, health, well-being, finances, sense of belonging and overcoming adversity.

### 6.2.3 Barriers

The second subsidiary research question asked:

What are the transition barriers for Māori students into tertiary study?

Many barriers impacting upon effective transition experiences noted by other researchers relate to the extent of support an individual student perceives they have. This has implications for how tertiary institutions can structure programmes and systems to minimise barriers. My findings echo the literature, showing Māori students experienced institutional and everyday (individual) racism and were hindered by finances (high student fees and being averse to taking on student loan debt), geographic inaccessibility, TE not a relevant option, lack of Māori academic role models among staff (Kidman, Chu, Fernandez & Abelly, 2015), reluctance to approach support services, non-inclusion of Māori culture and being first in family (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Wikaire & Ratima, 2011; Wiseley, 2009). Based on Hall et al.'s (2013) system of grouping barriers and enablers (as discussed in section 3.4.3), as well as using Giddens' (1984) micro and macro approach to analysis (a perspective which analyses the interrelations of agency and structure), I considered characteristics of Māori students, characteristics of the tertiary environment and, student relationship characteristics.

I identified and grouped barriers into three areas: a) individual, b) institutional; c) societal (Table 7). As established earlier in section 3.4.4, evaluating situational barriers and opportunities for participating in TE activities necessitates considering individuals' social backgrounds and roles, along with other elements

of the wider psycho-social context (Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Some barriers related to an individual's circumstance or attitude, whereas other barriers clearly linked to the TE organisation's systems or processes. Yet a third group could be seen as barriers that may exist due to the wider socio-political context in which Māori students live. Some barriers exist in more than one category (e.g. "racism", "financial"); therefore, they have been listed twice to indicate this. Affordability of TE was a very important point and a significant barrier for adult learners.

Barriers were consolidated and analysed according to themes that were highly relevant to each participant's lived experiences. These are compiled in the thematic analysis table below (Table 8). Subsequently, this thematic table was synthesized with information in the other thematic tables to form three overarching themes of identity, structure and agency (introduced later in section 7.2.8 and re-visited in the Discussion chapter).

Table 7: Barriers for Effective Transitions

| Individual   | Institutional   | Socio-political   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failing an assessment</li> <li>• Fear of failure</li> <li>• Financial pressures</li> <li>• Geographical distance, inaccessibility of TEO</li> <li>• Guilt for being the one studying</li> <li>• Lack of confidence</li> <li>• Lack of self-esteem, or self-belief or sense of being worthy to study</li> <li>• Lack of support (family, iwi, friends)</li> <li>• Lack of motivation</li> <li>• Lack of time</li> <li>• Poor health or well-being</li> <li>• Poor time management skills</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Responsibility of being the first one in family to study at tertiary level</li> <li>• Transportation issues</li> <li>• Whānau – obligations, commitments, marae</li> <li>• Work/life/study balance</li> <li>• Tertiary level education not seen as relevant</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing academic advice</li> <li>• Cultural and social isolation</li> <li>• Enrolment process</li> <li>• Experiencing racism</li> <li>• Failing an assessment</li> <li>• Financial pressures</li> <li>• Lack of Māori culturally related curricular content</li> <li>• Lack of mentoring</li> <li>• Lack of relationship with teacher and/or classmates</li> <li>• Lack of sense of belonging</li> <li>• Limited culturally responsive teaching and learning</li> <li>• Poor physical Environment</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• School subjects and qualifications unrelated to course</li> <li>• Unfamiliar with academic requirements</li> <li>• Unprepared academically</li> <li>• Unsupported socially and academically</li> <li>• Study decisions, related to clear career path goals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural and social isolation</li> <li>• Disconnected</li> <li>• Experiencing racism</li> <li>• Lack of Finances</li> <li>• Lack of role modelling</li> <li>• Lack of support (family, iwi, friends)</li> <li>• Poor health</li> <li>• Racism</li> <li>• Tertiary level education seen as not relevant</li> <li>• Transportation issues</li> </ul> |

Table 8: Thematic Analysis of Transition Barriers

| Thematic Analysis of Transition Barriers             |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|  |    | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 | P11 | P12 | P13 | P14 | P15 | P16 | P17 |
| 1. Balancing life/work/study                         | 13 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |
| 2. Lack of finances and/or resources                 | 10 | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |     |
| 3. Fear of failure (course/assessment)               | 9  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |
| 4. Experiencing Racism                               | 8  | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |     |     |
| 5. Lack of/Incorrect information, advice and support | 6  |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | ✓   |
| 6. Geographic distance from campus                   | 5  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |     |     |
| 7. Difficult Enrolment Process                       | 5  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     |     | ✓   |
| 8. Practical matters not sorted                      | 4  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     |     |     |
| 9. Delayed feedback on assessments                   | 2  |    | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    | ✓  |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 10. First in family                                  | 2  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     |

**All these barriers become enablers in reverse. E.g., Easy enrolment processes or having suitable school subjects and qualifications facilitate more effective transitions.**

## **1. Balancing life/work/study**

The most common barrier faced by participants (13) related to balancing time and energy between everyday life happenings around family commitments, social or sports events, marae commitments, work commitments and study priorities. This barrier was experienced whether participants were enrolled part-time or full-time.

*Marie:* "So what I've decided to do is to extend my degree over four years. That decision has come not because I'm not coping with the work, but I'm not coping with the balance of...so my daughter has just turned one, and my son is two, and I'm not coping with finding time for them, finding time for my partner and finding time to do everything that needs to be done. I was just really struggling with that, and my partner was starting to become bitter towards this choice because it was taking me away from our family" [Int 3, 2016].

*Lorana:* "I'm pretty blessed though, because I'm home by myself, so I haven't got little children. The setup of my life is such that I can push it, whereas I couldn't have done this at any other time in my life. I would NOT have been able to do it. So now, I've got no 'littlies' at home, I don't have a job..." [Int 3, 2016].

*Aubrey (discussing his part-time job at the mill):* "I do Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday night and then Sunday. I am usually so tired when I go to work on Sunday. I'm getting up at 4:30 in the morning anyway, some days I'm asleep by 4:30 in the afternoon. It's just that having to play rugby as well on a Saturday and making rugby training on Tuesdays and Thursdays doesn't leave me with much energy when I sit down to look at the books" [Int 3, 2016].

## **2. Lack of finances/resources**

A second barrier most commonly and repeatedly discussed by participants (10) was lack of finances, or experiencing financial pressure as a barrier for them.

Limited finances were a source of stress and worry, impacting (practically, emotionally and cognitively) on ability to continue studying or to give enough time to study instead of earning.

*Hemaima:* "...The third time I wanted to drop out was that I actually didn't want to come back because I was feeling financially stressed. I thought there would be more security in me going and working..." [Int 2, 2016]

*Awhina:* "The transition is not going to be easy, if it happens. And it may not be possible. I'd have to change (from the solo parent allowance) to a student allowance. And because I've never done it, I don't know how it works.....someone of my age shouldn't really be studying much longer....because I don't want a big student loan. Not at my age." [Int 2, 2016]

### **3. Fear of failure**

Fear of failure was a very real barrier expressed by nine participants. This meant failing an individual assessment, or an entire course/paper or even failing the whole programme. Fear of failure linked to participants' sense of belonging, self-confidence and past experiences in education environments, especially secondary school.

*Marie:* "We started off doing the Te Ara Reo Māori together and he stopped, mainly because he couldn't cope with working and studying at the same time. But also because of the pressures of fear and failure. I mean, I'm a lot like that. I haven't completed a lot of things in my life because of fear...and being a failure." [Int 3, 2016].

Failing an assessment or getting a very low pass grade was a barrier to an effective transition for participants because it decreased their motivation to persist and reduced their self-confidence. By contrast, getting a very low mark, but still a "pass" on an assessment worked in reverse to enable motivation for some students to "try harder" next time.

*Aubrey:* “Failing my first assessment, my first essay. That was another low-light for me, but then I turned it into a high-light because I was able to get really high scores...failing that very first one, I think I only got 49% but then, I turned that around...so that was good”.

#### **4. Experiencing Racism**

The fourth most common barrier to an effective transition experience cited by participants (8) was experiencing “everyday racism” (Ford & Airhihenbuwa, 2010) from within or beyond TE institution staff and/or classmates (institutional racism). This was experienced in the form of attitudes expressed by verbal or written remarks and/or actions that resulted in the participant feeling emotional anxiety, fear or weariness.

*Sophia:* “...there’s been a bit of a, ummm, *pause*, I’m not sure how to explain it. A little bit of a divide in the group, based around some racist comments that were said and posted online in a private FaceBook page that was formed, a very exclusive group.

*Researcher:* “Was this racism from Pākehā towards Māori?”

*Sophia:* “Yes....and it didn’t subside over the semester break...” [Int 2, 2016].

*Racism came up again later in the interview:*

*Sophia:* “I sort of felt offended personally on behalf of *all* Māori students here on campus...and then I began to question whether this was a place that I should be. And that wasn’t good. I went up to Auckland this weekend just passed ...and spoke to my Dad...so, he said don’t allow those prejudices to dictate your future. I’ve just come back a little bit, just believing this is still what I want to do. But yeah, just a bit broken last week...” [Int 3, 2016].

Experiencing racism was a barrier stated explicitly by eight participants. Students who experienced racism from the TEO staff or their classmates in the form of actions or comments disengaged with their learning, temporarily or long-term.

*Participant: Weary tone* "...[experiencing racism] has been normalised for so long and we walk amongst it every day. We experience it every day. I don't know how we stop it. By not doing anything...doesn't mean that we condone it, sometimes you get tired of fighting it, or having to feel that you need to justify everything you do constantly. Yeah, I honestly don't know that it will ever change. I'd love to think that it will, but I don't know. I don't think so." [Int 2, 2016]

The remark made by this participant indicates how insidious and difficult to articulate that institutional racism can be. Often hidden, institutional racism impacted on institutional support and clearly underpinned the academic experience for the Māori students in this study. In addition to the eight participants who shared explicit stories of racial discrimination experiences, instances of institutional racism were implicit among *all* participants' experiences.

##### **5. Lack of access to and/or incorrect information, advice and support**

Not being able to easily access information, advice, support, including culturally relevant academic and/or pastoral support was a barrier for six participants, as illustrated by Aubrey's explanation below. Induction processes at all three institutions were discussed as barriers by many participants, preventing students from knowing what to do and diminishing their confidence.

*Aubrey:* "Getting the forms in was the easy part, it was actually trying to get in contact with someone to figure out what I was supposed to do, or what was expected of me. I just wanted a piece of paper...this is what we'd be doing, just so I knew what to expect. You come into it blinded, with a blindfold on, and you don't know what is going to happen until you actually do your first three weeks. I think they do that for a reason, being that some of us might get overwhelmed" [Int 1, 2016].

Simply having no support was a barrier and a reason for Awhina not making a transition to university.

*Awhina:* “I don’t have the support. I firmly know and believe that to do any tertiary level of study, you need to have some kind of support. Financial, emotional and you need security...so that is why I couldn’t transition into the uni, I couldn’t do it. Probably not impossible, but probably stupid for me if I was to, with that lack of support” [Int 3, 2017].

For some participants, their school subjects and qualifications were not suitable to allow them entry into a programme in which they were interested. Notably, these participants were all school-leavers (and the only school-leavers that participated in this research). Not being given appropriate advice at secondary school as to what subjects enable tertiary level decisions inhibited which programme a student could enrol in and also caused confusion about what the programme they signed up for was really about, and what job opportunities it may or may not lead to.

*Luwina:* “Well, I want to do it (referring to a bridging foundation course) because I want to get the credits for the Animal Care course. I was meant to do that in the first semester, but apparently I don’t have credits for it. They told me to come to this Foundation study Level 2 course, get the credits for that and then I can go onto the Animal Care in semester two...” [Int 1, 2017].

This may be related in part to the ‘dumbing down’ of Māori student choice of subjects during secondary school and in part to a lack of information early enough to choose subjects which will pathway into programmes of interest (Chauvel & Rean, 2012).

## **6. Geographic distance from campus**

Geographic distance from the campus was experienced as a barrier for five students in this study. The geographic distance became a barrier if/when they had car troubles (how else could they get to their classes?), financial stresses impacting

ability to purchase petrol/bus tickets, timetable difficulties, leaving campus with enough time to pick up children from school, being able to meet with other students spontaneously on campus and get involved in wider campus activities.

*Aubrey: (lives over one hour away from campus) "...and then last week I got a flat tyre and had no money to get to course. I had to get a new tyre and I had to sit on the side of the road and wait for somebody to bring me a wheel, so yeah, missed class!" [Int 5, 2017].*

*Jamahl: "Aaah, my student ambassador role, I kinda stopped that because of the travelling from Rotorua to here (Tauranga)..." [Int 3, 2017].*

## **7. Difficult (re)enrolment process**

A difficult enrolment or re-enrolment process was a barrier for five participants. Confusing website processes; not understanding the role and links (or lack of links) between StudyLink and the TEO itself; waiting a long time for information about confirmed enrolment created barriers to participants' effective transition experiences.

*Diana: "Have you put your re-enrolment forms in for next year"?*

*Pūtara: "I don't know how to do it. It didn't look right".*

*Diana: "Okaaaay, so..."*

*Pūtara: "So, one of the girls who has done it in our class already had a look at it and she said hers didn't look like that. It only showed our Year 1 papers. Do we click on that? She said, "You need to click on Year 2" [Int 3, 2016].*

*Lorana: "...Just in regards to actually starting at the wānanga. Because when I first enrolled it took a while to get the information. I didn't know where I was meant to be on the first day, I hadn't received any information, and it all just added to my, 'oh, what have I gotten myself into here'?! [Int 1, 2016]*

## 8. Practical situational matters not sorted

Not having practical matters arranged was a barrier expressed by four participants. If matters such as child-care arrangements, finances, clashes of job hours with class timetables, family help with domestic duties and transportation were not arranged before study commenced; it hindered participants continuing attending classes or completing assessments. Even if practical matters were sorted out at the beginning, changes in situations as the programme continued may have disturbed the balance.

*Marie:* "...I'm trying to pick the kids up earlier but I can see that that's not going to work as well as I thought it would" [Int 2, 2016].

*Watene:* "...Because you know I cut down my hours at work in the summer when I did that dance paper, aye? It was tiring, who would have thought, dancing all day?!" [Int 4, 2017]

## 9. Delayed feedback on assessments

Delayed feedback about how the student was achieving in their assessments was a barrier to effective transitions, especially if feedback was late during early stages of a new programme or a new course/paper. (Conversely, timely feedback was an enabler).

*Diana:* "Have you been getting some feedback a little more timely this semester"?

*Dillon:* "Yeah, yeah, yeah. So that has been quite a bit better this year and that might have come about as part of the feedback we gave last year. Getting a bit more timely feedback has been really helpful, particularly around my essay writing, which has needed a bit of work on *laughs* but I think that has developed this semester as well, certainly as a result of getting that feedback." [Int 4, 2017].

Conversely, timely feedback linked to subsequent motivation and academic development (illustrating the importance of formative feedback).

*Lorana*: “Yeeeeeah! Maaaaan! What a difference that makes. *Staff name* is one of them and man, it makes a big difference! A lot of the other students say the same thing, ‘oh, it’s good to get some feedback early’”.

*Researcher*: “You’re getting the feedback quicker this year?”

*Participant 6*: “Yeah, so that we know that the way we’re writing...’but you’re missing this out...’ and all that stuff, so that is very helpful!” [Int 3, 2017].

## 10. First in family

Being the first in family to carry out tertiary level study (especially a degree) was a responsibility experienced as both an honour and a burden. Students discussed the honour and the pressure to ‘educate’ the rest of the family (e.g. balancing marae commitments, etc). Furthermore, managing other family members view of them being in TE (sometimes negative) was a barrier for two students.

*Watene*: “When you come from a whānau unit, sometimes it (being the first in family to enter TE) can be seen as, maybe not openly, but they think that, are you better than us? Not all families are like that of course, but that is the general thing. You don’t want to stand out from your whānau in a sense. I might be going over the mark a bit but that is how it is...” [Int 3, 2016].

*Charvae*: “Yeah, so, at the start, I didn’t think I was good enough to get into this course, no one in my family has ever done anything like this before. Having the Māori background too, being Māori, you don’t really feel like you’re allowed to do this, like you’re entitled to something as cool as this” [Int 1, 2016].

What is intriguing (and disappointing) is that barriers expressed by participants are not new. Many barriers discussed in Chauvel and Rean’s (2012) literature review are akin to barriers voiced by participants in this study. It is clear that these barriers directly impact upon transitions experiences and success for Māori.

#### 6.2.4 Enablers

The third subsidiary research question asked:

What are the transition enablers for Māori students into tertiary study?

Findings from this study illustrate a numerous enablers which facilitated students' effective transition experiences. Initially, all enablers were identified and grouped into three areas: a) individual, b) institutional; c) societal (Table 9). Some enablers related to an individual's circumstance or attitude, whereas other enablers clearly linked to the TEO's systems or processes. Yet a third group of enablers were factors due to the wider socio-political context in which Māori students live. Enablers which exist in more than one category have been listed twice. Next, these enablers were consolidated and thematically analysed according to which theme was strongly relevant to each participant's lived experiences (Table 10). Subsequently this thematic table was synthesized with information in the other thematic tables to form three over-arching themes of identity, structure and agency (see section 7.2.8).

Table 9: Enablers for Effective Transitions

| Individual  | Institutional  | Socio-political   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being prepared</li> <li>• Gaining a sense of belonging</li> <li>• Feeling connected to staff and classmates</li> <li>• Geographic accessibility of the TEO</li> <li>• Goals – fixed</li> <li>• Goals – shifting</li> <li>• Health and well-being holistically</li> <li>• High grades</li> <li>• Knowing what to expect</li> <li>• Motivation – consistent or fluctuating</li> <li>• Low cost or free courses</li> <li>• Passing</li> <li>• Practical matters sorted</li> <li>• Social connections with other classmates</li> <li>• Support from friends</li> <li>• Support from whānau</li> <li>• Tuakana-teina relationships with experienced students</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic support</li> <li>• Approachable staff</li> <li>• Being prepared academically</li> <li>• Bridging courses</li> <li>• Career Pathways understood</li> <li>• Easily accessible information and support</li> <li>• Flexible delivery (e.g. online, evening, weekends, block courses)</li> <li>• Flexibility in deadlines</li> <li>• Inclusive environment for Māori</li> <li>• Knowing what to expect</li> <li>• Low-cost or free courses</li> <li>• Māori Role Models</li> <li>• Māori pastoral support</li> <li>• Peer mentoring from more advanced students</li> <li>• Schools encouraging TE</li> <li>• Teaching staff having high expectations of Māori students</li> <li>• Timely and frequent feedback (assessments)</li> <li>• Quick response to acceptance or rejection of application</li> <li>• Summer courses</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridging courses</li> <li>• Culturally accepting environment</li> <li>• Cultural inclusion</li> <li>• Career Pathways</li> <li>• Financial</li> <li>• Support from hapū/iwi</li> <li>• Good health</li> <li>• Public transportation</li> </ul> |

Table 10: Thematic Analysis of Effective Transition Enablers

| Thematic Analysis of Transition Enablers  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|   |    | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 | P11 | P12 | P13 | P14 | P15 | P17 |
| 1. Sense of belonging   | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
| 2. Passing/High Grades  | 14 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
| 3. Whānau/Hapū/Iwi Support  | 13 | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| 4. Classmates Support   | 12 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
| 5. Academically Prepared  | 12 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
| 6. Māori content in course  | 11 | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| 7. Access to help   | 10 | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |
| 8. Approachable/Flexible Teachers   | 10 |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |     |
| 9. Academic and/or Pastoral support   | 9  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |     |     |
| 10. Bridging Courses/Stepping Stones  | 9  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |
| 11. Practical Matters Sorted  | 9  |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| 12. Role Models   | 7  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |     |     |
| 13. Career Pathway  | 7  | ✓  |    |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |     | ✓   | ✓   |     |     | ✓   | ✓   |
| 14. Well-being (holistically)   | 6  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |
| 15. Expectations  | 5  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |
| All these enablers become barriers in reverse.<br>E.g., a lack of role models or a lack of whānau support inhibit effective transitions |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

## 1. Sense of belonging

Overwhelmingly, the strongest enabler expressed by all 15 participants related to gaining a sense of belonging in the study environment. Repeatedly, throughout the duration of the research process, all participants identified that developing a sense of belonging and ‘a right to be in this place’ empowered their transition.

*Watene:* “Being made to feel comfortable. Making that transition, you have got to find that sense of belonging, like you belong here, like you are allowed to be here. If you find that, then you can do anything. That is probably what last year was all about for me really, the whole year, and now I know I belong here. That is why I am really pushing forward more, so yeah, maybe a feeling of belonging and connection helps a lot for Māori students” [Int 4, 2017].

Sophia began her Social Work degree describing her incredible ‘gratefulness’ to be ‘allowed’ to study at university. She said it felt like being like a dream. During her first interview, when I asked her how she felt about being at university, she responded that she felt anxious, nervous. Thoughts of, “Am I good enough, do I deserve to be here?” raced through her mind. Later in the semester, as she gained a stronger sense of belonging, her attitude shifted to feeling comfortable about her ‘right’ to be studying at university:

*Sophia:* “It has changed now. I am more settled in. I know with every cell in my body that this is the right place for me to be. My motivation levels are high, and no matter what the challenges, I believe I will get there. The fact that the staff know my name validates my right to be here, it helps to make me feel like I belong and I am part of the place here” [Int 3, 2016].

Nigel created a ‘home away from home’ at the wānanga campus by having a regular booking in one of the study rooms in the library, contributing to his sense of belonging.

*Nigel:* “This is my room from Monday to Friday, or if I’m not in this room, I’m in one of the rooms upstairs. And, it’s my own

space, so I can just carry on with a few of my papers, and then go for lunch, and then come back. But they need blinds in here. People wave at me and stop in for kōrero” *Ha ha ha, Nigel laughs, showing pleasure at the thought of these happenings* [Int 2, 2016].

## **2. Passing/High grades**

Passing courses and assessments within courses was another highly discussed enabler by 14 participants. Receiving high grades was a confidence boost and added to motivation to not only persist with studies, but aim for high grades in future assessments. Both passing and high grades linked to students’ self-confidence and motivation for attendance and completing their work.

*Marie: “It frustrates me that people can’t get that everyone’s start line is not the same. I think that is probably my biggest frustration of this whole year, is how many people in our class don’t get that, don’t get that it’s not the same for everybody. You know, a C+ for someone is the same as an A+ for somebody else, because of the journey that they have to go to get there.”* [Int 2, 2016]

Later in the interview, when asked what has helped her motivation to complete all her courses this year, illustrating that ‘success breeds success’, she replies:

*Marie: “I’m just so proud of myself for this semester. We got our overall paper results back on Monday for last semester. My lowest mark was a B+, so I was pretty proud of myself. In my family, like, it’s always been...tears well up in her eyes, big breath, and pause.*

*Diana: “Oh, dear, you are going to cry” (Passes her some tissues).*

*Participant 4: “Mmmhmm...yeah, for me to get a B+, three A- s and an A is really big for me...”* [Int 3, 2016].

### 3. Whānau/hapū/iwi Support

Support was a major factor enabling effective transitions for 12 participants. Support from at least one whānau member, and/or people in their hapū or iwi was the most essential factor in helping them to succeed in their transition to TE studies.

*Jamahl:* “I pretty much use my family and friends as motivation to keep going. So you’ve got Mum and the girls and my step-father, really. They’ve always been supportive of me no matter what. Games and sport and studies, so they are a big influence for me.” [Int 1, 2016]

An institution’s openness to involving students’ whānau facilitates understanding of requirements and expectations to help whānau provide support ongoing involvement in students’ learning experiences which enables more effective transitions.

*Luwina:* “...next Wednesday we are doing our pepeha presentation and I’m still a bit nervous, because I’ve actually never fully done one in front of people. Hopefully I’ll get confident and just do it.

*Diana:* “How will you overcome your nerves?”

*Luwina:* “Well, it would be good if my Mum and my Nan come over from the island for my pepeha presentation because then they would be there to see what I have been doing at course, and they would be happy that I am doing my pepeha presentation”

*Diana:* “Do you think they will”?

*Luwina:* “Yeah, my Nan is really excited. She says she wants to meet the class. I’m like, ‘okay then, just meet all the class and the tutors” [Int 1, 2017].

*Sophia:* “If there was one thing I could say to another student coming into this, it would be to know that you have support, even just one main support person” [Int 4, 2016].

#### 4. (Māori) Classmates Support

Forming relationships with classmates in general as a 'whānau' was an enabler, and 12 participants often raised this notion. Having classmates' support reduced feelings of isolation and engendered feelings of belonging, whanaungatanga, and that presence/absence in class matters. Furthermore, feeling comfortable to ask other classmates about issues to do with assessments was seen as a 'safe' and reliable source; this facilitated a more effective transition experience.

*Waipae:* "And the other part of a good transition is having supportive classmates. We've got a tight-knit class, we're a bit more of a family, I guess" [Int 3, 2016]

*Watene:* "...within class we're all in our own groups and we generally always sit with the same people, but as a unit we come together. FaceBook is just the medium where we chat and swap our ideas and stuff. We all come together and help each other out. Someone will ask a question and then the first person will reply and then we'll all pitch in with ideas and stuff, whereas maybe within the class we don't talk to each other as much. Myself, personally, I find that *really* helpful" [Int 1, 2016].

Watene's interesting observation implies an influence of informal, peer learning as a contributor to effective learning. This has connections with another enabler for an effective transition for many students relating to having at least one other Māori classmate with whom they bonded on the basis of being Māori.

*Aubrey:* "...his group is like a mixed race group...he's found common ground with them, whereas the Māori boys I hang out with have always hung out with Māori, and Māori only. I hang out with heaps of other different races, but I'm not too sure what it is, I'm always drawn to other Māori people. Whether its food, sport, I just have more in common with them, really" [Int 1, 2016].

## **5. Academically Prepared**

Being academically prepared for the course content enables success; for 12 participants, having relevant academic skills or knowledge made the transition more effective and less stressful. Among these, nine participants reported that their previous study in a bridging course was significant in supporting their effective transition into higher levels of study. Other participants expressed that if they had been *more* academically prepared they would have had a smoother or easier transition into their new environment.

*Aubrey:* “For me, if I knew what I was doing, I could have prepared for it, I could have mentally prepared as well as educationally prepared. I could have read up on certain things so I wouldn’t have gone to classes not knowing anything, so it would have made it easier for me” [Int 1, 2016].

## **6. Māori content in course**

Having Māori content in the course strongly contributes to Māori students’ feeling of belonging, that Māori culture is valued, and improves knowledge of Te Ao Māori. Māori content in the programme was seen as a strong enabler for 11 participants, having implications for curriculum development and institutional priority (re-visited in section 7.5 as implications for Pākehā educators).

*Dillon:* “I guess a lot of my development is coming from, what would it be? All the sort of Māori [content] in the course has a real relevance for me...that is really opening up my understanding, my whole view of the world...”[Int 2, 2016]

## **7. Access to help**

Ten participants expressed that they gained an understanding that it is okay, in fact advisable, to ask for study help if you are feeling stuck. Access to help became an enabler to assist their effective transition into being a more capable student. Seeking support and assistance for academic skills such as APA referencing, essay format, digital skills, time management and planning, proof-reading and editing

knowledge were frequently mentioned. Other types of help included financial, health, transport, disabilities and library navigation.

*Dillon:* “Well, in your first year, you get scared almost to ask someone for help, but as you transition from your first year through to this year, you understand why that help is there if you need it.

*Diana:* “You understand why it is there? Why is that?”

*Dillon:* “We’re not all able to proof-read! Everyone is going to need help eventually, so just understanding that they [support services] are actually there to help you when you are stuck” [Int 3, 2017].

## **8. Approachable/Flexible Staff**

When students feel that they can approach staff about questions they have, or even just to get to know the staff member a little better, they experience belonging and gain a better understanding of what is required. Ten participants felt more reassured and comfortable to ask for help or assessment extensions if needed when staff were approachable and flexible.

*Dillon:* “There was a ‘not knowing’ what to expect, a kind of perception of university lecture hall and hundreds of people sitting around at a lecture, and get your assignments in on time, rah, rah, rigid rules, *Dillon is banging his hand down on the table in a steady rhythm as he speaks* um, sort of approach to education I suppose...

It has been quite a different environment here (at the wānanga). Bit of flex in the system, a lot of understanding, a **lot** of support and awahi and, just being able to sit down and have a one-on-one with our tutor. Just being able to discuss things that might have a relationship to the course, perhaps even things that don’t. Being able to have that personal relationship with our kaiako has been huge” [Int 3, 2017].

## **9. Academic or Pastoral Support**

Nine participants cited having academic or pastoral support easily accessible and available to them as empowering and reassuring, especially in the early weeks of starting to study. Many participants knew of academic support available to them, but were reluctant to take up these services.

*Sophia:* “I’m not sure if it’s me, if it’s a cultural thing, if it’s being a Māori, if it’s being an older woman. I had this sense of not wanting to go and ask for help” [Int 6, 2017].

*Aubrey:* “I had this thing about not wanting to ask them (support services) for help, but once I realised that they were actually there to help us, I couldn’t imagine NOT asking them. But, it was hard to take that step to ask for help, I’m not too sure if that is a Māori thing, or pride, or a man thing, or what!” [FG 1, 2016].

These comments reflect two salient issues: the first, being ‘shy’ (whakamaa) to ask for help, and second, being an older learner. Being shy to ask for help is a well-documented barrier for Māori students (Hunt, Morgan, & Teddy, 2001). Moreover, there are issues of real relevance for older learners, especially in connection to the new millennium. Findsen (2017a) discusses how curriculum has been created before examining issues of older people’s participation within a lifelong learning framework. Many of the experiences discussed by students in this research are similar to adult learning literature and identity construction – for example ‘learning to become a learner’.

## **10. Bridging Course/Stepping Stones**

Bridging courses and programmes which provide stepping stones as entry into TE were a strong enabler for effective transitions into TE for many of the participants. Completing a lower level tertiary qualification before entering higher level courses enabled them to gain confidence and knowledge about how to navigate and understand the tertiary learning environment.

*Jordan:* "I want to get my Level 2s now, and then after this semester, I am going to do my Level 3s".

*Diana:* "Will that be through Toi Ohomai as well?"

*Jordan:* "Yeah, yeah, it will be through this place, and then, I either want to do a Business Management course or an engineering course. I'm not sure whether I want to go into business or engineering yet, but I do want a degree in one of them so that is why I have to do these other courses first". [Int 1, 2017]

*Emere:* "So I did 'Tools for Academic Study' and, oh my gosh, that helped me see the world much clearer in mainstream. I finished that and went straight into Kahikitea (Social Services) here. I passed that, like pretty well...and I was like, oh my gosh, I **can** actually study at a University level, at Level 4. It was like, I can do this!"

In addition to attesting to the empowerment of bridging courses, Emere's statement above also reflects sentiments of the *imposter syndrome* (Clance & Imes, 1978). Three other female participants spoke about their feelings of being over-estimated about their 'intelligence' by others (Sophia, Pūtara and Marie). Despite academic and professional accomplishments, women who experience the impostor syndrome believe they are not really capable or 'bright' but have fooled those who think otherwise (Clance & Imes, 1978).

The findings of the present study positively illustrated that low educational attainment in early schooling did not necessarily transfer into low attainment at TE levels. For these participants, bridging courses were helpful in enabling effective transitions, especially into higher levels. Maturity, life experience and a strong motivation (sometimes fuelled by financial obligations) to succeed also played a role in influencing participants successful transition experiences, as illustrated by Pūtara's story. She was part of the first cohort in New Zealand to experience the NCEA system.

*Pūtara*: “When my results came out, my Mum couldn’t even help me. She didn’t even understand them and I honestly just went “F’ this, I’m going to work”! So I left school, I didn’t make it to sixth form, I didn’t get my School Leaving Certificate...” [Int 1, 2016].

*Later in the year, during a focus group hui...*

*Diana*: “How do your past experiences of school impact you now, in your current programme of study?”

*Pūtara*: “Oh, well, they do, but that was ages ago. I mean for me, since then, I’ve worked heaps, I’ve done a teacher aiding course online through the poly and stuff, and I mean I’m passing, and this is a uni level course, and I’m passing, so I’m not really bothered about my school grades, because this is what I want to do now” [FG2, 2016].

*Emere*: “Yeah, same! In fact there’s one teacher at school who told me I wouldn’t amount to anything in life, and I’d like to meet that teacher again and tell them that I already passed both my poly courses and now I’m at uni, and this is what I’m doing now!! *Ha! She laughs at that satisfying thought.* [FG2, 2016].

Over half the participants had undertaken some form of TE prior to the programme they were currently enrolled in during this research. For three participants their transition experience into TE was their first taste of educational success.

### **11. Practical Situational Matters Sorted**

Having practical matters arranged was an enabler for eight participants. Having flexible working hours at part-time jobs, having child-care helpfully arranged, having efficient transportation to/from campus, having a laptop and internet access sorted out before commencing study, or having a place to study all improved transition experiences for these participants (By contrast, not having these matters arranged was a barrier – see barrier section).

*Nigel:* “You’ve got to step out of the shadows. My mates know that I’m here for a purpose, and I’ll always be there so when there’s time to be drinking and stuff like that, **then** I’ll go back and have a few with them. But at the moment, I’ll be in here (campus library) til I guess, 4 o’clock, 5 o’clock, something like that.”

*Diana:* “Awesome! So, you’re treating it like a work day? Come in to the library, bring your books, study for the day...”

*Nigel:* “Yeh, I always try, especially when it comes close to the end of semesters, I always try finish two weeks ahead of due dates. So I’ll have a three week holiday and I’ll go over to Aussie for a bit” [Int 2, 2017].

## **12. Role Models**

Participants expressed that having a role model provides a standard to aspire to and helped them to be more confident in making the transition. In most cases, this meant a Māori person (usually of the same gender as themselves) who was someone they could relate to and whom they felt they knew personally. For instance, often, these role models were grandparents, teachers or a staff member, or a sports coach.

*Nigel:* “I think that is what has led me to wanting to finish this course, is that you have people like Professor, *names three Māori staff members*. All these people that have been there, done that. It makes me want to achieve better seeing that there are Māori role models. All you have to do is come to the wānanga and you’ll see that these people are actually here” [Int 1, 2016].

By contrast, a lack of role models in education was also noted:

*Aubrey:* “...because everyone sees rugby stars like Liam Messam and Aaron Smith who play for the All Blacks. We don’t have many role models from Māori that are in the education

world or the business world that are exposed enough for us to look up to". [Int 2, 2016].

Another aspect to the role model theme was a participant seeing him/herself as a role model for others, such as being first in the family to study at tertiary level, or having a story to tell of how education had helped them turn around their life, or role modelling study skills for student peers.

### **13. Career Pathway**

Having good knowledge of what career pathways are available after completing a particular type of qualification provided motivation for many participants. Furthermore, an informed understanding of what type of programmes to select to enable a pathway into certain careers enabled more effective transitions.

*Aubrey:* "I already knew before coming into this programme that it would open up job possibilities for me to work in sports, or coaching and mentoring, or even teaching, you know? And in my work placements, I've been getting great feedback from all the work placements I've been at, so that is opening up more avenues on top of those things" [Int 5, 2017].

### **14. Well-being (holistically)**

An enabler for six students was maintaining their overall well-being, including their spirituality, emotional health, relationships with others and physical health, reminiscent of Durie's (1985) Te Whare Tapa Whā model. For instance, some students made an effort to maintain commitment to their sports teams as a way to stay fit and have a mental outlet.

*Diana:* "Are you still keeping up with your sports this year?"

*Aubrey:* "Yeah, I have to do that otherwise I would go insane, I think"

*Diana:* "Would you?"

*Aubrey:* "Yeah, it is just something that keeps me sane really. I go there and get a little bit of the anger out. I got 'Player of the

Day' which made it even better because we get a box or a \$25 gas voucher..."

Conversely, six participants experienced poor well-being as a barrier, affecting their ability to attend classes, or to concentrate on learning and completing assessments.

*Diana:* "Do you still feel like you are keeping up?"

*Pūtara:* "I was, until I got sick this weekend. Last semester I experienced a lot of headaches, and I thought it was my medication for my diabetes. But actually, I would say it was from the screen time. This semester, I try to stay away from it doing more stuff on paper" [FG 2, 2016].

## 15. Expectations

Five participants spoke about knowing what to expect, having high expectations of self, having high expectations from whānau and from teaching staff being empowering.

*Jamahl:* "I'm not sure if it's a Māori thing or not, but um, my grandfather always taught me to help others first, then yourself around these things. He's always been teaching me that, so I'm like, okay, that's what he expects of me, so okay, I'll give it a go, and once I heard about the course, I thought 'oh, this sounds quite good'" [Int 2, 206].

*Aubrey:* "For the first couple of weeks I didn't know if I'd be able to complete this course, I thought it might be out of my league and I'd be unable to keep up. As the semester went on, people I thought would do really well actually started coming to ask me for help. I figured out that most of the Māori got highest marks. I was blown away. Initially, I thought we were going to be some of the lowest. Even when I was doing the first semester exams, I was still second guessing myself for some of the answers. But that's the difference this semester,

I have more confidence because I know what to expect from the kaiako and what I can achieve” [Int 3, 2016].

In sum, similar to the barriers findings, many of the enablers expressed by the participants in this study have been found in previous studies. It is clear that a sense of belonging and support from a number of avenues were key enablers for effective transition experiences for the participants in this study.

#### 6.2.5 Effective Transitions

The fourth subsidiary research question asked:

What do Māori students say defines an effective transition into tertiary study?

Alongside ‘transition’ another key word in this question is ‘effective’. All themes that were linked to definitions of “effective” transitions were identified and grouped into three categories: a) individual, b) institutional; c) societal (Table 11). These are compiled in the thematic analysis table below (Table 12). Subsequently, this thematic table was analysed and synthesized with information in the other thematic tables to form three over-arching themes of identity, structure and agency.

Table 11: Definitions of Effective Transitions

| Individual   | Institutional   | Socio-political   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquiring relevant skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Being comfortable to be Māori</li> <li>• Completing and passing the course</li> <li>• Feeling like you belong in the new environment</li> <li>• Feeling motivated to learn</li> <li>• Feeling motivated to graduate and get a job</li> <li>• Graduating</li> <li>• Growing personally</li> <li>• Having good support</li> <li>• Learning how to succeed in the western world</li> <li>• Learning more about your identity</li> <li>• Making connections with other students and staff</li> <li>• Making mistakes and learning from them</li> <li>• Making new friends</li> <li>• Overcoming obstacles and hardships and still passing</li> <li>• Passing the course</li> <li>• Study decision is the right one to get a job at the end</li> <li>• Using the qualification to get a job at the end</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing academic advice</li> <li>• Providing support</li> <li>• Approachable staff</li> <li>• Easy system to navigate (e.g. website, library, Moodle)</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Recognition of prior education</li> <li>• Mobility between institutions (enrolment transfers, course alignment, pathways)</li> <li>• Evidence of professional development for staff to address Māori learner needs</li> <li>• Options of 'non-traditional' learning (weekends, evenings, online, block courses)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More access to knowledge of education to career pathways</li> <li>• Better understanding of subject selection</li> <li>• Financial support systems need improvement</li> <li>• Mixed ages in the same educational environment</li> <li>• Ability to integrate work, study, hobbies without penalisation</li> </ul> |

Table 12: Thematic Analysis of Effective Transitions

| Thematic Analysis of Effective Transitions    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|   |    | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 | P11 | P12 | P13 | P14 | P15 |
| <b>1. Personal Growth/Identity discovery</b>  | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>2. Support</b>                             | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>3. Sense of belonging</b>                  | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>4. Goals (Shifting and fixed)</b>          | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>5. Motivation (Consistent/Fluctuating)</b> | 14 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>6. Journey (highs and lows)</b>            | 11 | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |
| <b>7. Knowledge/skills acquisition</b>        | 11 |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>8. Overcoming adversity</b>                | 11 | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>9. (Re) Connecting with Being Māori</b>    | 10 |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |

## 1. Personal Growth/Identity Discovery

All 15 participants defined experiencing self-identified personal growth as part of a satisfying, relevant and effective transition. Reflecting on their transition experiences, they believed they went through (or were still going through) a process of change to their identity, their knowledge, their goals for next steps beyond this programme.

*Dillon:* “...Yeah, different mind-sets, different worldviews, yeah um, just being able to relate on a whole number of different levels. Yeah, the content has just been absolutely amazing actually. Just learned a whole lot about myself, how to relate to others, we are all the product of our own life experience, really” [Int 3, 2016].

The definition of an effective transition experience centred on what many participants considered to be the most important, valuable and relevant learning outcome—to understand more about their personal and cultural identity. Although subject and content knowledge were also considered an important part of the purpose and learning experience, effective transition experiences were clearly linked to the degree to which participants gained new understanding and growth about their personal and cultural identity.

*Lorana:* “So I had already been on this journey about 6-8 years before coming here, of discovering what it means to me to be Māori, and that there *is* value in it. So, I’d already been started with it before that time.

*Diana:* “Yeah, the seeds had been sown.”

*Lorana:* “Yeah, otherwise, I probably wouldn’t have taken this course of study...but, so it’s shifted how I process when things come up. It’s not like I have to fight for, I have to make a stand. I don’t...anyway, it’s a work in progress, I just, I’m there to learn so that I can see better myself.” [Int 1, 2016].

*Marie:* And like, yes it was a big year, but it was probably the year where I grew the most, like I probably haven’t really grown

that much in a year before. Yeah, just a lot of personal growth and personal understanding, and like growth in my relationship with lots of people, including my parents, just a lot stronger relationship with them after last year, 'cos they really have been supportive of me doing this. [FG3, 2017].

## **2. Support**

In close connection with the theme of personal growth and identity discovery, all 15 participants overwhelmingly linked the degree of how effective their transition was to the support they did or did not receive. Sources of support described were family members, (mainly a spouse, a mother for females, or a grandfather for males), classmates, academic support, tutors, friends and someone who has related subject knowledge. (See also 'having support' in Barriers and Enablers section).

*Charvae:* "But yeah, transitions to tertiary vary a lot from person to person, depending on the support they have and it could be partly financial, outside support... I think that has got a lot to do with why I have gotten this far towards the end of the course" [Int 2, 2016].

*Awhina:* "I think what has made it easier on the course itself is the support of our own class. The fact that we are all the same age, and we've got the same mentality...our tutors are really supportive and they'll move things around if you need a specific thing and they'll do their best to make it fit." [Int 3, 2016]

*Sophia:* "He doesn't really know about the content but that doesn't matter, he supports me with allowing time and space for study, or sometimes he says, "come on, let's take a break and have a coffee". He has been my rock, he was there through all the hard times when I was sick with my cancer, and now, he is on this journey with me. It is 'our' degree, not just mine" [Int 2, 2016].

*Jamahl:* “Definitely the support system! Not only within the class, but outside as well. It’s not until further on where you start opening up as you get that support and then as you continue to get that support throughout the year, you just keep growing and can really be yourself” [Int 2, 2016].

*Diana:* “What would you say helped you the most to get settled into your programme in those first few weeks?”

*Aubrey:* “Making friends. That would be the first one. Actually, which would be the biggest one, that’s the only one that really helped me. Once I made friends and got a stronger bond with them, realising we had the same goals, I knew I would be okay here. So it was mainly friends, and finding people who have the same goals which supported me to settle in.

### **3. Sense of belonging**

Fifteen participants experienced developing a sense of belonging and ‘a right to be in this place’ correlating this with an effective transition having been made (See Enabler section 7.2.4). A sense of belonging was facilitated by being made to feel welcome through activities such as pōwhiri, sharing kai together, using karakia and other tikanga during class sessions, building relationships with staff, staff being able to pronounce Māori names and places accurately and feeling that Māori culture was valued (See Transition Experiences section 7.2.2 *Watene Moon* and section 7.2.4).

### **4. Goals (Shifting and Fixed)**

Fifteen participants frequently spoke about goals. For eight participants, the definition of an effective transition experience was linked to the importance of having one or some goals at the beginning of doing the study, yet these goals frequently changed during their period of study (shifting goals).

*Nigel:* “Like I said, my path has changed from the first year, like we just recently talked about, so I’m still in a position where I

still want to help people, but yeah, at the moment it's gone back to working with the youth". [Int 1, 2016].

*Watene:* "One thing I have learnt as a self-revelation is that what I thought at the beginning of this course about what I would do at the end as far as teaching goes, *has changed* as I have gone along...That's why I don't make concrete goals, just rough ideas in my head, and then re-shape them as stuff comes in" [Int 1, 2016].

Among the 15 participants who emphasized the relevance of having goals, seven clearly linked their understanding of an effective transition with having a strong goal of the desired outcome at the end of the programme when embarking on study. For these participants, their goal remained fixed throughout the period of study (fixed goals).

*Sophia:* "And I think right from the start, I believe that my social worker career began before I started studying here. This is just sort of cementing and putting names to theories and beliefs that I have, so yeah, it is basically just a continuum of what I have been doing. I don't see any major changes for me over the next two years." [Int 6, 2017].

This section identified the key aspects of what Māori students say define effective transitions into tertiary study.

## **5. Motivation (Consistent and fluctuating)**

In the context of adult learning, Merriam and Bierema (2014) describe motivation as, "the drive and energy we put into accomplishing something we want to do. We cannot see it or touch it, but it is ever present in our thought and action" (p.147). Fourteen participants discussed motivation as a key factor: among these, nine participants experienced a consistent level of motivation to attend classes, complete workloads and assessments, prioritise study commitments and complete the overall programme, even if there were setbacks. (In most cases, the motivation levels tended to be consistently high, despite some small fluctuations).

Vincent Tinto (1987; 1993) suggests a student's motivation, drive or commitment is key to the likelihood that they will persist in higher education, reasoning that the greater the motivation or commitment to the goal of university completion, the more probable the student will persist. Conversely, a lack of motivation leads to early departure. As discussed in section 3.3.3, according to McClusky's theory of margin, internal and external factors operate to (de)motivate adult learners as adults continuously seek balance of energy needed and energy available to persist in voluntary learning characteristic of adult education.

*Diana:* "You've had so much to overcome since those floods. So, what would you say is your motivation level to finish at the moment?"

*Aubrey:* "Oh, it never stops. Like even if I was going to stop for that six months, *(he had considered returning to full-time work for financial reasons after the flood)* I was always going to go back and finish it. Yeah, that was just trying to get back on top really. I've always wanted a job that I can wake up and I am happy to go to work. Even when I was traveling from Kawerau in the morning, it's cold, I live in a tent, I still wake up happy to go to course. And that is what makes me think, oh yeah, this is what I am meant to be doing." [Int 3. 2017].

Among the 14 participants who discussed motivation, six experienced fluctuating motivation levels during their transition experience. Lower levels of motivation seemed linked to receiving disappointing results, or having computer issues, or experiencing negativity in their personal life. Higher motivation linked to receiving a pass, a 'good' grade, bonding with classmates, developing new friendships and having a positive relationship with staff. At least, for these participants, as for the above nine participants, making an effective transition was connected to feeling motivated – whether consistent or fluctuating, whether for internal or external reasons.

## **6. Journey (highs and lows)**

An effective transition into TE was defined as a journey by 11 participants. During the journey, adversity was faced, achievements were celebrated. Their journeys were characterized by experiencing highs and lows, whether spanning one semester, one year, the whole length of a degree programme or even more broadly to include previous TE study experiences.

*Marie:* “Last year was such a journey, and there were highs and lows. There were difficult parts and easy parts and fun parts and parts that made me want to cry, but I came out the other end of it. Our whole family benefitted from it. Yes, it was hard on my kids, yes, it was hard on my partner and there were times when it put massive strains on my relationships, but there was so much stuff that I learnt that was relevant to them and that we could implement as a whānau and that has helped us grow” [FG 4, 2017].

## **7. Knowledge/skills acquisition**

Most participants (n=11) defined an effective transition as being able to learn new skills and information that were relevant, helpful and applicable for life during and beyond study.

*Awhina:* “So see, before, I wouldn’t have done something like that. I would have just read something and gone, ‘oh interesting’ and that’s that. But now, because you are dealing with things that affect the environment, or you want to compare, I have probably just got more involved with how things work. Now, instead of reading just one thing, I like to read a little bit more to understand what the issue is. Now, I like researching and finding out stuff”. [Int 2, 2016].

## **8. Overcoming adversity**

At some point, 11 participants experienced a key event perceived as a painful hardship that they had to personally overcome in order to continue or complete

their particular goal during that passage of time. Having the resilience and grit to overcome adversity was seen as essential by most of the participants to being able to make an effective transition, as illustrated by Lorana Mitchell's visual story (Figure 24) below.

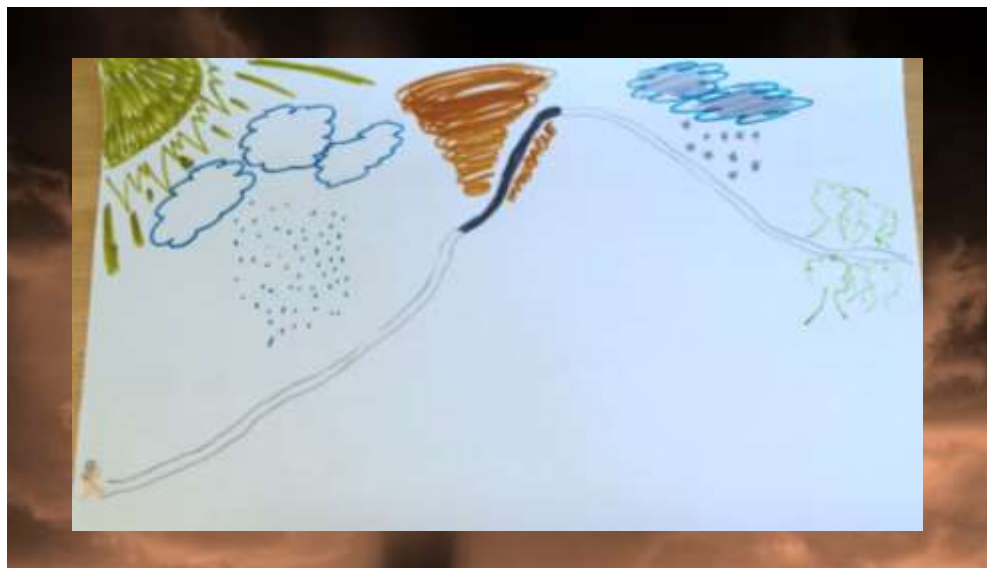


Figure 24: Lorana Mitchell's Visual Story

Lorana saw the intensity of her journey as a pathway that steeply inclined. As the year progressed, the intensity of the journey finally reached a point where she did not know if she was going to make it. She uses the word 'improbable' and shades that part of the path in heavy black. She felt it was unlikely she would stay in her course and pass the remaining assessments.

The weather conditions depict all the 'stuff' that was happening around her at the time which she felt she did not have any control over, but that nevertheless affected her transition journey. For example, Lorana's eldest son got married in October and her sister's wedding was in early December. Both events involved her travelling; she felt she absolutely *had* to be at those important family occasions, but the events (and their lead-up) took her away from her studies right at a critical time. Lorana was also enrolled in another institution's programme and there were assignments due for that around the same time.

Furthermore, during this period, Lorana and her husband received notice from their landlord that they needed to move within three weeks. Based on past experiences, Lorana firmly believed that if she went to the rental agency to pick up the application form and they saw her (a Māori woman) she would have less

chance of being able to find a house than if her Pākehā husband were to apply (everyday racism). The following quote is a revealing social commentary.

“...and I just got this sort of thing in my mind, “tell *husband* to go pick it up” and as soon as I felt that, I was like, “of course”, he’d be way better because he’s a man, and he’s white, so he is going to get far more favour where he goes than what I would get, so I quickly said to him and he totally got it, and he goes, “oh yep, yep, I’ll go”...”

*Later.* “So that all happened around the time of due dates. We got the notice, and exactly three weeks later we were moving into a new place. The tornado reflects this particular period, which was just before final, final due dates” [Int 4, 2017].

Lorana put down having “really good support” as the main thing that helped her overcome this challenge. This support was from her husband and her *kaiako* (teacher). Her husband took care of some practicalities (e.g., looking for a new place to live, being helpful during the move) and her *kaiako* gave her encouragement and showed flexibility.

The sun symbolised positivity and hope. No landscape was drawn on the rest of the page because there was no room in her life for anything else other than what she needed to get done for her studies. The forest at the end of the pathway signifies the end of the year, her resting (but not concluding) position. She deliberately drew her end point higher and further away than where she began:

“I am not way back down here anymore. That is just not where I am, anymore. I am at a different level. But everything is a lot more relaxed, there is time to rest, time to reflect, no more due dates!”

## **9. (Re) Connecting with being Māori/Māori Identity**

Ten participants defined an effective transition experience as enabling them to learn more about Te Reo Māori, tikanga, Mātauranga Māori, history, current situation, Te Ao Māori, what it means personally to be Māori. Key concepts of

Māori identity revolved around whakapapa, wairuatanga, whanau, hapū, iwi, whenua, tikanga and Te Reo Māori.

*Dillon:* "I think the course has just made me, *pause, big breath*, ummm, *pause*, more Māori".

*Diana:* "More Māori".

*Dillon:* "Yeah, more Māori. It's something that I have been a little bit, worried, well not worried, but yeah, I guess I have been a bit worried whether I have become institutionalised with my long history with the *[workplace]*. This study has been really challenging for me in that respect..."

*Diana:* "It seems as though this has freed you up, in some ways".

*Dillon:* "It has, it's been a release in some ways. I don't know whether I have been holding onto something unconsciously. I have always felt that because I don't have the reo, you know, that has let me down.

*Diana:* "Mmmm, I wonder...has that made it hard to be strongly Māori?"

*Dillon:* "Yeah, that has made it very hard to be strong in my identity I think" [Int 4, 2017].

*Lorana:* That helps me settle into this place... I see a lot more Māori being seen for who they actually are, and not trying to be who, or present themselves, me included, as looking like this over here *moves her hands to the side of her body...*"

*Diana:* "Like Pākehā, you mean?"

*Lorana:* "Yeah exactly. It is in the church too, there is a certain way of being, and you think that that is the way to be, rather than who you were created to be. I wasn't created to be a Pākehā. I didn't choose to be a Māori, but how do I walk in that, in this place, in this land?"

Overall, this theme of (re) connecting with being Māori and understanding Māori identity linked to wider key themes of identity discovery, personal growth and a process of change as factors contributing to an effective transition experience.

#### 6.2.6 University, Polytechnic and Wānanga Differences

The fifth subsidiary research question asked:

What are the differences, if any, in transition experiences into a university, or a polytechnic or a wānanga?

Similarities and differences were evident in transition experiences into a university, a polytechnic/institute of technology and a wānanga. Similarities clustered around an individual's experience when adjusting to studying at a tertiary level. Differences centred on values, systems and processes of each organisation. Table 13 below outlines whether each participant has experienced a transition into university, a polytechnic and a wānanga and identifies the key differences that arose for each experience.

Eleven of 15 participants had experienced studying in at least two and sometimes all three different types of organisations. Four of the participants had experienced studying in just one organisation. All made comparisons based on their own personally lived experiences and also drew upon what they had heard other students say about their experiences. When comparing organisations, participants discussed what they perceived as merits and demerits of each organisation. The following tables below (Tables 14, 15, 16) present advantages and disadvantages voiced for studying in each particular organisation.

Table 13: Thematic Analysis of Tertiary Institutions Difference and Similarities

| Thematic Analysis of Differences and Similarities between wānanga, university, polytechnic |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|--|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|  |   |    | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 | P11 | P12 | P13 | P14 | P15 | P17 |
| <b>Participant's Experience</b>  | Has studied at a Wānanga  | 11 | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
|  | Has studied at a Polytechnic                                    | 11 | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |
|  | Participated in Workplace TE Training                           | 9  |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |
|  | Has studied at a University                                     | 7  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓   | ✓   |     |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| <b>Wānanga</b>   | Wānanga lives its values  | 10 |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
|  | Wānanga is a positive environment for Māori to learn            | 10 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
|  | Wānanga is flexible   | 6  |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |     |     |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |
|  | Wānanga is a stepping stone                                     | 6  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |     | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |     |     |
|  | Wānanga has a lower social status than university               | 4  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    |     |     |     |     | ✓   |     |     |
| <b>University</b>  | University is rigid   | 6  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |     | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   | ✓   |
|  | University staff need more PD to address Māori learners' needs  | 6  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |     | ✓   |     |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
|  | University is not inclusive of Te Ao Māori                      | 5  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |     | ✓   |
|  | University lives its western values                             | 5  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |     | ✓   |
| <b>Polytechnic</b>   | Polytechnic staff need more PD to address Māori learners' needs | 5  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     |     |
|  | Polytechnic is more flexible than school                        | 4  | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |    | ✓  |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     |     |
|  | Polytechnic lives its values                                    | 4  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    |     |     |     |     |     |     | ✓   |
|  | Polytech culture is inclusive of Māori                          | 3  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | ✓  |    |     |     | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |

Table 14: Advantages and Disadvantages of a Wānanga

| Wānanga  |  |
|--|--|
| Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Māori organisation</li> <li>• Looks after the ‘whole’ student – provides food, sometimes transport</li> <li>• Whānau-like classes</li> <li>• Māori whānau and children are welcomed</li> <li>• Relaxed atmosphere</li> <li>• Fun</li> <li>• Lots of Māori role models among the staff</li> <li>• An environment to hear Te Reo Māori being spoken</li> <li>• Inclusive of everyone</li> <li>• Approachable staff</li> <li>• Offers free courses</li> <li>• Beautiful learning resources</li> <li>• Staff know how to pronounce names correctly</li> <li>• Provides a stepping stone into other study</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived as non-professional</li> <li>• Website and digital learning space not sophisticated</li> <li>• Limited range of programmes on offer</li> <li>• Qualifications may not be seen as valid in industry or by employers</li> <li>• Student has to ‘chase up’ enrolment procedures</li> </ul> |

The over-riding advantage offered by the wānanga was the kauapapa Māori environment which made it a comfortable place for Māori to transition into formal learning. The following excerpts are typical of participants’ experiences.

*Aubrey:* “...which is the thing that the wānanga was made for, was to stay away from that so that Māori students could learn a lot easier. That is what the wānanga was made for. Because we learn differently. It’s a pre-known fact. We learn differently than other people. Yeah.” [Int 2, 2017]

*Dillon:* “So I mean, we discuss our challenges as well, and she (*Dillon’s partner*) is working through a mainstream tertiary

institution as well. Pretty rigid deadlines and all that! Which is probably another reason why I feel a bit funny *uncomfortable laugh* you know, when I can get an extension fairly easily” [Int 2, 2016].

*Diana:* “What has worked well for you, what helped you adjust?”

*Waipae:* “Definitely having a safe, secure, healthy environment as expressed through the uara (Awanuiārangi Māori values displayed on the wall) that resonate with Awanui staff and students. This allows a sense of wholeness, and inclusiveness, for all who enter its space. Māori values cannot be taught in an institution, but they can be shared, to remind people like myself that these values are not just art on a wall, but real, with substance and must be upheld if they are to be put on display.” [Int 1, 2016].



*Waipae:* “I liked what I saw in terms of the environment, lecturer and interaction between all. It reminded me of the marae, with values that cannot be replicated, manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, pono, and so forth. Laughter, satisfaction, food, karakia, awesome teaching styles that were suited to my learning needs, sharing of knowledge too, everyone there for the same purpose to learn and help each other through. No individual or isolation of students, nor the lecturers. That was my reason for pursuing study with Awanuiārangi, I realised the journey was a collective journey with unique, special and authentic support, which it has been.” [Int 2, 2016].

In summary, participants believed a wānanga was a fun, engaging, relaxing and meaningful learning environment fuelling their motivation and adding to their sense of belonging. The kaupapa Māori values evident in the processes and staff conduct made it easier to transition into the learning environment. The biggest disadvantage of the wānanga appeared to be the lack of organisation in

administrative processes such as enrolment and orientation procedures and industry perceptions of a wānanga qualification.

The following table presents the advantages and disadvantages voiced by participants for studying at a university.

Table 15: Advantages and Disadvantages of a University

|  University    |  |
|--|--|
| Advantages   | Disadvantages  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualifications perceived as credible in industry</li> <li>• Fantastic library (digitally and physically)</li> <li>• Equips students for success in the “real” (western) world</li> <li>• Enables a step into a satisfying career</li> <li>• Degrees lead to a higher salary, improved lifestyle</li> <li>• Can go onto higher level study within the same institution</li> <li>• Offers a wide range of programme options</li> <li>• Develops critical thinking and research skills</li> <li>• Good support for students with disabilities</li> <li>• Belief that university qualifications are on a “higher level” than polytechnic or wānanga qualifications</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigid</li> <li>• Not inclusive of Māori values</li> <li>• Staff need more professional development to include Māori content</li> <li>• Lack of Māori role models in teaching staff</li> <li>• Unwieldy website, difficult to navigate</li> <li>• Lecturers are not so accessible</li> <li>• Lack of support for Māori students</li> <li>• Watching videos of staff giving lectures (panopto) not as good as face-to-face</li> <li>• Enrolment process cumbersome</li> <li>• Māori whānau (especially children) are not encouraged to participate in the learning</li> </ul> |

Participants understood a major advantage offered by the university as the qualification itself leading to a satisfying career and/or a higher salary. Furthermore, the academic environment was prominent in their thoughts. The following excerpt exemplifies participants’ comments.

*Sophia:* “...For academic learning, Waikato hands down. Oh, it’s very academic, veeery academic. *Pauses and thinks.* So what I get back from those three institutions is different. My learnings

from the wānanga to Toi Ohomai to the uni are completely different...” [Int 4, 2017].

*Hemaima:* “I’ve enrolled in the Bachelor of Biological Applied Sciences, and the goal is to have a qualification from Waikato University that will back me up academically and resilience-wise so I can work within environmental issues and environmental management. Mainly, my eyes are on conservation”. [Int 5, 2017].

One participant (Emere) stood out from the rest as an outlier. Her transition experience was about moving from immersion Māori schooling into English mainstream TE environments. She attended 12 years of schooling from early childhood to primary to secondary in Māori immersion environments. In this system, she was a high achieving student and had a high level of self-esteem about her identity as a student. During her last year of secondary school, Year 13, she attended a mainstream English-speaking school. This was a complete shock to her whole world. Although she managed to complete the year, she ‘dropped out’ of English.

Next she enrolled in the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic in a bridging course and then went straight into a Level 4 Social Work Certificate (See Enablers – Bridging Courses section). That helped her decide she did not want to be a social worker; instead, she found a job in a Kohanga Reo for six years. Her Nan passing away triggered her decision to become a qualified teacher and enrol in the UoW in the Bachelor of Teaching Primary programme. She chose to study at the University instead of at the wānanga because she wanted an opportunity to improve her English skills, experience studying in a ‘western’ system.

*Diana:* “Oh, thanks for telling me all about that. So, in general, you felt that your whole kura kaupapa school experience had a good flow for you with the values and things. What about when you came here?”

*Emere:* “Nah, I was freaked out!” *Explains more about her experience.*

*Diana:* “And on top of this, you had been used to speaking Te Reo I guess too, but this is all in English...?”

*Emere:* “Yeah, I didn’t even know what similes were, jargon, all those things...”

*Later...*

*Diana:* “...And so what made you choose Waikato?”

*Emere:* “I knew Waikato was challenging and I was up for the challenge...I wanted to get out of my comfort zone which was in the Māori area, like everything in Māori, and I wanted to develop more in mainstream. That’s why I came to Waikato. And because it’s based in Tauranga.”

This participant found her first semester “soooo tough”, failing two papers. She was trying to “pick it up” in her second semester, involving her travelling to Hamilton to re-sit one of her failed papers. This added to the pressure on her relationship with her newly-wed husband and 18-month old baby. Unfortunately, this participant withdrew from the research after the first year which was a pity as she could have offered a different perspective. Other participants told me that she continued with her studies into her second year.

Overall, the university was perceived most different to the other institutions in its academic, and very western environment. Participants believed that qualifications from a university gave credibility to what they had learned and would be valued in the workplace. However, a disadvantage of studying at a university for Māori students was the lack of inclusive Māori content, lack of Māori role models, lack of engagement with wider Māori family and community and the rigidity of the system and staff. As Findsen (2017b) recently pointed out, across New Zealand, universities have been constantly under review and engaged in cost-cutting which has resulted in a struggle (for both internal and external reasons) for universities to maintain community engagement, including relationships with Māori. To some extent, polytechnics face the same struggles; however, perhaps their overall higher percentage of Māori student enrolments (compared to universities) demands more efforts for community engagement. The following (Table 16) presents the

advantages and disadvantages of studying at a polytechnic or institute of technology as perceived by the participants.

Table 16: Advantages and Disadvantages of a Polytechnic

| <b>Polytechnic or Institute of Technology</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Advantages</b>  | <b>Disadvantages</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive environment</li> <li>• Provides a stepping stone into other study</li> <li>• Geographically accessible with small satellite campuses in outlying areas</li> <li>• Includes a lot of practical hands-on learning</li> <li>• Offers shorter programmes – e.g. one-year certificate, two year diplomas</li> <li>• Staff attempt to be inclusive of Māori values</li> <li>• Māori whānau are welcomed</li> <li>• Some Māori role models among staff</li> <li>• Polytech options are more flexible than schools (e.g. Gateway, Trade Academy, NCEA foundation courses)</li> <li>• Have a strong industry link seen as advantageous for jobs after study</li> <li>• Have a reputation for assisting with internships and cadetships.</li> <li>• More creative than universities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social perception that polytechnics only offer practical trade training</li> <li>• Social perception that polytechnics do not offer degrees</li> <li>• Social perception that a degree from a polytechnic is not as “good” as a degree from a university</li> <li>• Staff need more professional development to address Māori learners’ needs and incorporate Māori content into courses</li> </ul> |

Participants described the polytechnic environment as supportive and attempting to be inclusive of Māori culture and values. This is encouraging given that there are higher numbers of Māori studying in polytechnics than at wānanga or universities. The following excerpt typifies participants’ comments.

*Diana:* “What differences or similarities have you noticed between Waikato University and Toi Ohomai?”

*Hemaima:* “Toi Ohomai was a lot more fun! It’s a lot more culturally accepting. I actually think it is more forward, more supportive....there is so much pastoral care and responsibility on the tutors that it is quite...I don’t know how they do it. Maybe they should get paid more because they put so much work into each individual student, moving them through, whereas at university, it’s like, I am going to tell you everything you need to know, and I know this and rah, rah, rah...” *Student is wagging her finger for emphasis.* [Int 5, 2017].

The main perceived difference of the polytechnic environment compared to the two other institutions was the ability to provide a wide range of courses which could act as stepping stones to further education. Furthermore, participants found the hands-on and practical elements of the learning advantageous, alongside the flexibility and links to the related industry. Students enrolled in the polytechnic felt that attempts of Māori culture acceptance are being made and at the same time, there is a need for more professional development in this area for staff.

Overall, within wānanga, participants felt their Māori cultural identity was highly valued; within polytechnics, there was a sense that Māori culture is included but more could be done; within universities, a need for more inclusive practices to support Māori learner requirements was identified.

### 6.2.7 Educational Success

The sixth subsidiary research question asked:

What does educational success in a TE context mean to Māori students?

The question of education success from a Māori perspective was an identified gap in the literature (Chauvel & Rean, 2012). What educational success means to Māori students involved considering complex views. Perspectives varied depending on which organisations the student had studied at and what their past involvement had been in TE environments. Educational success also concerned

whether they were thinking about notions of success in a mainstream, westernised sense or whether they were considering the notion from a Māori worldview perspective, as illustrated by the following conversation between the researcher and three participants during a focus group:

*Pūtara:* “As far as Māori achievers, or, what is perceived to be high achievement in Te Ao Māori, it doesn’t matter, because that is that. This is university, and that is not that. They are two different things, why would I need that information here? Because it won’t help over here. Maybe for me, for my identity...”

*Diana:* “So, educational achievement would be saying you need to pass your courses, you need to get good grades and that is your success, and that is in the university world, but are you saying that might be a different thing of what is high achieving or high success in Te Ao Māori?”

*Pūtara:* “Oh yeah! Definitely! What I am doing here, it’s for me personally, because this is what I want to do, but then, I guess it is also giving back to Te Ao Māori, because, getting myself into a teacher role to then,

*Marie:* “...broaden the minds of other people and then teach them about Te Ao Māori.”

*Pūtara:* “Yeah, so it’s helping me in the westernised world, but then also helping me in that world to hopefully instil some tikanga Māori in the next generation. So to do that, I have to first do this in university. And it’s totally different to how I would do it in Te Ao Māori. Does that make sense?”

*Diana:* “Yeah, it does. But I still don’t understand about **what** would you do differently in Te Ao Māori, then?”

*Pūtara:* “Yeah, oh well, definitely it’s not about marks, it’s not about percentage, like you have to know a certain percentage

of how to do something. I would use my experience in the Kohanga, for example, we don't really have a marking system of, 'your child is meeting this, and your child is meeting its development stages'....we don't use development stages. We don't have stages, we just go with nature".

*Emere:* "You know no kid has a level...you're not a Level 1, 2, 3, 4 child.

*Diana:* "What kind of goals are there?"

*Emere:* "Oh, if we're looking at, oh, expanding their vocab in te reo Māori, yeah, just them getting to speak more". [FG 3, 2016].

All participants definitions were thematically analysed (Table 17). Following the Thematic Analysis table, a brief excerpt from the data is given to illustrate typical comments for each theme. The crucial element was whether a participant thought of educational success in terms of in Te Ao Pākehā or Te Ao Māori, or both. Overall, educational success meant different things to different people, but strongly involved themes of completion, gaining employment and giving back to other Māori or wider Indigenous society. This finding emerged as the main response to what 'educational success' means to Māori students in a tertiary education context.

Table 17: Thematic Analysis of Definitions of Educational Success

### Thematic Analysis of Definition of Educational Success

|   |    | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 | P11 | P12 | P13 | P14 | P15 |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Completing the programme  | 15 | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Getting the tohu/qualification                                    | 10 |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Fulfilling Career   | 10 | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Improving situation   | 10 | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Helping other Māori students/people achieve                       | 9  |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Enabling further study  | 9  | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |
| Getting a job   | 8  | ✓  |    |    |    |    | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓  |     | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   | ✓   |
| Achieving High Grades   | 7  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |     | ✓   |     |     |     |     |
| Giving Back   | 7  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |     |     |     |
| Being a role model  | 6  | ✓  | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |    | ✓  |     | ✓   | ✓   |     | ✓   |     |
| Passing   | 6  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓   |
| Learning from mistakes  | 6  | ✓  |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    | ✓   | ✓   |     |     | ✓   |     |
| Doing it fast/ "on time"  | 4  |    |    |    |    | ✓  |    |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓   |     |     |     |     |     |
| Being able to succeed in today's (or a western) world, as a Māori | 4  | ✓  |    |    | ✓  |    |    |    |    |    |     | ✓   |     |     |     | ✓   |

## Terms Explained Using Participant Quotes

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Completion</b>  | “Completing an individual assessment, a group assessment, a course, a programme, a degree means education success”.  |
| <b>Getting the tohu</b>  | “Earning the qualification and receiving the certificate (or diploma or degree)”.  |
| <b>Fulfilling career</b>   | “Having the qualification and knowledge to lead into work in a satisfying career”.   |
| <b>Improving situation</b>   | “Gaining knowledge and qualifications to earn more in order to improve personal or family situation”.  |
| <b>Helping other Māori students achieve</b>                          | “Helping other Māori students to achieve in their studies”.  |
| <b>Enabling further study</b>  | “Doing the current programme to enable options for further study in the future”.   |
| <b>Getting a job</b>   | “Completing the qualification and getting a desired/related job at the end”.   |
| <b>Achieving high grades/passing</b>                                 | “Achieving high grades”.   |
| <b>Giving back</b>   | “Giving back to iwi/community/whanau involves completing the course and using the knowledge to contribute towards improving the situation for other Māori”.                                      |
| <b>Being a role model</b>  | “Being a role model in educational achievements and sharing knowledge about the journey with other Māori”.   |
| <b>Learning from mistakes</b>  | “Making mistakes and learning from them. Like, if you fail an assessment and then learn how to do better next time. Having a mind-set that making mistakes is fine so that you learn from them”. |
| <b>Doing it fast/on time</b>   | “Keeping up with the workload and getting assessments in early or on time”.  |
| <b>Being able to succeed in today’s (western and/or Māori) world</b> | “Educational success means being able to walk in two worlds, proudly, comfortably and with knowledge to succeed in both”.  |

To summarise, the most overwhelming definition by all participants of educational success linked to completion, with all 15 participants giving this response. This meant completion of the whole programme, or degree or certificate. Few thought that completion of some papers or components of their qualification defined educational success – an important point picked up in the Discussion chapter. These findings are consistent with research from Hunt, Morgan and Teddy (2001). Success itself is a multifaceted concept, and certainly, from an academic viewpoint, the goal of the majority of the participants was to complete their programme, thereby to attain their qualification. This often linked to job or career prospects. While completion and career progression were seen as desirable by participants, helping others to succeed, alongside an aspiration to give back and improve the situation for Māori and other Indigenous groups, were important aspects.

There were common experiences and shared understandings among participants during focus groups about what it means to be succeeding educationally as Māori. Being strong in Māori cultural identity and having Māori culture and values celebrated within the tertiary environment were consistently noted. Having the ability to resist low expectations and negative stereotypes about being Māori was frequently touched on, with reference to the power of environments that fostered the strength of working together with other classmates. Like Berryman and Eley (2017) found in their study of Māori secondary school student voices about the *Ka Hikitia* challenge, participants voiced that being able to contribute to the success of others and experiencing the power of whanaungatanga were key in the context of educational success as Māori.

### 6.3 Summary

This chapter reported the findings of the data collection and analysis. Findings were presented by way of thematic analysis tables and accompanying explanations for each subsidiary research question. In this chapter, I first explained who the participants were, then gave accounts of three participants' transition experiences. Next, I identified the barriers, enablers and definitions of effective transitions based on personally lived experiences of participants. I reported the similarities and differences between transition experiences into a university,

polytechnic and wānanga and then I described what Māori students said educational success means for them.

Lastly, it is important to note that as the data collection and analysis process unfolded, participants valued the chance to share with me their thoughts and gradually unfold their life experiences. They thanked me for creating the space and time to reflect on where they had come from and the direction they were heading in. Eight participants expressed their participation had been therapeutic for them. They encouraged me to keep doing the work I was doing. Several participants sent emails to me well after data collection was finished, continuing to keep me abreast with their lives, which was very rewarding personally.

*Lorana:* “Oh, thank you for your generosity every time, I mean, yummys and tasties, and amazing koha. I’m always added to whenever we have met together, and I’ve always come away feeling like, “that was so cool”. When you first asked, I thought ‘man it was cool to be asked to start with’, and just that uncertainty of what have I got myself into...but it has actually been totally the opposite. This has added to me, I really appreciate it...”

*Emere:* “...even the way you ask the questions, the way that you listen, you listen to understand, and I really appreciate that, it means a lot. I am very, very thankful for these times, and it’s good to look back too and be reminded and...I find it healing on so many levels....it’s been really great for me to ‘clock in’ with you, you have helped me understand so much more about myself and where I am going”.

In seeking answers to the over-arching research question of what an effective transition to TE looks like for Māori students, three over-arching themes emerged from the data collection and analysis process. These were identity, agency and structure. The reciprocal influence of identity, agency and structure played a significant role in effective transition experiences.

## Whakataukī

*Mā te rongō, ka mōhio; Mā te mōhio, ka mārama;  
Mā te mārama, ka mātau; Mā te mātau, ka ora.*

*Through listening comes knowledge; from knowledge comes clarity;  
from clarity comes wisdom; from wisdom comes life and vitality.*

## Chapter Seven Discussion

### 7.1 Introduction

At the outset of this thesis, I introduced the metaphor of a tree. With notions of layered growth, the metaphor of a tree brings together the importance of the seen and unseen, the importance of using all our senses. My research approach called upon me to use all my senses to understand the data in response to an important question:

What do effective transitions to tertiary education environments look like for Māori students?

From the findings, an over-riding theme of identity stood out. Within this major theme of identity, layers of sub-themes and important ideas were evident. In this chapter, the over-riding theme of identity is presented and evaluated in six key areas. First, I discuss the relevance of historical and contemporary Māori identity in light of the transition experiences of the participants. Next, the difference between Māori identity and personal identity is clarified and personal identity is elaborated upon. Thirdly, the influence of student identity as it related to effective transition experiences is discussed. In the fourth and fifth sections I draw on sub-themes of agency and structure (respectively) to consider how these impacted on the participants' experiences. In the sixth section, I discuss the theme of identity in connection with Pākehā educators. Consideration is given of how this (unanticipated) research outcome may have relevance for other Pākehā educators and researchers who work across kaupapa Māori spaces. Next, I draw upon my own transition experiences as a doctoral student throughout this research journey as I discovered and developed my own identity. My personal reflections and understandings are offered. Lastly, I offer a chapter summary bringing together an

overall picture of what effective transitions to tertiary education look like for Māori students.

## 7.2 Identity

In this research, identity means the way in which participants perceive themselves in dynamic and evolving contexts of their lives. It is their sense of who they are as a person, where they 'belong' and how they believe others perceive them. Through analysis, it emerged that a complex interaction of participants' experiences of 'being Māori' in different education contexts had contributed to their self-perceptions. Conversely, numerous participants spoke of how being Māori had influenced the manifestation of their education journey, and also how they perceived and managed their personal circumstances. Moreover, the wider TE system and the differences between a university, polytechnic and a wānanga context related to individuals' sense of belonging in certain environments and this influenced their learning experiences.

Erikson (1974) suggests that identity is a sense of personal well-being developed by individuals through interactions with their social environments. Pollard and Filer (1999) describe identity as developing a narrative structure to enable a viable, coherent story about oneself in order to achieve a workable way of 'being' in a particular context. The participants in this study evolved their identity narratives of themselves as they learned how to 'be' and belong in TE environments (see section 3.2.3). During this research, the participants' evolving internal story of their identity through their transition experiences into TE was constructed and re-constructed through reciprocal interactions with others. This included students, teaching staff, the TEO's systems, with people outside the formal education arena and, possibly, through their interactions with this research.

### 7.2.1 Māori Identity

In this study, Māori cultural identity was a key aspect, since *all* participants self-identified as Māori. As the research unfolded, it became apparent that their Māori cultural identity was a key part of the overall theme of identity. In the literature, research on cultural identity has tended to be separated from personal identity.

However, Schwartz, Zamboanga, Weisskirch and Wang (2001) propose that defining oneself culturally contributes to consolidating a personal identity. In turn, this leads to a positive sense of well-being. Seen from this perspective, cultural identity comes about as a result of how individuals define themselves in relation to culture(s) to which they belong.

Definitions of cultural identity are numerous and complex; for the purpose of this study, culture is seen as the ideas, customs and social behaviour of particular groups of people. Deaux (2006) describes culture as everything that makes up a particular way of living, such as beliefs, values, language, customs, food, music, stories and style of dress belonging to a group of people. This includes how an individual takes these aspects of the culture(s) they belong to and uses them, to shape and define their self-cultural identity. Thus, cultural identity goes beyond questions of country of origin, citizenship, or language use (Deaux, 2006).

Cultural identity, (in this case, Māori identity) is part of a broader, more historically and socially constructed meaning and is created in (and an expression of) dialogic and social reality. Māori identity, although experienced on a deeply personal, spiritual and individual level, is about the ways that 'being Māori' gives meaning to (and is an expression of) experiences. Although 'being Māori' itself, may not necessarily be the primary determiner or shaper of identity and self, it can provide a strong basis on which other identities can be layered. Without the base it is difficult to layer further identities.

In coming to understand notions of Māori identity from my perspective as a Pākehā, I needed to gain an understanding of relevant interpretive systems. While it is not possible for me to know what it feels like to 'be Māori', by understanding relevant interpretive systems such as Culturally Responsive Methodologies (Berryman et al., 2013), kaupapa Māori theory (Pihama, 2016; G. Smith, 2000), IK mātauranga (Smith, Maxwell, Puke & Temara, 2016), and whakapapa (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003), I developed an emerging understanding about Māori ways of knowing and being.

*Whakapapa* is a common element of all these interpretive systems and forms part of Māori identity about the way the universe was created and connections between the spiritual and physical worlds (Durie, 2001; Mead, 2003; Rameka,

2012). Te Huia (2015) notes that for Māori, the self becomes meaningful through a web of interpersonal connections between whakapapa ties – a psycho-sociological perspective.

The subject of Māori identity is complex and diverse, encompassing both historical and contemporary elements as discussed in section 3.3.3. Rameka (2012) explains that historically, Māori identity clearly encompassed whakapapa, wairuatanga, whānau, hapū, iwi, whenua and Te Reo. However, contemporary Māori identities are impacted upon by complex factors such as colonisation, urbanisation, Māori renaissance, dealing with the “primordial/situational dichotomy of ethnicity (May, 2003, as cited in Rameka, 2012), being bicultural and developing an “inclusive supra-Māori identity” (Maaka & Fleras, 2005, as cited in Rameka, 2012). Furthermore, emphasis on reclaiming and reframing Māori identities within contemporary education contexts can be linked to reconciliation of spiritual connections through whakapapa of ‘being Māori’ (Rameka, 2012).

This is not to say that historical and contemporary definitions of Māori identity are exclusive of each other; they work together to weave a web of myriads of factors concerning Māori identity. Some of the complexity of historical, contemporary and reclamation of Māori identity could be seen in Watene Moon’s transition experiences. He perpetually re-constructed his sense of Māori identity, first discussing his father’s description of it “not being cool” to have Māori blood in him, then moving towards seeing himself as “bi-cultural” rather than “half-caste”. A later interview illustrated his emerging pride in identifying as Māori. Bennett and Liu (2018) argue that the way New Zealand manages cultural diversity is distinguished by embracing the partnership between Māori and European settlers (formalised through the Treaty of Waitangi) as the symbolic core to its narrative of national identity. Bennett and Liu (2018) suggest that biculturalism is “a *system of meaning* that contributes to the construction of New Zealand identities” (p. 95). (See section 3.2.1 for a more detailed discussion on biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand).

One historical and contemporary element of Māori identity is the connection to land, *whenua*. This is increasingly prominent in contemporary Māori identity with Māori feeling a pressing need to assert traditional values of *kaitiakitanga* (care for

the environment) in present-day environmental and conservation arenas. Four participants expressed they were learning to listen to the ancient wisdom from *kaumātua* (elders) of how to live in the land of Aotearoa. Rameka (2012) explains that “whakapapa connects Māori to the land, providing a sense of unity and harmony with the environment” and in this sense, “land is therefore not viewed as a commodity, but is a source of identity, belonging and continuity that is shared with the dead, the living and the unborn” (p.107). Hemaima’s story of being in her ‘safe and good place’ at the top of a Nikau tree symbolised her level of spiritual comfort and connection with nature—a connection so strong that it resulted in her making a dramatic change in her life to undertake an Environmental Diploma.

Concepts of Māori identity have been impacted upon by land loss through colonisation. Although participants in this research self-identified as being Māori, Durie (2005) explains there continues to be some individuals with Māori ancestry who prefer not to identify as Māori. It is probable that they choose not to identify as Māori because of discrimination enacted towards them by the dominant Pākehā culture (Te Huia, 2015). In the present study, all participants described being discriminated against and eight participants spoke about multiple incidents that typified ‘everyday racism’ experiences (e.g. being turned down for rental housing applications based on racial appearance, as in the case of Lorana).

Fifteen participants identified that developing a sense of belonging and ‘a right to be in this place’ in the learning environment enabled their effective transition. Yet discrimination was a burdensome part of their transition to institutional education experiences and shaping their Māori identity—a factor that seemingly heightened their need for a sense of belonging and being ‘allowed’ to be there. Participants discussed issues relating directly to the failure of the education system to be fully inclusive of their culture affecting their Māori identity. Other researchers have found similar stories of cultural dislocation (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Macfarlane, 2004).

Colonisation impacted upon Te Reo Māori language loss, which has given rise to disconnection from Māori identity for many Māori. For nine participants in this study, their transition to TE experiences involved a journey of re-connection to Te Reo Māori as part of strengthening and re-constructing their Māori identity. Four

participants decided to enrol in a free Māori language night programme offered at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa whilst simultaneously enrolled in their main programme.

Ten participants expressed at various times their lack of confidence in conversing in Te Reo and their discomfort if or when a lecturer or tutor called upon them to speak Māori in front of their classmates (e.g. to say a *karakia*, prayer). This conundrum of wanting to strongly re-connect and 'be Māori' combined with an inability to competently converse in Māori language underlines the diverse and complex reality of the identity position for contemporary Māori. Dillon Te Kani explained how he felt 'let down' because he didn't 'have the reo' but that his learning journey at the wānanga, although challenging, was helping to bring him to a place of acceptance. Statistics New Zealand (2014) indicate that approximately 11% of Māori adults reported they could speak Te Reo Māori "well or very well". If speaking Te Reo Māori is central to Māori identity, this unfairly places a large number of Māori in a difficult position of having to reconcile their Māori identity with their Māori language skills.

Durie (1995) theorized that the relevance of historical values is different for each individual Māori, as are the extent of their links with iwi or hapū. But that does not mean that these individuals view themselves as less Māori than others. The youngest participant (16 years old) was proud to express his Māori identity through his involvement in sports at the rugby club. He pointed out that although he had few opportunities to learn Te Reo or Māori tikanga when he was growing up, this did not bother him. "I would kind of like to know, but I'm fine for now. I might want to know a bit when I'm older, but I think I'm sweet for now". Other participants expressed how they had little to do with their iwi or the marae when growing up yet still felt strong in their Māori identity, a connection that grew stronger in gaining new knowledge through becoming a TE student. Māori identity was a key aspect of an overall theme of dynamic identity found in this research.

### 7.2.2 Personal Identity

Personal identity is about the ways that our powerful sub-conscious inner self shapes, distorts and gives meaning to our experiences. In this sense, our personal

identity encompasses our *sub-conscious* (Freud, 1917). Viewing our feelings and thoughts as part of our internal world assumes that underneath or behind our discussions and actions, there are sub-conscious drives, hidden feelings, acts of repression and so on. In all, eight participants discussed distinct aspects of their personal identity connected to age, gender, sporting, religious or spiritual aspects, well-being, disabilities, and workplace or family roles (e.g. teacher, social worker, mother, husband, grandparent etc).

Participants in this study saw their Māori cultural identity hand-in-hand with personal identity in the way they perceived their whole self, but Māori identity and personal identity could be seen as distinct aspects of a whole identity, as illustrated in the following statement by Lorana:

*Lorana:* "...I'm kind of like, well, because I'm female for starters, I'm Māori, you know, I'm a big woman, I'm a Christian, so my whole identity is kind of like the most marginalised I guess you'd say..." [Int 2, 2016].

Another participant, Maia, also shared her views that learning Te Reo Māori might help her children to develop their Māori identity, and she believes they would also need to know English to survive or thrive in New Zealand society. She linked knowing two languages to having two distinct aspects of identity.

Marie discussed a distinct aspect of her personal identity relating to her family roles as a young mother, a partner and a daughter.

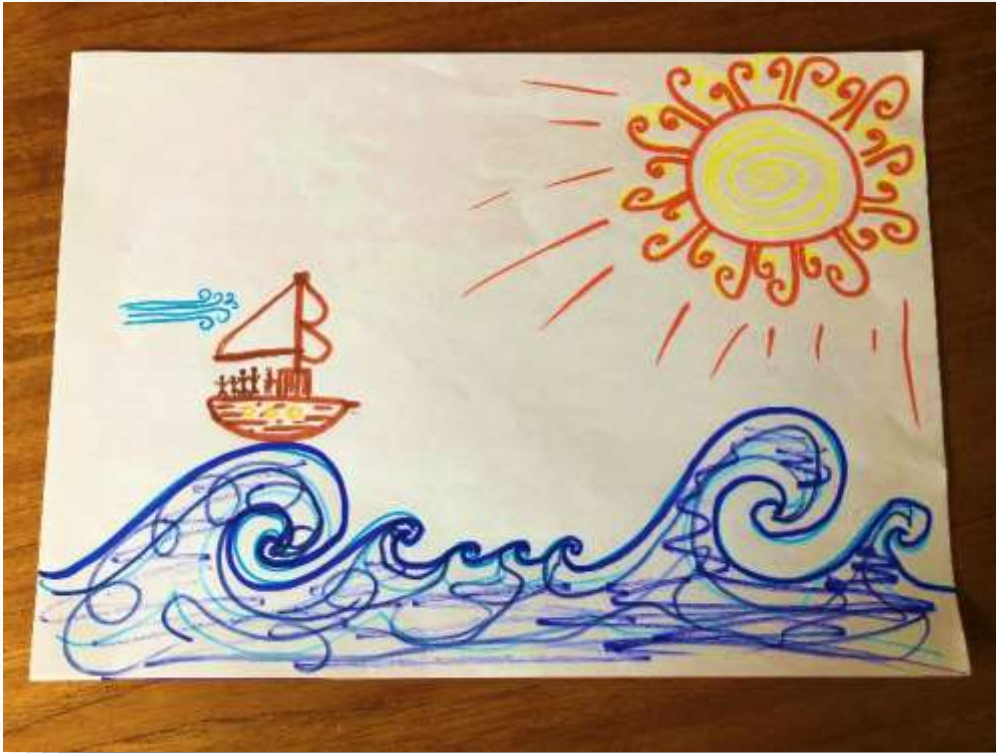


Figure 25: Marie's Visual Story 1

This visual story completed by Marie (Figure 25) early in her second year of her degree depicts reflections about her personal identity, her growth, her motivations and the transition experiences of her first year, as narrated below:

*Marie:* “That is us [referring to her *whānau*] on our waka, having a bit of a journey, sometimes lots of wind powering us, sometimes nothing in the sails, sometimes big huge obstacles, sometimes just cruising along waves. So for me, that represents last year, not just the study, but the study was such a pivotal part of it. People say study *and* home, but for me they are one, because one can’t function without the other. My whole year was topsy-turvey and sometimes that was because of home stuff and sometimes it was school stuff, but we worked in our *whānau* together and we made it. I finished my first year, in the end, really well...”

*Diana:* “What about the sun in this picture”?

*Marie:* “It just represents my growth, and also all of the positivity of external things that helped us on our journey.

When it was the low time, there was always someone spreading sunshine on us. There were my classmates, and my Mum, and even just having people like you and *staff member* have really become little rays of sunshine in my life. That is what that sun is for me—people who showed us the way and helped us when we needed it.

*Marie:* .... It's hard with kids...But, probably in the past, I might have given up when things got hard, whereas I know I need to show my kids that if they want to do something they can put their mind to it and they can achieve it. That was a big part of what helped me get through last year. Even though they made it harder, they also made it more motivating to get it done" [FG 3, 2017].

Personal identity that is viable in one context may not always transfer to another context (Ecclestone et al., 2010). Hemaima's transition experience from polytechnic to university was more stressful and less effective than her transition from the wānanga to the polytechnic context. In the wānanga and polytechnic environments, she developed her understanding of a viable way of 'being' in a tertiary organisation based on living with Irlen's syndrome which contributed to her personal identity narrative. This harmony was disrupted when that personal identity narrative was no longer viable in the university context. Hemaima had to re-work and re-construct her identity narrative about her Irlen's syndrome in relation to being a student when she encountered the university environment.

Similarly, Charvae lives with epilepsy and re-assessed his identity narrative concerning his epilepsy while making the transition from school to studying at the polytechnic.

*Charvae:* "When I was going to school, I would use it [epilepsy] as an advantage, just to get out of class and stuff like that, but now, I'm trying to live the adult life, study so I can feel happy and have kids and live a nice normal, happy life. I don't want to

take this epilepsy as a blockage of making those steps happen”

[Int 1, 2016].

Charvae felt the students and staff in the polytechnic environment were accepting of his epilepsy, and this helped him to more readily identify with having a disability than he had been able to do at school. He described a recent seizure he experienced on campus:

*Diana:* “How were you treated during that event?”

*Charvae:* “That’s the thing. My tutor and classmates were really good about it. I was on the way to class with another student and he noticed that I was on the ground shaking so he raced to get the tutor who came out immediately. All of a sudden I woke up and she was communicating with me and she called the ambulance”.

*Diana:* “Was that a good way to handle the situation at that time?”

*Charvae:* “Yes, it was. And since then, it’s bonded me a whole lot closer to my tutor and to the rest of my classmates and made me less worried about my epilepsy here than I ever was at school”. [Int 2, 2016].

Both Hemaima and Charvae had to re-construct their personal identity and self-perceptions of what living with a disability meant in their new context of a university and a polytechnic, respectively. Weedon and Riddell (2010) suggest that it is important to understand transition experiences of students with disabilities as their struggles with social identity (as well as practical and emotional aspects of transition) may provide lessons applicable to other learners. They note that a tension exists for universities (perhaps less so for polytechnics and wānanga?) about providing better social and emotional support and the belief that once at university, adults are independent. This tension can prevent students either creating their disabled identity or coming to terms with that identity.

Just as Hemaima and Charvae had to re-construct their personal identity and self-perceptions of what living with a disability meant in their new context of a

university and a polytechnic, Marie had to re-construct her personal identity and self-perceptions of what her various whānau roles meant in the new context of studying at university. Her identity moved fluidly between home and university contexts as evidenced in her phrase, “People say study *and* home, but for me they are one, because one can’t function without the other kind of thing”. In this sense, Marie had a viable identity (Ecclestone et al., 2010) which transferred from the home context to the university context (mostly) and she viewed her transition into TE as effective.

Another participant (Awhina Te Whenua) found the transition from polytechnic to university problematic because she believed she needed practical and financial support she did not receive. Her personal identity was viable (Ecclestone et al., 2010) in the context of polytechnic where she enjoyed learning; Awhina believed she was a competent student with high self-efficacy. She graduated with a two-year Diploma of Environmental Science. Yet this viable identity did not transfer to the context of university where she enrolled in a Bachelor of Science and withdrew after two weeks. In part, this decision was based on practical and financial changes that simultaneously occurred, and in part, this decision was based on a belief that university study would not suit her (identity) and that she would have low self-efficacy (perhaps related to a lower self-confidence) in a university context. As noted by Ecclestone et al. (2010) from this viewpoint, if a viable identity does not transfer from one context into another, transitions into TE environments may become challenging.

Turner (2007) links the notion of ‘self-efficacy’ to ‘personal capital’. The notion that self-efficacy is a resource to enable an individual to recognise other ‘resources’ (friends, family, mentors) is closely linked to ‘personal capital’. *Personal capital* refers to a person’s psychological and emotional attributes as ‘skills’ which enhance opportunities and survival in life (Turner, 2007). “Consideration of agency, to give direction to one’s life through interaction with social and material conditions, both individually and collectively requires self-motivation, self-efficacy, opportunities to exercise autonomy or perhaps a desire to shape a particular field or context” (Ecclestone et al., 2010, p.10). Awhina’s self-

efficacy and identity were linked to her personal capital, which at that particular time in her life, she felt, was insufficient to make the transition into university.

From the perspective of applying norms in policies for TE this series of events may be interpreted as a 'failed transition' or as a 'non-retention' case, but as Colley (2007) points out, norms of 'persistence' and educational transitions neglect to account for the forward and backward motion of life and closures and openings of opportunities to learn. Awhina herself thought that she would probably return to university in the future when she had more support available to her. Similarly, there were other participants who had 'dropped out' of various TE settings in the past who did not view that experience negatively as part of their identity narrative. This is an important point because as raised in section 3.3.1, Kinnane et al. (2014) note that governmental agencies collect statistics around completions and withdrawals with the view that withdrawals (drop-outs) are "failures" penalising both students and institutions financially. Yet, five Māori students in this study did not appear to hold this view based on their own experience.

During the present study, many participants shared with me how much they felt they had personally grown and changed as a result of their TE experience, (and this aligns with TE policy narratives which signify 'change'). Yet, interestingly, all but two participants continued to live in the same place, socialise with the same friends, affiliate to the same marae as they did before they entered their programmes (signifying 'stasis'). Although participants expressed they experienced growth inwardly with their personal identity, this did not necessarily translate into direct changes to their outward lives.

Fourteen participants experienced 'personal growth' and 13 experienced 'identity discovery'; their experiences illustrated that their 'self' was being constantly re-constructed. Constructing and re-constructing their personal identity was a perpetual process of permanent flux. Although participants spoke of summer holidays, or semester breaks as a 'pause' or a chance to 'rest' or 'take a breath and reflect', change and re-working of the *self*, did not stop during these periods.

Ten participants emphasized examples of how an institution's flexibility had enabled them to make a more effective transition because it suited their personal needs and situations. Quinn (2010) pointed out that, "a 'failed transition' to HE is

a mirror of multiple 'failed' transitions in the lives of working-class learners: anticipated failures, because of their supposed 'lack' of aspirations and ability, and predetermined failures because of the rigidly hierarchical education system" (p.119). Educational policy makers are obsessed with fixed moments of change, but if a more dynamic conception of transition were to be adopted, emphasis could be put on flexible, 'unsettled' and spiralling movements throughout a learning life (Quinn, 2010).

Jocey Quinn (2010) suggests that the idea that a coherent 'self' around which people can construct a coherent identity narrative is flawed because it implies a, "unified humanist subject capable of being transformed by education" (p.122). Her research in the UK on young working class people who dropped out of university concluded that education alone cannot shape people into their real and perfect human form; rather, education is one of many sites where people act out certain culturally shaped roles. (I pick up this discussion about a core 'self' again in section 7.7 of this chapter). Quinn's (2010) observation about fixed and inflexible moments of 'transition' in higher education policy causing significant problems for students appears to be congruent with the present study. Students in the present study were able to make more effective transitions when people within the institutions showed flexibility. Personal identity, the way in which participants perceive themselves in dynamic and evolving contexts of their lives, is part of an overall key theme of identity that emerged in this research.

### 7.2.3 Student Identity

The third aspect of identity that is important to discuss in this study is student identity. Marcia (1966) explained that identity provides people with a historical sense of who they have been, a meaningful sense of who they are now, and a sense of who they might become in the future. Osborne and Walker (2006) view student identity as the "extent to which an individual defines the self through a role or performance in a particular domain, in this case, schooling and academics" (p.563).

This theory comes from a sociological perspective of *symbolic interactionism* based on the ideas of key theorists such as Charles Cooley, John Dewey, George

Mead and William James (Schellenberg, 1990) (see section 3.3.3). The main idea proposes that self-awareness and identity come about from multiple and repeated interactions with others. Symbolic interactionism, an important school of thought in American sociological spheres predominantly established by George Mead (1907) and further developed and named by Herbert Blumer (1969), holds that, reciprocally, individuals' behaviour towards things and others relates to the *meaning* these things/people have for them.

One of the behaviours that links clearly to student identity is withdrawal or 'drop-out' (Osborne & Walker, 2006). A challenge for TE leaders has been to 'retain' students (Tinto, 1993; Wisely, 2009). Yet, interestingly students do not view themselves as needing to be 'retained', but rather as needing to have reasons to persist in their studies. Aubrey felt that Māori students would be more likely to "stick around" if there were more everyday Māori role models in tertiary education environments, not just role models who are musicians or sports celebrities.

*Aubrey: "Because everyone sees rugby stars like Liam Messam and Aaron Smith who play for the All Blacks, ...we don't have many role models from Māori that are in the education world or the business world that are exposed enough for us to look up to...where are the stories of Māori who have put in hard work [study] and made it? They're the type of people you need to be exposing to our younger Māori generation. We need to see more Māori kaiako around this place too..." [Int 2, 2016].*

Osborne and Walker (2006) observed from their study that stigmatised minority groups feel first-hand the impact of negative stereotypes and, in some cases, must decide whether or not to risk confirming them (withdrawal) or appearing as possibly just the exception to the rule (completion). In the case of Emere (immersion Māori schooling transition into mainstream university), this proved to be a daunting challenge! Ballam (2008) discusses the phenomenon of transitioning to new cultural and linguistic settings, noting that attitudes and expectations of learners to become like the dominant culture may neglect the knowledge and experiences of those making an attempt to learn the dominant language and

customs, resulting in poor academic or social outcomes for such students. With very few role models of either staff or other Māori students who have entered mainstream TE environments from the immersion Māori school system (partly because it is a relatively new phenomenon), this participant was among a few brave pioneers. Conversely, seven participants expressed what a significantly positive influence a Māori role model in academia had been on their personal motivation and this endorses findings from other similar studies that Māori role models in education are influential in motivation (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012).

The development of a positive student identity has been found to influence a student's motivation to engage in TE (Martin, Spolander, Ali, & Maas, 2012). Historically, the transition to a student identity within TE has been reasonably transparent; however, this has become murkier as the demographics of the 'typical' student have evolved. Traditionally in Aotearoa, TE student identity has been linked to full-time, on-university-campus, largely middle-higher class school-leaver Pākehā students. The current student body in TE in Aotearoa looks a lot different, and as raised in section 2.7, on an international level Aotearoa has many more part-time students than other countries. As part of the widening participation initiatives set by the TEC (MoE, 2014a), student identity now must account for adult students, part-time students, online students, students who are also in employment (Martin et al., 2012) international students and a diverse range of ethnic minority students. Tertiary student identity is furthermore widened beyond university contexts into polytechnic, wānanga and other TE settings.

For students to make an effective TE transition, it must be possible for them to develop a student identity that is viable in the TE context in which they are situated. Often such contexts value participation in group-work, reflection and critical debate. Dillon Te Kani's struggle between moving from 'I' to "whānau" when doing his end-of-year group assessment task illustrated how he re-worked his student identity over the year. He adjusted his understandings of the way TE was conducted in a wānanga through learning the institution's values of collective

achievement, and he re-worked his incoming perceptions of 'being a student' based on stereotypes he held about how TE individuals are assessed and graded.

Dillon had not undertaken formal TE for 15 years; his existing student identity itself (largely constructed from secondary schooling memories) underwent a transition as part of his whole identity re-construction. The experiences of the participants in this study show that for Māori students, stimulating a positive student identity was more challenging in a university setting than in either a wānanga or polytechnic context. A challenge exists here for universities to address the barriers that prevent stimulating a positive student identity for non-traditional students. Inclusive pedagogical practices must be embraced.

As stated in the literature review, the majority of Māori students transition into TE as post-school leavers rather than school-leavers (MoE, 2014b). Thirteen of the 15 participants in this study were post-school leavers (although two of those had previously experienced being school-leavers going into a TE environment). All other participants had been engaged in other post-secondary activities prior to enrolling in tertiary courses and they largely cited either being disengaged with learning in the secondary environment and/or financial reasons for going into work directly after leaving school which is consistent with other studies citing barriers for Māori adult students' learning (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012; Sciascia, 2017; Wikaire et al., 2016).

Quinn (2010) raises the question of students' readiness for change. Similar to her research, this study showed the rhythm of many young Māori lives did not synchronise with the set time-frames the education system has in place. Their point of readiness for TE lay well beyond the period of immediately after school life. It lay in the future, after conditions within the family were able to support study, or finances were in place, or they felt 'ready' (two participants were commencing study in the 50s age-bracket). Watene Moon compared his experience studying at Otago University when he was 19 to his current experience, reiterating that he had two totally different 'mind-sets' in terms of motivation and planning. He stated that how prepared he was to adopt a student identity was remarkably different to when he was younger. Currently he viewed himself as far more deeply committed; this may also relate to his lifecourse development

(Erikson, 1950; 1974; Levinson, 1978) or, in a Bourdieuan sense if we look to the practices of learning to 'play the TE game', learning to become a student, a successful learner.

In this study, nine participants found that bridging courses acted as stepping stones and were strongly influential in enabling more tertiary level study or going on to higher levels. Bridging courses enabled participants to 'dip their toe in the water' and experience being a TE student. In the case of Emere who had come from an immersion Māori schooling experience, taking a foundation academic skills course empowered her ("oh my gosh, I can actually study at a university level...I can do this!"). Her transition experience illustrated how she had to rework her student identity throughout her life. First she developed an identity as an immersion Māori student; then adjusted to her final year of high school in a mainstream, English speaking environment; then adapted to TE to complete two one-semester Level 4 certificates, and; then re-worked her student identity when she enrolled in university. She experienced achievement and success during her immersion Māori education contributing to her positive sense of student identity that she drew upon to help her face challenges at university.

Student identity is part of an overall key theme of identity emergent in this research as the lived transition experiences of Māori students unfolded. Each individual came with a historical sense of their student identity, grappled with making a meaningful sense of what it meant to be a student currently, and seemed motivated by their thoughts of future possibilities. Although the extent to which student identity comprised their overall identity might change again in future, a significant part of making an effective TE transition involved participants constructing and re-constructing aspects of their Māori, personal and student identity.

### 7.3 Identity and Agency

This section has three parts, first discussing identity and agency in tertiary education as it relates to Māori students. Second, I consider the role of Māori identity for agency in educational success and what 'educational success' means

for Māori. Third, I examine agency in both whakapapa whānau and kaupapa whānau and interpret this in light of Māori identity.

### 7.3.1 Agency in Tertiary Education

In this research, participants viewed their transition experience as a journey of personal and identity growth—transition as a process. The process allowing people to change their self is at the heart of agency. Part of agency is to make changes, and in the process of doing so, make changes *to* or be changed *by*, the environment (Sharar, 2016). The belief that the process of education is able to (and must) help people develop their capacities for being independent has been a long-standing western tradition since at least the Enlightenment (Ecclestone et al., 2010).

Agency has been extensively theorised from sociological perspectives (Biesta, Priestly & Robinson, 2015; Blumer, 1969; Embree, 2011; Garfinkel, 1967; Giddens, 1984; Hollis, 1994; Hurrelmann, 2009) and is often considered in relation to structure which, at a macro level, is about social control and how structure may influence the behaviour of an individual. As discussed in section 3.4.3, agency and structure are context specific and dynamic. My goal here is to recognise the phenomenon of agency as it arose in the findings and how it was achieved in the individual lives and identities of the participants and of the TE staff.

By viewing the notion of agency as connected to an agent-situation interaction rather than something that an individual ‘has’, it is possible to recognise potential for increased agency for Māori students for effective transition experiences. Bourdieu (1977) suggested that social class, upbringing, education, past choice, and culture all form part of social structure and determine in part, the behaviour of an agent (student or teacher) in the *field* (tertiary education). Bourdieu (1977; 1984; 1986) analysed and developed the concept of cultural capital, comprising factors such as an individual’s economic, social and cultural capital, in influencing educational outcomes. He proposed the notion of *habitus* as part of the explanation for the ways in which relationships of social inequality are reproduced through the education system (see sections 3.3.3 and 4.4.4). In other words, habitus is a ‘structuring structure’.

Bourdieu (1986) proposed that within a university context, members of minority groups must take on a secondary habitus, that of the university, which closely aligns with the habitus of the dominant group. This group must adapt to the practices, habits and dispositions of 'distinction' in the university context. An application of this theory can be seen when Emere, for whom Te Reo Māori was her first language, decided not to submit her university assignments in Te Reo Māori, despite this option being presented to her by teaching staff. She believed that she needed to write in English to be validated as successful in the university context. In Bourdieu's *theory of practice*, it is the practices of élitism that build a certain kind of capital.

The interaction of the individuals in that context for action was shaped by their agentic potential. This participant identified a number of issues that she surmised would stand in her way, including the difficulty of finding a suitable assessor to grade her assessment, and the length of time this would take before she would receive any feedback. Furthermore, she had heard from other Māori students that translators may not be familiar with the topics and content being covered in their assessments. She purposefully accommodated herself to the system, although it is possible the system may not have the real capacity to provide appropriate assessors despite its rhetoric.

Understanding agency being connected to an agent-situation interaction shifts the capacity of agency from existing within in an individual Māori student to the capacity of the context for action as shaped by the interaction of students and staff within the TE context. This also places a spotlight on agency in the context for action during the interactions between student and staff to facilitate educational success and is a (re)turn to viewing agency as an important dimension of teaching professionalism (Biesta, Priestly & Robinson, 2015).

Māori lecturers, tutors and kaiako were deemed as important to at least 10 participants; they were seen as approachable and as role models that students could aspire to. One participant expressed that getting high grades was a way he could honour the mana of his kaiako. The participants highly regarded teaching staff who were approachable and appreciated staff who made themselves available outside the classroom. Some participants commented that Māori tutors

were effective because they could relate what they were teaching to a Māori context; this usually facilitated greater understanding and more meaningful learning.

Five participants preferred to approach Māori teaching staff if they experienced problems requiring support. Although eight participants felt that more Māori faculty were needed in the university setting, three indicated that ethnicity alone would not improve the success of Māori students; whether or not they could connect with Māori students was paramount. There was consensus among participants that staff needed to be well-qualified and passionate about their content and their teaching. Six participants indicated that they had established very strong connections with some Māori staff, referring to the metaphor of the *whānau* to explain these relationships. The reciprocal process of the teaching and learning (*ako*) is an example at a micro level of an agent-situation interaction that shifts the capacity of agency from residing within (Māori) individuals to the capacity of the *context for action* as shaped by the interaction of the individual students and teachers in that context (Biesta, Priestly & Robbins, 2015).

### 7.3.2 Agency in Educational Success

Agency had an influence on which goals participants considered desirable or reasonable. Glaesser and Cooper (2014) suggest that a course of action is not merely chosen by how likely it is to lead to some outcome, but also by the subjective estimation of the likelihood of success. Students who participated in Māori content-focussed programmes (e.g. Te Toi Tangata and Te Ara Reo Māori Certificates offered at *wānanga*) had clear expectations that they wanted to access and improve their understanding of Te Reo and Te Ao Māori. They sought to study with other Māori students, and they wanted validation of their habitus and cultural capital, as seen in Dillon Te Kani's transition experience. For Dillon and most other participants, educational success meant to succeed academically, *and* to succeed as Māori. This notion is at the heart of educational success for Māori (Durie, 2003).

Cultural values can influence student motivation for participating in TE (Phinney, Dennis & Orsorio, 2006). As reported in the literature review, Māori culture is a

collectivist culture; traditional Māori values align education with communal rather than individual good (Durie, 2003, Hōhepa, 2013; Pihama, 2016). Seen from this perspective, educational success is education that benefits the collective unit (e.g. whānau, hapū and iwi). In this study, ten participants spoke about enrolling in TE to support their whānau or wider Māori community.

Among those participants who enrolled in non-Māori programmes, some were very disappointed with the lack of Māori content during their learning experience. There was a mismatch between their expectations and what the course or the tutor provided in this aspect of the teaching pedagogy. This finding became particularly noticeable during the focus group discussions of the university students. They questioned the commitment of the institution and some staff to Māori cultural aspirations, particularly concerning the delivery of Māori courses and Te Reo Māori.

Tinto (1993) attributes a person's commitment or motivation as directly impacting upon their ability to finish university. Fifteen participants in this study were motivated to succeed in TE and particularly those studying at degree level. For eight participants, their day-to-day commitment levels waxed and waned while their underlying motivation remained strong. Motivation was an important factor contributing to their success. At the same time, for many participants their personal commitment and motivation were driven by a powerful sense of wanting to improve their situation and empower their whānau and wider Māori community, and even in Dillon's case, the global Indigenous community—they viewed this as educational success.

For those participants who chose to transition into a polytechnic or a university (i.e., non-kaupapa Māori organisations), they achieved success because sometimes disconnecting themselves from Te Ao Māori by making what they perceived to be short term sacrifices for the long-term goal of completing their studies. A strong agreement from all participants demonstrated in the findings revealed that, completing their programme, getting their qualification, and helping other Māori, were central to educational success. Linked to these aspirations was an insistence that support from within their whānau and teaching staff were two very critical enablers to achieve that success.

There were clear statements from participants around educational success as being connected to getting a job, giving back to whānau and improving their situation. All these ideas inferred that participants would do or gain these things *after completing* their chosen programme. Completion linked closely to their statements of what education success meant to them. Furthermore, *how well* they completed was a source of motivation and pride for seven participants.

Yet, a paradox exists here. Many who had previously experienced TE but not completed their programme at that time, did not necessarily view their non-completion as a non-success largely because the experience acted as an opportunity for other directions in their life at that time. This finding correlates positively to the research of McGivney (1996; 2003) and Quinn (2010) carried out in the UK. Surprisingly, there was less emphasis from participants about educational success being the acquisition of knowledge, although some participants mentioned gaining the skills to do what was needed beyond the learning programme as symptomatic.

There was remarkably high consistency of experiences by participants about educational success as Māori relating to having Māori culture and values celebrated by staff and institutional culture. This overlapped with being able to contribute to the success of others through knowing and acknowledging the strength of working together – students enrolled in the wānanga expressed this strongly. Developing the ability to build on personal experiences, as well as others' experiences was enabled through the influence of whanaungatanga. When it was valued, whanaungatanga maintained emotional and spiritual strength among the cohort of students and bolstered motivation to continue rather than to stop attending classes.

Seven participants pursued TE in the hopes that their children or wider whānau would follow. A further reason was the opportunity to be of service to the wider Māori community. These reasons were about empowering the Māori collective. This study's findings resonate with international research that persistence in higher education often means that Indigenous students move closer to making a better life for their families (Guillory & Wolverton, 2008). As Giddens (1979; 1984)

claims, in principle, any given pattern of social conduct may be transformed by agents behaving differently from what they have done in the past.

### 7.3.2.1 *Perspective Transformation and Critical Social Theory*

I closely considered Jack Mezirow's (1991; 2000) *perspective transformation* theory for its application to this research to explain the phenomenon of transition experiences. Mezirow discussed cultural assumptions; similarly to Graham Smith, Mezirow's ideas were heavily derivative of Habermas and aligned to Freire's but in a North American context. Mezirow argued that when adults modify existing meaning structures and behave differently from how they have behaved in the past, there has been a process of *perspective transformation* (Clark & Wilson, 1991; Mezirow, 1991; 2000). For instance, in this study, some participants discussed the paradoxical honour and burden of the behavioural change associated with being the first in their family to carry out tertiary level study (especially a degree). These behavioural changes were accompanied by both the pressures and privileges of educating wider whānau members about what tertiary level study entails. Some participants discussed significant transition challenges as disorienting, being positioned into a dilemma or needing to overcome adversity. Jack Mezirow (1991; 2000) explained that transformative learning challenges a person's fixed assumptions and expectations (mind-sets and habits) to make them more open-minded, discerning, and emotionally able to change.

In this study, Dillon discussed his dilemma resulting in a shift in his perspective from "I" to "whānau". Hemaima was disoriented by the strategies she had used to cope with her disabilities in the polytechnic environment when she transitioned into university: "So, the risk is that if I behave the way that I did in the diploma, that I would get absolutely no qualification at Waikato University". Within Mezirow's (1991) perspective transformation theory a disorienting dilemma acts as a catalyst for perspective change when a person experiences something that does not fit their expectations, or they cannot resolve the situation without some change in their views. Therefore, these types of experiences cause trigger points for learners to question their own understandings and assumptions (Mezirow, 1991).

Upon digging deeper to uncover the 'unseen' roots of Mezirow's (1990) theoretical base, I realised that this theory is constructed, situated and informed within a wider context of dominant American cultural norms and values prevalent in Mezirow's era (and perhaps today too). As Clark and Wilson (1991) point out, Mezirow's fundamental theoretical assumptions adopt hegemonic American values of individualism, rationality, and autonomy through his focus on, respectively, "learner-centeredness, critical discourse and self-directedness" (Mezirow, 1990, p.363). I argue that these assumptions are incorporated *uncritically* in his theory, on the premise that there is a generic process of adult development and maturity applicable to all adults.

The notion of 'maturity' may be a contested concept, especially by marginalised cultural groups (Chodorow, 1999; Gilligan, 1982; Katz & Marshall, 2003). In this sense, assumptions underpinning Mezirow's theory painted a clearer picture about the wider context and culture in which his theory is situated than of adult development to maturity or perhaps perspective transformation itself (Clark & Wilson, 1991). The main critique is of Mezirow's individualism.

However, my study was rooted in a CST theoretical framework (Browne, 2000; Calhoun, 1995) and embedded within a collectivism cultural setting with 20 participants who identified as Māori. Their experiences were more likely to align with those of a marginalised social group in Aotearoa. This in mind, the aim was not only to understand, but also to critique and change society through raising consciousness and affecting power balances in favour of those less powerful. CST recognises that social attitudes or norms may control many options for people; the aim of CST is to expose oppressions constraining individual freedoms (Browne, 2000). This aligns more with Freire (1970) who argues that education is political. Furthermore, no genuine learning occurs unless students are actively involved in controlling their own education through dialogue and problem posing alongside respect and working cooperatively with educators.

Dillon's attitude moving from "I" to "whānau" reflects the learning about genuine Māori values that occurred for him as a result of studying in the wānanga environment. Flexible conditions for assessment deadlines gave Dillon a greater ability to control his own education through respectful dialogue with his

educators. Dillon gained an understanding that his tertiary education experience was as much about bettering his own individual situation in life as it was about the role he could play in assisting to empower others around him to improve their situation.

### 7.3.3 Agency and Whānau

Within a contemporary society, whānau operates as a major context to shape the identity and well-being of Māori (Durie, 2003; Metge, 1995; Pihama, 2001; G. Smith, 1997). Durie (2003) identified five primary functions within contemporary whānau. They are the capacity to care (manaakitia), share (tohatohatia), protect (pūpuri taonga), empower (whakamana) and plan ahead (whakatakoto tikanga). In this sense, the agentic capacity of a whānau could be viewed as the capacity to define agency for themselves. The context for action is the construction of the identity of the whānau itself, created through the interaction of the agents, or individual whānau members.

#### 7.3.3.1 *Whakapapa-Whānau*

The kinship or whakapapa-whānau is the basic unit of Māori society and traditionally has functioned as the social and economic unit of day-to-day living. Whānau would comprise relatives descended from a recent ancestor and, usually, three or four generations of a family living and working together (Rameka, 2012). Parsons (1949; 1991) hypothesized that the family is the central context for primary socialization and that in addition to providing basic shelter, food and safety, children learn cultural and social ideals to guide them through life as they develop. If a child is unable to internalize these norms, they are unable to successfully participate in their culture or society in future.

Durie (2003) proposed that whānau well-being empowers individual members by advocating on their behalf and smoothing their transition into different domains in society (cultivating human capital). Belonging to a whānau comes with privileges and responsibilities (Durie, 1997). These equated with both enablers and barriers when it came to participants' transition experiences. Whānau has been highlighted as an essential contributor to educational success for Māori in TE contexts (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012; Tiakiwai, 2001; Williams,

2010). Interestingly, Dewey's work (Murphy & Fleming, 2010) also says that education must be linked to family and community. This was certainly found to be the case in the present study. Whānau provided much needed financial, emotional, spiritual and practical support for the participants. This point is significant if an individual Māori student is to make a transition into a TE environment where whānau participation is discouraged.

Māori students have similar responsibilities and commitments to their Pākehā student counterparts, but in addition, there are a parallel set of priorities located in a web of whānau responsibilities outside the TE environment. Interestingly Kidman, Chu, Fernandez and Abelly (2015) found the same to be true for Māori academics and staff members. Other research has shown that Māori academics experience a different form of academic socialization than their Pākehā counterparts (Kidman, 2001) posing unique challenges for Māori scholars in university and polytechnic environments particularly. Kidman and Chu (2017) recently reported that generally, in western mainstream universities, Māori faculty members experienced more intellectual, social and professional isolation when few or no other Māori staff were employed, affecting their well-being.

Thirteen participants in this study thought that without whānau support they would not have been able to make an effective transition into TE, nor remain motivated to achieve educational success. Awhina directly stated that she could not continue with her degree because she did not have adequate whānau support at that time in her life and moreover, her wider whānau needed her support for health and child-care reasons. A McCluskey perspective of Awhina's case would explain that she had very little margin to deal with her current situation, much less respond to any other demands on her time and energy to apply to the process of learning. This example illustrates agency linked to a moral or ethical imperative; the agent-situation interaction is related to the collective learning and function of the whānau as a whole.

The narratives of participants were saturated with descriptions of interactions with whānau members highlighting whānau as an important factor in terms of participants' effective transition experiences. Participants regularly referred to a grandparent, parent, aunty, uncle, brother, sister, child or grandchild as

supporters. Significance of the support and influence participants felt from their whānau came through very strongly during the interviews and focus groups. Their discussions included living and non-living relatives and often branched out to include stories centred at a marae or at kōhunga reo centres. Many enjoyed speaking at length about whānau members who influenced their early upbringing as well as those who were closely involved in their transition experiences into TE contexts.

On the other hand, as reported by others, (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Hunt, Morgan, & Teddy, 2001; Jefferies, 1997; Nikora et al., 2002; Sciascia, 2017), this study also identified whānau as a barrier to the participation and performance of Māori students in TE. Challenges arose around balancing whānau commitments with adequate time for study workloads. “In a collectivist culture, maintaining whānau relationships and responsibilities is culturally expected. If you are unable to manage this, then your identity can be challenged” (Williams, 2010, p.225). The expectation that whānau members contribute to whānau wellbeing and participate in whānau activities, regardless of whether or not they were studying, put a lot of pressure on several participants. This was particularly the case for Marie, who found it hard to maintain her whānau relationships. For this reason, she changed her enrolment status from full-time to part-time, eventually accepting her degree would take longer to complete than originally anticipated.

Whereas the wānanga and polytechnic contexts were found to be whānau and child friendly contexts, the university context was less so. Similarly, the university environment seemed less flexible around students being absent for tangihanga and other marae-centred tikanga. Tinto (1993) states that adult students in particular can find it difficult to balance external commitments (such as family and work) with study. Despite guilty feelings, four participants discussed prioritising whānau-centred commitments above their study requirements. Equally, as discussed by participants who were parents, at times when they *did* prioritise their study they experienced guilty feelings over the time they missed with their children. Participants tried to organise their time around family routines, to put whānau first, but this proved to be extremely difficult at times. Overall, participants’ identities were strongly connected to their role, responsibilities and

privileges associated with their whakapapa whānau and this tended to support or hinder their transition process and educational success.

### *7.3.3.2 Kaupapa-Whānau*

The other type of whānau used in a broader sense is a kaupapa-whānau, an informal learning community and cultural enclave (Williams, 2010). Metge (1995) uses the term kaupapa-based whānau to distinguish between two types of whānau – those based on kinship or genealogical ties and those that have come together for a common purpose, both instrumental and expressive. Participants regularly likened their class environment to a (whakapapa) whānau to express the bonds and sense of belonging they felt within that environment, contributing to their sense of an effective student identity.

Kaupapa-based whānau delivered a range of support, were a source of motivation and encouragement, and helped to cultivate a sense of belonging in the experience of many participants. Three participants discussed times when kaupapa-whānau contributed financial assistance. In many other cases, food was shared, as well as transportation to and from campus. The kaupapa-based whānau helped to facilitate academic success through strong bonds among Māori peers and the collaborative collective approach to learning together. They were a social support network to help participants to make an effective transition. Sometimes, there were disappointments, as in the case of Hemaima, who felt there had not been any friends from the class offer, “let’s get your grades up so we can all finish with those 70% of grades all together”.

Participants included teaching staff in their description of some kaupapa-based whānau as members of the learning community. The nature of the relationship determined whether the participants would approach individual staff members for support. This further embodies the traditional essence of ako, with the teacher and learner engaged in a reciprocal relationship and both positioned at the heart of the teaching and learning process (Hemara, 2000). Being grouped with other Māori in tutorial groups (cultural enclaves) was viewed positively by 13 participants, whether in a university, polytechnic or wānanga setting. Fourteen participants talked about the close personal relationships that they formed with

fellow students—not all, but mostly Māori. They drew on the metaphor of the whānau (extended family) to describe these strong connections.

Students Marie and Pūtara also spoke of situations where the kaupapa-based whānau offered support to promote the health and wellbeing of other members in their group. Participants demonstrated that they cared for each other's spiritual, physical and emotional welfare and this helped to cultivate a sense of belonging and connectedness. Kaupapa-based whānau provided the encouragement to persist when others lacked motivation and drive. As expressed by Nigel (who had adopted a strong sense of his student identity): "I've sort of taken myself into the role of trying to push people up, not in the way of handing in assignments and stuff, but in the way of just making sure they get their A into G". Nigel had developed his student identity and was partaking in his kaupapa whānau responsibilities to support other members.

Although the participants expressed their enjoyment in collaborating for learning purposes, they did not ignore competition. During one focus group, three students enrolled in the same paper received their results by way of a text message. There was a palpable friendly competitive mood as they asked "What did you get?" to find out each other's grades and sort out who had got the highest. Most seemed aware of which students were the, 'ones to beat'.

Agency in whānau is part of an overall key theme of agency in connection with Māori identity that emerged in this research. When considering the explicit and hidden details in the stories of participants' transition experiences, agency in TE, agency in educational success and agency within whānau is a process to make changes, and in the process of doing so, make changes to or be changed by the environment. As raised in the literature review, (section 3.3.3) Barker (2005) suggests that by connecting agency to an agent-situation interaction (agency as something people 'do' together, rather than agency as something that a person 'has') the locus of agency is shifted. Instead of agency existing within individuals, agency is shifted to the capacity of the context for action as shaped by the interaction of those individuals in that context.

## 7.4 Identity and Structure

I studied students' personally lived transition experiences in three unique types of TE institutions – a wānanga, a polytechnic and a university. In this study, the fifth subsidiary research question investigated whether there were any differences in transition experiences into three education institutions: a university, a polytechnic or a wānanga. Unsurprisingly, the findings illustrated that there were both similarities and differences (see section 6.2.6). Similarities tended to relate to transition experiences of 'being a student' studying at a tertiary level, while differences related to students' personal experiences of the values, systems, processes and perceived status of each institution in the wider social system.

This section considers structure in wānanga and is followed by two more sections discussing structure in polytechnics and universities respectively. Differences among the three are closely examined in terms of structural influences and the impacts on the identity of the participants. As explained in section 3.3.3, structure is about how society creates conditions for individual/collective behavior through social institutions such as family, work, and education. Structure is the term given to recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limit choices and opportunities that are available to people (Barker, 2005).

When a Māori student enrolls in a TE programme, the wider socio-political and educational policy context can heavily influence both their decision about which type of institution to study with, and also, their capacity to make an effective transition. Existing tertiary education admission policies around prior educational achievement may present a set of rules which direct a student's behavior through normative or cognitive means (Coburn, 2005). For instance, Government funding systems (or lack of) may dictate how much financial support is available for student tuition and support. National TE priorities and their marketing may facilitate or hinder what type of study options are made available to students.

Social forces that exist outside individual Māori participants played a large part in decisions they made. Structure was a factor that limited or influenced opportunities available to individual participants. Here, 11 of 15 students had

studied in at least two, and in one case, all three, types of institutions. Decisions around which institution to study with were influenced by:

- geographic proximity (five participants)
- cost (seven participants)
- availability of the desired programme (five participants)
- the match of the values of the institution to the programme of study to their own (seven participants)
- financial and practical matters, e.g. transportation, child care availability, family support during study (six participants)
- perceived status and value of the qualification from that institution (nine participants).

#### *7.4.1.1 Structure in Wānanga*

Overall, participants expressed their experiences of the wānanga positively, saying that the wānanga was very flexible to meet their needs. Although this study tracked five participants enrolled in Te Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, other participants had previously studied within a wānanga or were simultaneously enrolled part-time at a wānanga whilst enrolled at Toi Ohomai or the University of Waikato. In all, 10 participants expressed that in their experience of a wānanga, Māori values are strongly lived; thus, wānanga are positive environments in which Māori can learn. Participants generally discussed the advantages of studying at a wānanga as being beneficial for Māori students because the wānanga operates in a 'Māori way' which has the effect of making the student feeling at home, relaxed and looked after as a whole person. Most participants readily noted and appreciated wānanga staff who correctly pronounced Māori names. Such elements facilitated a supportive learning environment and effective transition experiences for the participants.

There was a belief by six participants that the wānanga provided a 'stepping stone' for them to study at a higher level in future, or, to study at another tertiary institution such as a polytechnic or, ultimately, a university. For instance, four participants (Emere, Tanisha, Jamahl, Aubrey) wanted to "work their way up", building their confidence and developing their identity of being "good enough" by introducing themselves to TE firstly at a wānanga. This idea links to another theme

which arose—that the wānanga has a lower social status than its mainstream counterpart, the university. Bourdieu (1984) proposes that groups with high volumes of cultural capital (e.g. education, which promotes social mobility beyond economic means) are most likely to determine what constitutes ‘taste’ in society. Conversely, groups with low volumes of cultural capital accept this ‘taste’ as valid and natural.

Aubrey consistently expressed his opinion that wānanga qualifications are not seen to be as valid in the sports and health industry as university or polytechnic qualifications. He believed that employers would privilege those candidates with a polytechnic or university qualification above the same credential if it were from a wānanga. Sophia expressed similar views about social work degrees.

Eight other participants communicated that they did not perceive the wānanga to be as ‘professional’ as a university and they believed this perception was also held by the wider community, such as future employers. Lorana openly expressed her opinion that prior to studying at the wānanga, she thought wānanga practices were not professional (e.g. enrolment systems, orientation process etc.) but that having been an enrolled student and coming to better understand the values and approaches of the wānanga, she had changed her mind. Lorana had moved to a point where she now felt proud to say that she was a student at the wānanga and that the knowledge she was gaining about Māori historically and contemporarily empowered her and stirred her to shift others’ thinking as well.

*Lorana:* “Umm, so, I’m less about trying to make people feel comfortable and settled in their views of Māori, particularly of themselves as well because I know that was me too, and I am less comfortable about making them feel comfortable with it, and I’m more confrontational”.

*Diana:* “Oh that is interesting, you want to dig things up a little bit, challenge their thinking!”

*Lorana:* “Yeah, yeah, I think I am often stirring things, and I think it is a good thing too. I feel like I am educating people, and that this way of thinking is not the only way of thinking, it’s not the one and all way of thinking...” [Int 3, 2016].

Stories from participants who studied at a wānanga were bursting with experiences of personal growth journeys, changes in their thinking and their re-connection to being Māori. Furthermore, *all* participants attributed this change to studying in a kaupapa Māori organisation where the Māori values created an environment facilitating advancement of their Māori knowledge and application of Māori custom.

Like other tertiary organisations, contemporary wānanga must meet TES priorities and TEC funding regulations. Previously in section 2.7 I discussed the dual priorities of wānanga to contribute to the economic productivity of the nation as per the Government's mandate that TE is the vehicle for economic transformation and, at the same time, to support advancement of Māori knowledge and application of Māori custom. The transition experiences of all five participants enrolled in Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi during this study are a case in point of how this wānanga meets priorities of supporting advancement of Māori knowledge and application of Māori custom.

As evidenced by the participants' views in this study, in terms of credibility and status of educational qualifications, hierarchically universities are perceived to be at the 'top', polytechnics in the 'middle' and wānanga at the 'bottom'. This image reflects a deeper reality in New Zealand of the existing power structure which creates and defends the very westernized education system that produces and perpetuates discrimination against Māori (and other ethnic minority groups) on an everyday basis (Bidois, 2012). Even within university contexts, Kidman (2007) discusses tensions in the racializing of Māori academic scholars who may challenge the status. She notes that in the post 9/11 era of contemporary universities, political activism faces increasing penalties in the workplace for Māori academics who speak out.

Furthermore, such hierarchical attitudes are based on a dichotomy that differentiates theoretical and practical knowledge, ranking theoretical knowledge above practical (NZITP & Metro Group, 2017 as cited in NZPC, 2017). Furthermore, fueled by global ranking systems, tertiary education institutions seek to gain high research gradings. Research grading of a tertiary institution can be linked to the status or position of an institution within the tertiary system hierarchy (Tawhai et

al., 2004) – an example of the neo-liberal university and the ‘scholastic’ model of production.

In Aotearoa, the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) system, which is designed to distribute funding by research ‘results’ and ‘outputs’ has steadily dominated the TEC’s prioritisation (Tawhai et al., 2004), and is perceived as disadvantageous by some staff employed at wānanga. The PBRF model may limit opportunities for appropriate recognition within wānanga (Roa, Beggs, Williams & Moller, 2009; Tawhai et al., 2004) because it tends to ignore traditional wisdom of Māori research practices unique to kaupapa Māori research largely engaged in by wānanga research staff. The PBRF system does not provide evaluative criteria compatible with Indigenous research practices (Roa et al., 2009). One illustration of this is that higher evaluations are usually placed on sole authored papers than on multi-authored publications (Amundsen, Ballam, Cosgriff, 2018; Roa et al., 2009). The impact of the PBRF on Māori scholarship needs more research (Kidman, Chu, Fernandez & Abelly, 2015) since Indigenous and cross-cultural research often demand teamwork. PBRF poses challenges for researchers interested in long-term solutions to the “big” issues in an academic environment, favouring short-term ‘outputs’.

Ironically, the creation of a sole tertiary education funding system alongside the establishment of the NZQF, which was purported by the Government to reduce the division between academic and vocational education, have done the opposite. Now, more than ever, universities have entered the competitive marketplace for student enrolments. One way they achieve enrolments is by promoting traditional views that university education is of higher status, quality and desirability (reinforced by international ranking systems) than credentials from other tertiary providers. Although wānanga are essentially a kaupapa Māori university, they do not enjoy the same status privileges of their westernized university counterparts (Roa et al., 2009).

This study looked at what an effective transition to TE looks like for Māori students. Bourdieu’s theoretical concepts were used to interpret the findings and support the claims made. Although mainstream perspectives about the status of wānanga qualifications could be slowly changing, existing structures played an

influential role in the decision-making of participants about which institution to study with, and consequently, impacted upon their transition experiences into a wānanga environment. Personally lived transition experiences into a wānanga of participants in this study resulted in perceptions that studying at a wānanga had disadvantages but were primarily advantageous. The findings in this study suggest that despite wider social perceptions of the lower status of qualifications from a wānanga, these Māori-oriented institutions play a hugely important role in empowering Māori students' identity to 'be Māori' and to achieve educational success.

#### *7.4.1.2 Structure in Polytechnics*

Polytechnics share a mission to provide work-relevant vocational training and consequently are industry-led in nature. Such emphasis means that typically, programmes combine theoretical and practical learning in applied contexts, where learning and teaching are often immersed in a workplace environment (NZPC, 2017). Polytechnics have struggled with perceptual issues as the "poor relations" of universities because of the history of the polytechnic sector providing vocational skills above academic skills (Bruce-Ferguson, 1999). Even though there has been more recent involvement of polytechnics in offering degrees and higher level qualifications since the 1990s (Bowl, 2018), the place of polytechnics in the social hierarchy of TE institutions has not really changed. Transition experiences of participants in this study need to be understood in the context of this phenomenon.

Eight polytechnic participants had viewed their programme as a 'stepping stone' to go on to university or higher levels of education at a future time. Three of the participants (Hemaima, Awhina and Rob) were using the Toi Ohomai polytechnic pathway into the University of Waikato to obtain their degrees. Five other participants (Jordan, Luwina, Emere, Charvae and Tanisha) had enrolled in foundation certificates at the polytechnic with the intention of using that experience and credential to move on to higher levels. These findings concur with other researchers that enrolling in foundation courses to 'bridge the gap' has been found to be a key enabler in effective transitions for Māori students (Apanui & Kirikiri, 2015; Chinlund et al., 2011; Hohapata, 2011; Nock & Johnson, 2015; Ross,

2008). The value of bridging transitions is in preparing students with skills and knowledge needed to continue in formal TE endeavours.

Participants spoke about their experiences of the polytechnic as including a lot of practical hands-on learning—an approach they favoured. Other enablers that facilitated their effective transitions into the polytechnic were the staff who attempted to be inclusive of Māori values, making them feel welcomed and comfortable to ‘be Māori’. Like Nigel in the wānanga environment, Aubrey and Jamahl spoke of the benefits for them of having Māori role models among staff in the polytechnic environment because they provided inspiration and ideas of how educational success and Māori leadership is possible.

Another advantage which participants who were polytechnic students spoke about (whereas this was not strongly mentioned by wānanga or university students) was the strong links between the polytechnic and industry all of which polytechnic participants felt would be advantageous for job prospects once the study programme was completed. Aubrey and Jamahl expressed that this aspect of the polytechnic programme provided strong motivation.

One core theme that emerged in the findings related to motivation. Motivation levels were identified as either consistent (among nine participants) or fluctuating (among six participants). Participants expressed that motivation levels were strongly influenced by external factors such as family support, financial obligations, career plans, passing or failing assessments and feedback on work. Further, motivation was connected to internal factors such as a participant’s age and lifecourse development, cultural values, development of a positive student identity. Participants also spoke about motivation levels in connection with decisions to persist or depart from studies. These findings are consistent with other studies about motivations for adult participation in post-compulsory education (Knowles, 1984; McClusky, 1970; 1971; Merriam et al., 2007) as discussed in section 3.3.3.

Aubrey’s motivation was consistently high, even in the face of the serious Edgecumbe 2017 floods resulting in re-housing and financial pressures. In Miller’s (1967) force-field analysis, this event would have been seen as a restraining force. However, positive forces also contributed to Aubrey’s effective transition from a

scaffolding rigger worker into a wānanga and subsequently a polytechnic student in order to pursue his desired vocational goal of gaining a Sport and Recreation degree. Aubrey's decision to enroll in a polytechnic related to his perception that the polytechnic might be a stepping stone between wānanga studies and university studies (if he decided to continue at a higher level) and also his perception that the polytechnic would offer closer industry liaison experience for him with potential to lead to a job beyond achieving his qualification.

In close alignment with the perception that polytechnics are 'beneath' universities in social status, vocational education is often seen as a 'second choice' or alternative for students who are unable to succeed in academic contexts (NZPC, 2017). There is no evidence to suggest that Aubrey would not have been academically capable of achieving in a university context. Second choice is in relation to a 'first choice' being a legitimate, high quality academic pursuit, likely to be offered at a university. Such views place more emphasis on deficiencies located within the student (deficit thinking). Economic-social-cultural forces that exist outside individual Māori participants often played a large part in their decisions, limiting the individual agency of participants.

#### *7.4.1.3 Structure in Universities*

I have so far discussed the impact of the Education Amendment Act (1990) for wānanga and polytechnics both in this chapter and earlier in section 2.7. Universities were also affected by the changes this Act brought about. Pollock (2012) argues that universities had to become more entrepreneurial in order to seek funding sources beyond the government's allocations – a consequence of neo-liberal policies. A key strategy employed by universities to respond to neo-liberal competitive forces was to fiercely protect their high level status by employing a discourse of 'distinctiveness' to denote their superiority over other institutions (Bowl, 2018). Branding, impression management and institutional promotion became key means of influencing and protecting the status quo of the privileged position of occupying the 'top' tier of the TE hierarchical structure. A neo-liberal system of education that assesses students according to their performance may have impacts of Māori students who have traditionally disengaged from formal schooling.

To illustrate the influence of structure on an individual's social perceptions of the status of a university, perhaps one of the most striking participant stories was that of Emere. She had experienced almost all of her early childhood, primary and secondary schooling in an immersion Māori setting. She wanted to become a teacher, with the intention of teaching in an immersion Māori primary schooling setting. She chose to undertake her teacher education qualification at the University of Waikato, in an English medium. Her reasons were that she wanted the experience studying in a 'western' system, she wanted to improve her English and, she viewed a qualification from a university as the 'proper' teaching qualification (versus from the wānanga). Once underway with her studies, the option to submit her assessments in the Māori language medium was made known to her, but again, she decided to submit them in English, despite her skills in English being fewer than in Māori. She struggled with her transition into university, resulting in being unable to pass all of her first year requirements. This outcome necessitated her to re-sit certain papers and travel more than an hour each way to Hamilton twice weekly, with significant impacts on herself and her relationship with her whānau. Why would Emere not have chosen to undertake her Bachelor of Teaching degree at a wānanga instead?

Some of the answer may lie in Bourdieu's (1977) key concepts introduced in section 3.3.3 related to cultural reproduction: habitus, field, practice and cultural capital. Emere's behaviour may be explained by Bourdieu's theory that power is culturally and symbolically created, continuously re-validated through the interplay of agency and structure. This happens through socialized norms, tendencies which guide an individual's behaviour and thinking, or what Bourdieu calls 'habitus'. Bourdieu (1984) showed how, "the social order is progressively inscribed in people's minds" (p. 471) through everyday systems and activities such as education, 'cultural products', language, judgements and so on. Emere's story illustrates how 'social order is progressively inscribed', because, in her belief, a teaching credential from a wānanga would not be as valuable for her identity as one from a university. (Perhaps there is also an objective reality to Emere's decision as wānanga qualifications may not be as readily accepted in the teaching profession).

Levinson (1978; 1996) discussed how an individual's identity in a bicultural situation reveals differentials of how they 'were positioned' (an ascribed status) and the way they 'position themselves' (achieved status) in society and giving reasons for how and why this is acquired. Emere's bicultural situation illustrates how her student identity was positioned positively within Māori education contexts; however, within a western university English language medium context, her student identity was positioned less positively.

Levinson's 'positioning' in society has overlaps with Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of 'capital'. Bourdieu's (1986) conceptualization of capital extends past the idea of capital being material assets and into ideas of social capital, cultural capital or symbolic capital. It is necessary to understand that these forms of capital can hold equal importance, and, like material capital, these types of capital can be acquired and shifted between fields (Navarro, 2006). With some similarities to Miller's (1967) force-field analysis, Bourdieu's (1986) studies showed that patterns, relationships and decisions about taste are clearly linked to social class and cultural reproduction. Thus the impact of social class on cultural choices (and hence acquisition of cultural capital) were closely aligned for Emere, highlighting that habitus is a structuring structure which would propel her towards a wānanga, but distinction and cultural capital is powerful.

Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital is the means of a, "non-economic domination and hierarchy, as classes distinguish themselves through taste" (Gaventa, 2003, p.6). Here, the concept of cultural capital is central to comprehending the role of societal power relations. Emere expressed her choice (taste) in education through her view that a "western" university qualification would give her a "proper" qualification and a means of accumulating more cultural/economic capital.

It appears that the polytechnic and university participants in this study believed the best place to acquire academic capital is a university (significantly, this did not appear to be the case for those participants enrolled in a degree at Awanuiārangi). This belief was expressed through remarks about the "academic" or "western" or "formal" culture they encountered at the university.

*Sophia*: "...For academic learning, Waikato hands down. Oh, it's very academic, veeeery academic. *Pauses and thinks*. So, what I get back from those three institutions is different. My learnings from the wānanga to Toi Ohomai to the uni are completely different..." [Int 4, 2017].

*Rob*: "...Yeh, well actually...it's my first university paper ever. I have never done a university paper, it's always been through the poly, and I thought too much into it, you know what I mean? I over-thought most of it probably because I was freaking out because it was a university paper and I had never done it before. I thought it was way more formal, you know?" [Int 2, 2017].

*Hemaima*: "I've enrolled in the Bachelor of Biological Applied Sciences, and the goal is to have a qualification from Waikato University that will back me up academically and resilience-wise so I can work within environmental issues and environmental management". [Int 5, 2017].

The academic culture being spoken about by the participants has historical roots. According to a former University of Waikato Vice Chancellor, Bryan Gould, university values stem back to essential characteristics of free societies (Gould, 2017). In democratic countries, there is an ingrained belief that universities are central to new thinking which challenges an existing order. By taking full advantage of this, they hold a unique and consciously superior place in society.

Universities could not have carried out this role effectively over hundreds of years of social and political change without an internal culture that placed a high value on independence, stability, consistency, self-sufficiency and resistance to external forces. That culture could not have survived unless it were itself supported and sustained by a rich set of customs, beliefs and behaviours. (NZPC, 2017, p.173).

If viewed through the lens of Miller's (1967) force-field analysis, the restraining (negative) forces to proposed changes of academic culture within universities outweigh the driving forces. Whilst maintaining the status quo may work for the institution, a change of academic culture has potential benefits for Māori (and non-Māori) students. The personally lived experiences of the Māori students in this study illustrate this through the following key emergent themes: a) that the university is rigid; b) that the university is not inclusive of Te Ao Māori; c) the university lives its western values, and; d) that university staff need more professional development to address Māori learners' needs. It may also explain why universities are struggling to recruit more Māori staff, a lack noted by participants.

Participants such as Emere (and others) noticed a bigger distance between their personal Māori values and the institution's values in a university than in a polytechnic and a wānanga. These issues highlight the need for more action within universities to support Māori students in making an effective transition into their studies.

*Watene:* "Because it all relates back to identity and sense of self. University is very much a Pākehā institution. I'm not saying it's a bad thing, it's not, but it's a culture as well, right? So if you go there...well you'd know this as a teacher, Māori students feel like they leave their identity, leave their culture, at the door. So, I think if you have that **stronger sense of yourself** and why you are doing it, you won't think about that kind of thing when you come into university, right?" [Int 3, 2016]

This section considered the findings in light of the underlying debate over how and to what extent social change can occur in society and to what extent structure influenced the identity of the Māori participants in this study. The social forces that exist outside individual Māori participants played a significant role in influencing their personally lived transition experiences into a westernized university, a polytechnic and into a wānanga.

## 7.5 Identity and Pākehā Educators

In this section, I discuss what identity means to me, what my Pākehā identity is, and how I believe Pākehā educators may play a role in supporting effective transitions to tertiary education for Māori students. I discuss my personal understandings of identity arising from this doctoral journey. In keeping with the Culturally Responsive Methodological research design, I sought to include my own history, knowledge, thoughts and experiences as integral to co-constructing the meaning of this research alongside the participants. I emphasise here, that, awareness and understandings about my Pākehā identity have developed as a result of this doctoral journey, and is in keeping with a constructivism epistemology.

### 7.5.1.1 *What Identity Means to Me*

At the outset of this doctoral research journey, I had a belief about my identity which became challenged throughout this journey. First, it involved me questioning what my identity was, and then it deepened to me wondering how we find our 'real' identity. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how Māori identity, personal identity and student identity were aspects making up a 'whole' identity for participants in this study. Similarly, I viewed myself as having aspects of my identity such as being a female, being an educator, and being a mother and so on which made up my 'whole' identity. Notably, my Pākehā identity was not a strong aspect, though it is now.

The idea of there being a 'whole' identity triggered my search to find my 'real' identity. I had encountered many things in my life causing me to think that every person has a kind of core, an essence, a 'whole' identity. I connected these things with a belief that my 'real' identity must be something permanent and unchanging. When I was a teenager, I obsessed over horoscopes, believing that my identity as a 'Libra' defined my identity. Later, as I entered the workforce, I encountered more scientifically informed personality profiling tests such as the Myers Briggs which purport to reveal something about your core personality. The trouble was, as I did these tests over the years, my personality results changed from being an ESFJ to an INTJ! Similarly, in education I came across questionnaires to find out inherent learning styles – am I a visual, audio, kinaesthetic learner etc?

These experiences reinforced my belief that there is a core identity to be discovered, some kind of permanent truth about ourselves which remains unchanged throughout life.

I was going through life believing that everyone has this core identity. As I grew, I accumulated different experiences which were based on my gender, my culture, my age, my relationships etc. I created different memories living in different countries among different cultures. In addition to experiences and memories, I had desires (maybe to earn a degree, maybe to take a holiday) and I had ever-changing beliefs (about god and spirituality). I had knowledge, feelings, emotions and sensations as well. I made an assumption that all these things were connected to my core unchanging 'self', that there was an inner 'whole' identity to be discovered at the centre of these things.

That idea has been challenged because of this doctoral journey. All the different experiences which I have accumulated, all the different memories I have created, all my desires, intentions, feelings overlapped with each other, and still do. They all interconnect and inform each other in different ways. There is also a narrative I tell about myself, by integrating all these things into my evolving story about my 'self' contributing to my sense of who I am. My 'whole' identity. But I now understand that all these beliefs, desires, sensations and experiences are all inter-related and connected to each other, and they ARE my 'whole' identity.

This may not seem like a very big difference to my original assumptions, but in some ways it is substantial. I have made a shift between thinking of myself as an 'unchanging permanent entity' which has all the experiences, memories and desire attached to 'me', to thinking of 'me' as simply a collection of all experiences in life. Though each individual aspect has meaning on its own, taken together, the meaning becomes my identity. Or, in Aristotle's words: "The whole is greater than its parts".

The notion that the way to finding our 'real' identity is not thinking of ourselves as having a 'true permanent self' that has experiences, memories, desires, etc (but rather, that our true identity is a collection of our experiences) was very unsettling. What did it mean if there was no unshakable core of self, no fixed permanent essence, and no 'whole' identity to be discovered? It was not until that Sunday

when tramping deep into the Kaimai bush, I went beyond the Kauri tree and saw a waterfall (Figure 26) that the meaning of this started to become clearer.

Watching the thundering torrents of water rushing over the edge of the rock face it was easy to appreciate that there was nothing permanent about a waterfall. The water was ever-changing, carving new channels over time; I could easily imagine the waterfall changing in different seasons and weather. The water flowing through that waterfall was different at every single moment. I understood it as something which had a history and had certain things which kept it together. But it was a process, it was fluid, it was dynamic, forever changing through its interaction with the environment.



*Figure 26: Waterfall (my photo)*

It was a metaphor to understand my identity. A liberating metaphor. By thinking that I had a fixed, permanent essence that would always be the same throughout my life, no matter what, in a sense I was trapped, stuck and confined. By thinking of my identity not as a 'thing' which I was born with and had to discover, but instead as a process, as something that is ever-changing, I was quite liberated. Unlike the waterfall I was mesmerized by, I realised I have the capacity to carve new channels of my identity development, to a certain degree. (There are limits likely influenced by the social structures we find ourselves in or by our 'natural' abilities). Nonetheless, I realised I had the capacity to shape my 'whole' identity because it was not something that was lying in wait for me to discover. Instead, I understood that to the extent that we have a 'true self' and a 'whole identity', it may be in part something that we discover, but in large part it is what we create. That realisation was liberating and I was empowered to begin re-creating and carving out a new channel for my Pākehā identity.

#### *7.5.1.2 Pākehā Identity*

Communication and interactions with Te Ao Māori (such as the participants, my cultural mentors, supervisors and work colleagues) activated my pursuit of Pākehā identity knowledge, because, I had to re-consider my Pākehā identity narrative that had evolved. Being raised in New Zealand in the 1970s and 1980s followed by living abroad in the 1990s and 2000s in Japan, England and Hawai'i had sharpened my self-perception as a European New Zealander in an international sense, but unfortunately, clouded my sense of self as a Pākehā New Zealander.

Once back home in Aotearoa from 2005, I became uncomfortably conscious that my assumptions of being Pākehā were inappropriate. Partly, social times had changed; partly, my identity had developed through cross-cultural engagement with other nationalities, but wholly, my conceptions of being Pākehā no longer fitted. Extensive cross-cultural engagement has a transformative potential of self-cultural identity perceptions (Forsyth, 2018; Mezirow, 1991; 2000). When a Pākehā decides to explore and accept the impact of colonisation upon Māori, there is an unsettling upheaval in their self-perception as a logical result (Spoonley, 1995a; 1995b; Amundsen, 2018). When I began actively engaging to understand the effects of colonisation on Māori, it was extremely unsettling. In order to

understand the emotions I was experiencing, I began noting down thoughts and questions as they arose, such as, ‘why am I searching for my Pākehā identity?’ and ‘what is my Pākehā identity?’

As the journey progressed, I sought a model to explain the changes I was experiencing. I could not find anything. I considered Howard’s (2006) theory on ‘white’ identity development, which built on the work of Helms (1990). It did not readily apply to me since this theory posits that people move through six stages of change, and in the final stage, after abandoning racial privilege and evolving a non-racist identity, white people really learn about other racial groups (Howard, 2006). However, in my situation, it was the learning and interaction with other groups (e.g. Māori participants) *throughout* the process (rather than in the final stages) which was influencing my Pākehā identity development.

One model that caught my eye was J. O. Prochaska and DiClemente’s (1982) Trans-theoretical Model (TTM) – a theory characterising human change in stages. TTM has expanded into a range of fields. Its usefulness and relevance for therapeutic change processes are well established in the literature (Calderwood, 2011; Geller et al., 2008; Ha, Jayasuriya & Owen, 2005; Prochaska, Prochaska, & Levesque, 2001; Whitelaw, Baldwin, Bunton & Flynn, 2000).

Stage theories tend to lack explanatory power (Bandura, 1988; Casey, Day & Howells, 2005). However, an advantage of this model was helping me identify where I was in terms of readiness to change. In this sense, TTM was a model I used to motivate my change rather than seeing myself as unwilling or resistant to change. Using this as a basis, I adapted the TTM model to my circumstances, and subsequently conducted a reflective study to understand my Pākehā cultural identity. My journey is more fully documented in another article (see Amundsen, 2018). Here, I summarise five pertinent elements to me claiming my Pākehā identity, though I am not suggesting that these exhaust the identity possibilities for Pākehā New Zealanders.

1. Self-identifying as a Pākehā is a political act, stating my relationship to Māori as tangata whenua with a recognition of a colonial past that needs greater discussion.

2. The term Pākehā is not derogatory, it is a taonga. 'Pākehā' was gifted to us by the Indigenous people of Aotearoa. Claiming to be a Pākehā means accepting this gift, with responsibilities of honouring the priority of Māori through respect in their land.

3. "No other term quite fits" (Amundsen, 2018, p.146). 'European New Zealander' positions me in terms of my whakapapa, but does not sufficiently represent my sense of belonging – a necessary aspect of cultural identity.

4. The term 'Pākehā' has meanings of 'whiteness' and through this I seek to admit that white privilege is afforded to me in current socio-cultural times, to the disadvantage of Māori and other minority groups.

5. A Pākehā identity positions me as being of Aotearoa New Zealand. This returns to the first point of Pākehā identity as a political act; therefore, Pākehā cannot ignore our moral obligation to engage with Māori to decolonise and reconcile.

Engagement at more intimate levels with Te Ao Māori through coming to know of the lives of the research participants triggered me into recognising the unique rights of Māori as *tangata whenua* (Indigenous). Relationships and connections I formed opened my heart and mind to search and comprehend more about Te Ao Māori. Combined with deeper understanding of events of racial discrimination that occurred for all 20 participants during this study, the WAI 263 and 215 (Waitangi Tribunal, 2004) reports catapulted my awareness in a very personal sense into an admittance of there being past and present lingering colonisation issues for Māori. According to Mikahere-Hall (2017), contemporary Māori lifestyle requires engagement in both Māori and western-based realities. Equally, I suggest that contemporary Pākehā lifestyle should entail engagement in both Pākehā and Māori-based realities. It starts with a search for self-identity as a Pākehā. This means a responsibility for Pākehā to take deliberate and conscious steps to decolonise.

### *7.5.1.3 Role of Pākehā Educators*

#### ***Decolonisation***

Decolonisation involves efforts by Pākehā and Māori to reflectively work together to shape current and future cultural identities, politics and economics. This

process may be painful as it necessarily traverses self-critique, self-negation and self-rediscovery (see Amundsen, 2018). If we are to move to a more dignified social structure and organisation of education, decolonising research methodologies are possible approaches to reconcile historic injustices as they endeavour to change the continuing power of Pākehā governance.

### **Reconciliation**

I am suggesting reconciliation for educators as a means of decolonisation. Reconciliation has been extensively researched across many disciplines (Hirsch, 2012; Kymlicka & Bashir, 2008). Reconciliation is shaped by a drive for social justice and reconstruction following conflict. Broadly, reconciliation aims at all levels (interpersonal, societal, national, international) to reshape antagonistic identities, values and behaviour which remain a source of conflict through building a shared society (Hughes, 2017).

Participants in this study emphasised they valued the opportunity to have their perspectives ‘listened’ to, to have their voices and opinions ‘heard’. This links to why I chose this whakataukī for this chapter: *Mā te rongō, ka mōhio; Mā te mōhio, ka mārama; Mā te mārama, ka mātau; Mā te mātau, ka ora. Through listening comes knowledge; from knowledge comes clarity; from clarity comes wisdom; from wisdom comes life and vitality.* The repeated semi-structured interviews and focus groups offered a micro-environment in which a process of reconciliation began to unfold.

As the research progressed over time, (the advantage of a longitudinal study) trust between us grew, and a deeper transformation of the dynamics of relationships between myself (Pākehā) and the participants (Māori) took place. We were able, in small ways such as listening to each other, to reconcile and begin to heal past injustices and hurts, together. Reconciliation pursues an honest, fair and lasting end to conflict.

Reconciliation has the goal of a deeper transformation of relationship and shared acknowledgement between both parties (Rouhana, 2017). In this way, reconciliation brings about a profound transformation of the dynamics of relationships between societies and peoples through intertwined political and

social changes (Rouhana, 2017). Reconciliation implies a restoration and a bringing back together of relationships between two parties, *involving taking action of making views and beliefs compatible with each other's*.

One way of taking action is making an apology for past injustices. Celermajer and Kidman (2012) discuss the importance of political and social apologies being, “a means of constructing new narratives about healing and reconciliation that frame a national identity that has made peace with history and can, accordingly, move into a ‘resettled’ future” (p. 219). I found myself frequently wanting to say sorry to participants during interviews when listening to their stories of grief and irretrievable loss over language, land, and whakapapa ties. I was at a loss to know how to compensate and how to respond. All I could do was to make a genuine recognition of their loss and to take small personal steps to assist in the weaving of a bigger, new national identity narrative. Forsyth (2018) concurs that bi-culturalism discussions are still relevant to the formation of a Pākehā identity, an identity which she contends is shaped through the interface between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā. In some way, this discussion contributes to such a bi-culturalism discourse.

## 7.6 Summary

This chapter summary brought together an overall picture of what effective transitions to tertiary education look like for Māori students, and what my own transition within tertiary education looked like for me. I sought to discuss answers to the ‘seen’ research question: What do effective transitions to tertiary education environments look like for Māori students? From the stories of participants’ transition experiences, throughout the data collection and analysis processes, it became clear that a major theme was identity. In this study, identity meant the way in which participants perceived themselves in dynamic and evolving contexts of their lives. It was their sense of who they are as persons, where they ‘belong’ and how they believed others perceived them.

I discussed the over-riding theme of identity through six key discussion areas. Māori cultural identity was a key aspect, since *all* participants self-identified as Māori. Historical and contemporary definitions of Māori identity were inclusive of

each other; they worked together to weave a web of myriads of factors concerning Māori identity. The findings pointed to an effective transition for participants being connected to gaining a sense of belonging and experiencing self-identified personal growth.

Through experiences of 'personal growth' and 'identity discovery'; participants' experiences illustrated that their 'self' was being constantly re-constructed. Constructing and re-constructing their personal identity was a fluid, perpetual process of permanent flux. Students in the present study were able to make more effective transitions when people within the institutions showed support and flexibility in light of the re-working of 'self' that was constantly occurring. For students to make an effective tertiary education transition, it must be possible for them to develop a student identity that is viable in various tertiary education contexts.

Support from whānau was a significant factor related to support for an effective transition to occur. The privileges and responsibilities associated with belonging to both a whakapapa and a kaupapa whānau connected to both enablers and barriers when it came to participants' transition experiences. In this study, whānau support was highlighted as an essential factor facilitating or limiting educational success for Māori in TE contexts. Educational success meant to succeed academically, *and* to succeed as Māori. This notion is at the heart of educational success for Māori (Durie, 2003).

The findings illustrated that there were both similarities and differences in students' personally lived transition experiences in three unique types of TE institutions – a wānanga, a polytechnic and a university. Similarities tended to relate to developing a student identity and 'being a student' studying at a tertiary level, while differences related to students' personal experiences of the values, systems, processes and perceived status of each institution in the wider social system. These factors influenced what an effective transition to tertiary education looked like for the participants in this study.

In the sixth key discussion area, I reflected on the theme of identity in connection with Pākehā educators. I outlined how one key (unanticipated) research outcome regarding my Pākehā identity development may have relevance. I drew upon my

own doctoral student transition experiences offering my personal reflections and understandings about my identity development throughout this research journey. I shared my realisation that I had the capacity to shape my 'whole' identity because my 'true self' is what we create. Lastly, I advocated for other Pākehā educators and researchers who work across kaupapa Māori spaces to decolonise through reconciliation processes.



## He Karakia Whakakapi Kaupapa

*Kia tau ngā manaakitanga a te mea ngaro  
ki runga ki tēnā, ki tēnā o tātou  
Kia mahea te hua mākihikihi  
kia toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te aroha, toi te Reo Māori  
kia tūturu, ka whakamaua kia tīna! Tīna!  
Hui e, Tāiki e!*

*Let the strength and life force of our ancestors  
Be with each and every one of us  
Freeing our path from obstruction  
So that our words, spiritual power, love, and language are upheld;  
Permanently fixed, established and understood!  
Forward together!*

## Chapter Eight Conclusion

### 8.1 Introduction – He Kupu Whakataki

In this chapter I conclude the thesis. Following this introduction section, I provide an overall research summary, drawing together key aspects of this study and synthesising what effective transitions to tertiary education looked like for the Māori students in this study. Next, I outline limitations of this research, which centred on researcher position, interpretive and critical paradigms, generalisability, participant sampling and longitudinal features. Though these dynamics served as limitations, they simultaneously contributed as strengths to the research and in this sense, were two sides to the same coin.

Based on gaps that were identified through these research outcomes, implications for future research are outlined. I provide guidelines to underpin a Transition Programme (Akoranga Whakawhiti) for tertiary education institutions and staff to assist in supporting more effective transitions to tertiary education for Māori students. Lastly, I make recommendations for Pākehā who work across Māori education and research spaces in order to operate in respectful and meaningful ways. Concluding remarks are given at the end of this chapter.

At the beginning of this thesis, I introduced the metaphor of *he rākau* (a tree). Rākau, like all living things, have a life cycle. During its life, he rākau transitions

from the kākano, to sprout, to seedling, to sapling, continually developing throughout the seasons until it matures into a fully grown tree. Eventually, it goes into decline with age, and finally, a tree's life will come to an end, the roots necessarily parting from the earth below. Before this happens, a tree ensures that the life cycle will begin afresh by leaving behind new seeds to regenerate.

A kauri tree seed is unlikely to flourish if it is planted in the Antarctic region because the environmental conditions to nurture growth of the kauri tree would be unsuitable; there would be no grandparent plants or companion seedlings around in order to nurture its upbringing or to protect its leaves and branches from the perils of snow and frost. A stand of kauri trees is more likely to grow strong and healthy because the trees are growing together, not alone. Environmental elements may not be experienced so harshly because rākau can support each other through long winters, dry summers or extreme winds.

In Antarctica, a kauri would be disconnected from past generations of kauri trees which play an important role in contributing to nutrients in the soil in which the seed can best grow. Not only that, roots of trees do not take nourishment simply for their own growth; they always prepare for generations to come after them in order to protect the future by dropping their seeds during their life cycle. Cold, snowy conditions of the Antarctic would not provide a warm context in which energy could be released for germination. By contrast, in the sub-tropical forest conditions of the Coromandel regions and northern areas of Aotearoa, kauri trees reach an average height of 30-40 metres with trunks that are several metres in diameter and can survive for 1,000 years or more, although trees older than 1,700 years are now rare (Orwin, 2007).

The metaphor of a kauri tree growing in either the Antarctic or the Coromandel has similarities to a Māori student's effective transition experience into tertiary education environments. Just as the kākano need optimal conditions to flourish into magnificent rākau, Māori students need optimal conditions to flourish during their transitions into tertiary education. Tertiary education institutions should continue developing in directions of providing contexts in which Māori students have the potential to flourish and grow their identity into being strong. Wānanga, polytechnics and universities all have the ability to provide the optimal

environmental conditions to support the growth of Māori student educational success. These elements include listening to student voice, fostering relationships with Māori students and their communities, and facilitating more professional development and resources to strengthen staff knowledge and teaching practices related to supporting Māori success.

## 8.2 Research Summary

This study proposed to better understand factors related to Māori students effectively transitioning into tertiary education environments. I followed a qualitative research design, closely guided by kaupapa Māori principles, collaborative and participative research guidelines. As part of fulfilling this doctoral degree requirement, I began researching with a group of 20 Māori students from three tertiary education institutions: the University of Waikato, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology and Te Whare Wānanga of Awanuiārangi in the Bay of Plenty region in Aotearoa.

This research drew upon kaupapa Māori principles, using a Critical Social Theory (CST) and a Culturally Responsive Methodology (CRM) to investigate participants' lived transition experiences into tertiary education. 'Student voice' is often marginalised in education research; therefore, I placed an emphasis on understanding Māori student perspectives of effective transitions. Central to this notion was the concept of agency – people exercising control over their actions in a process to allow changes in their self to grow their identity.

The research sought to answer one over-arching research question: What do effective transitions to tertiary education environments look like for Māori students? It was a cross-cultural study as I (the researcher) am a Pākehā New Zealander and the participants were Māori New Zealanders. We met regularly over five semesters. The aim was to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of Indigenous Māori students regarding their transition process. I carried out this project with the expectation that institutions and staff may be better equipped to support those TE students who come after them in their transition. I did not set out to investigate my own self-perceptions of being Pākehā during this research

process; however, my journey in this sense became an unexpected, yet integral part of the research process.

This research identified factors helping or hindering students who transition into university, polytechnic and wānanga organisations located in the Bay of Plenty region of Aotearoa. These factors clustered around individual, institutional or societal levels and were connected to issues of support. The most overwhelming barriers experienced by students were experiencing racism, how to gain work, study and home life balance and lack of financial support. By contrast, the most powerful enablers for students were factors related to having effective support and gaining a sense of belonging in their programme/institution. A sense of belonging was deemed significant, connecting with defining personal growth as a key component of a satisfying, relevant and effective transition.

Conveying the voices of Māori students' lived transition experiences provided valuable perspectives about educational success perceived by the students. While completion and career progression were seen as desirable by participants, helping others to succeed, alongside an aspiration to give back and improve the situation for Māori and other Indigenous groups, were important aspects expressed by participants.

This research uncovered how dominant attitudes that exist in Aotearoa influence the social status of Māori in contemporary society, which in turn, influences education transition experiences and opportunities. On a deeper level, this research was an inquiry about the role of the tertiary education sector in contributing towards creating a more equal social structure in this country. An inherent notion of this research was how a reduction in the effects of inequality for Māori might be brought about through social change and the role of education in effecting social change.

From my own experience and interactions in Te Ao Māori, I began to re-conceptualise my understanding of a Pākehā identity. I gained a valuable awareness of the importance of Pākehā taking deliberate and conscious steps to decolonise and dismantle disturbing and prevailing prejudiced attitudes. I share this research from the position of an outsider; a non-Māori and non-Indigenous,

Pākehā scholar who identifies the pressing importance of supporting Māori rights in tertiary education policy.

As with all research, despite the significance of the findings of this exploration, there were methodological limitations. In this chapter I note the limitations of the research which were largely linked to the interpretivist paradigm and cross-cultural research design. In spite of the shortcomings, some valuable messages for diverse stakeholders materialised in three observable areas: a) implications for future research; b) guidelines for a Transition Programme (Akoranga Whakawhiti) for tertiary education institutions; and, c) recommendations for Pākehā working across Māori education and research spaces.

In light of existing studies and literature, these findings are timely because of the major reviews to Aotearoa's education system currently underway by the new Labour Government. Presently, the TE system in Aotearoa may be serving some students well, but clearly, strict government control and regulations are constraining innovative approaches which might better meet the needs of Māori students (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Tahau-Hodges, 2010).

As Māori achievement in tertiary education contexts continues to be a focus for institutions nationally, effective transitions of Māori students is an issue of great concern. Projections regarding the enrolment increases of Māori students within Aotearoa's TE landscape (NZPC, 2017) indicate the necessity for tertiary organisations to understand and move towards age-integrated models. Such approaches are likely to contribute to more effective transitions and successful educational outcomes for future youth and adult Māori students. The tertiary education system plays an extremely influential role in supporting (or not) effective transition experiences for Māori students. Stronger measures to ensure equity would be better for Māori and better for all New Zealanders.

### 8.3 Limitations

#### *8.3.1.1 Researcher Position*

One of the greatest limitations, whilst at the same time one of the most significant strengths of this study, was my researcher position as a Pākehā researching with Māori students. There have been discussions centring on claims that Māori are the

best qualified people to undertake research with Māori and accordingly, whether 'being Māori' itself is enough to conduct kaupapa Māori research (Mikahere-Hall, 2017; Tolich, 2002; Walker, 1997). Furthermore, many prominent scholars have commented on whether and to what degree Pākehā can be involved (Bishop, 2010; Bishop & Glynn, 1992; Durie, 1998b; Irwin, 1994; Pihama, Cram & Walker, 2002; Smith, L., 1999; 2013; Smith, G. 2003; Walker, 1997). Bishop and Glynn's (1992; 1999) research suggested that there is a place for Pākehā and non-Māori researchers, so long as the research methodology is empowering.

Smith (1999) asks,

Can a non-indigenous researcher carry out Kaupapa Māori research? The answer on current definitions is more complex. Perhaps it might read, 'a non-indigenous, non-Māori person can be involved in Kaupapa Māori research but not on their own, and if they were involved in such research, they would have ways of positioning themselves as a non-indigenous person'... (p.184)

In this thesis, I discussed ways I positioned myself as a non-Indigenous researcher (see section 5.5). Although I drew heavily upon kaupapa Māori values, a Māori researcher may have asked better questions, been more in tune with participants' stories, found different connections between data and themes, or more strongly represented a Māori voice in the presentation of the findings. Few documents written in Te Reo Māori have been incorporated because of my beginner-intermediate understanding of Te Reo Māori. It could be said that this research did not capture all of the factors from a Māori perspective relating to an effective transition to TE for Māori students. Although I have greatly improved my knowledge of Te Ao Māori (including Te Reo Māori) from advice and guidance of my cultural mentors, supervisors, and other scholars (through academic literature)—the quality and perspective of this research may be limited by my position as a Pākehā, middle-aged, female, emerging researcher.

Whilst I have endeavoured to represent the voices of the participants with utmost respect and mana, and I believe I have achieved this as well as any Pākehā researcher might, the information in this research is based on collaboratively constructed meaning between myself and the 20 participants involved. In light of

the critical and reflexive approach I have promoted during this research, I completely expect my own confines of cultural understanding to be critiqued, pushed and challenged. The dynamics of researcher involvement is at the heart of interpretivist research; although it contributed to significant strengths of this research, researcher position also served as a major limitation. This issue is not exclusive to my research. The participants and I constituted a unique set of interactions—any researcher would do things differently according to their own positionality. Thus, this research is unique. It is not repeatable as it stands; other people, Māori or Pākehā, would perhaps identify other features of transitions.

#### *8.3.1.2 Interpretivist and Critical Paradigms*

A second limitation of this study related to the interpretivist and critical paradigms of this research approach. Since an interpretive paradigm seeks to understand and a critical paradigm to emancipate (Scotland, 2012) these ontological and epistemological assumptions are reflected in the subjective methodology and methods of this research design. I caution researchers, educators or policy makers to consider similarities or differences within their proposed research context if they intend to draw upon this research. These findings are based on subjective accounts and constructions of meaning expressed by students and interpreted by myself as researcher. For instance, participants' accounts of services provided by a tertiary institution may or may not align with claims by that tertiary institution about their service provision (which was entirely the point in gaining perspectives from students' vantage points).

#### *8.3.1.3 Generalisability*

Research from a scientific paradigm may seek to generalise. Given that this research was undertaken in interpretive and critical co-existing paradigms, the purpose was to understand and to emancipate (respectively). Potential generalisability of this study beyond the specific context of the Bay of Plenty region is limited. For this reason, the context of this study is described in detail (Chapter Two). Participants were only recruited from organisations comprising the BOPTEP, which has unique characteristics. While the results of this study apply to the Bay of Plenty region, they may not be applicable in other regions. Although it may be possible to ascertain general guidelines which assist institutions to improve Māori

student transition experiences, clearly other regions and individual tertiary institutions face specific and distinct issues pertaining to their distinct population of students. Therefore, readers are left to make connections, if any, to their own specific context.

#### *8.3.1.4 Participant Sampling*

My method of participant selection was carried out using a purposeful snowball strategy or what Grootveld (2013) has dubbed 'kumara-vine sampling'. Although practical for my specific research context, inability to make inferences about 'all' Māori TE students based on the group of 20 participants is a limitation of this participant selection method. Bias due to oversampling of participants from a certain programme could exist. No participants enrolled in fully online programmes were included. Despite three different types of TE organisations being included in this study (a university, a polytechnic and a wānanga), this by no means encompasses all types of tertiary organisations - for instance, PTEs, ITOs and community organisations were not included. More research is needed to understand factors relating to effective transitions for Māori in these types of tertiary organisations.

#### *8.3.1.5 Longitudinal Design*

I tried to balance the ideal length of time to track students with the time and expense constraints of being a doctoral student. Ideally, I would have liked to track students for three or four years, as that was the length of the programme in which many students were enrolled. It would have been valuable to include their exit from study after graduation as part of this research. Neither was possible.

Participants were asked at the outset if they could continue to be part of the study whether or not they remained in their programme of study, which all agreed to do. Of those 15 who remained in the study, their persistence actually represented a limitation of this research; perhaps the most difficult to address. Participants who persisted with their course were less likely to be having similar experiences to students who withdrew from their course. Participants who withdrew from this research could have provided another valuable perspective about reasons for not persisting in their studies if they had remained in this research; there may be a

lack of insight surrounding reasons those students withdrew from their programmes.

Though I have outlined the limitations of this research, in most cases there are two sides to each coin. A notable strength of my researcher position included the fact that I was in the position to carry out this research which otherwise may not have occurred. Additionally, by adopting interpretivist and critical paradigms, the research approach was collaborative and empowering by being fundamentally based on emancipatory goals. Furthermore, since data collected from longitudinal research is a known lack in the body of research regarding transitions of Māori students into TE environments, valuable ideas and knowledge can be appreciated.

This study is unique in that it is the only study in Aotearoa that has specifically investigated the difference in transition experiences in a wānanga, a polytechnic and a university from a “student voice” perspective. Three main implications arose from the findings regarding future research, guidelines for tertiary education institutions who may wish to develop a transitions programme, and recommendations for Pākehā educators and researchers working across kaupapa Māori spaces.

## 8.4 Implications

### 8.4.1 Future Research

#### *8.4.1.1 Developing Māori identity through effective tertiary education transitions*

Future research should continue exploring the complexity of historical and contemporary factors of Māori identity impacting upon effective TE transitions for Māori students. Concepts of Māori identity have been impacted upon by land loss through colonisation. Participants discussed issues relating directly to the failure of the education system to be fully inclusive of their culture affecting their Māori identity hindering their transition experiences. An over-riding advantage offered by the wānanga was the kaupapa Māori environment which made it a comfortable place for Māori to transition into formal learning. Future research should continue to identify and build on existing knowledge of how Māori identity can be further strengthened through interactions and transition experiences within all tertiary education contexts.

#### *8.4.1.2 Ensure benefits return to Māori communities*

Future research should ensure benefits are returned to Māori communities by conducting relevant tertiary research that advances knowledge to support Māori development in tertiary (including higher levels) education. This has potential to accelerate social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being for Māori communities. One gap this research has identified is knowledge of tertiary transition experiences of students who have carried out their compulsory schooling in immersion Māori language environments. More knowledge of this would be beneficial information for Māori communities.

Landers (2012) proposes that higher qualifications are key to accelerating Māori advancement. Little is known about enablers and barriers to effective transitions for Māori students to higher levels of study (for instance post-graduate levels) and whether the same key factors I have discussed in this thesis are relevant for those students who have already achieved an under-graduate degree and gained experience of TE study. Owing to larger numbers of Māori presently studying in lower levels of the TE system, this research would provide pertinent information for those students continuing into higher levels of academic study.

#### *8.4.1.3 Academic Preparation and Career Pathways*

Future research should address information gaps on how to better synthesise and disseminate knowledge to students at school and throughout adulthood about academic preparation, study options and career pathways. Government concerns over how Māori students transition into TE encompass how effective compulsory education prepares students. There is room for improvement in school-based career education to better assist students in their understanding and knowledge about study options and career pathways. Webber, McKinley and Rubie-Davies (2016) suggest that well-conducted academic counselling can increase engagement with Indigenous students and their families leading to increased academic excellence and improved Māori student achievement.

First-in-family Māori tertiary students have to work hard to de-mystify for themselves and their wider whānau what a TE experience entails. Te Pōkai Tara (2018b) recently published quite startling statistics that, “almost half (48%) of

recent Māori university graduates were the first in their families to attend university, one third are parents and 70% are female” (p.2). Since there is still a large proportion of Māori students who do not have a family member who has studied at tertiary level (NZPC, 2017), guidance for this must be made more available, including enhancement of academic preparation skills. The quality of the information produced by the government and the TEC is difficult for Māori students to find and understand. Such information should be made more empathetic to Māori and easily accessible not just in school settings, but more widely among Māori communities throughout adulthood, reflecting a focus on lifelong learning priorities.

#### 8.4.2 Guidelines for Transitions Programme (Akoranga Whakawhiti)

The following principles have potential to inform a Transitions Programme for Māori students (Akoranga Whakawhiti) for tertiary education institutions to create and implement.

##### 8.4.2.1 *Listen to student voice*

TEOs would benefit from listening to their students’ perspectives to better understand students’ needs. Educators and policymakers must continue seeking understanding of students’ transition experiences. As the term ‘student voice’ suggests, Māori students have legitimate perspectives and opinions, and need to have opportunities for an active role in educational policy development and to practice decision-making. Perspectives from Māori tertiary students themselves continue to be under-represented in research (Cook-Sathers, 2014; Kidman, 2014). Kidman (2014) argues that in education policy and research, Māori (children) have almost exclusively been framed in ways that suggest their “ethnicised representations of selfhood are somehow disconnected from the wider economic and social forces that surround them and their communities” (p. 208). If we fail to engage with the students who have had effective transition experiences, we are left in the dark as to how their interaction with the tertiary organisation led to their positively experienced outcomes.

Tertiary organisations that research and evaluate students’ perspectives regarding what helps them stay engaged and succeed will benefit from such investigation. A

deeper understanding of disengagement signals and of appropriate interventions may become clearer. As Wiseley (2009) proposed, “we must continue to seek understanding of students’ experiences from their perspective, and conduct further research to achieve greater understanding of student transition and transformation as they move through the educational landscape” (p.190). This may mean some adaptation of research practices in order not to squash participant voice during data collection and analysis stages in pursuit of patterns, but being open to perspectives of outliers or anomalies (e.g. Emere, section 6.2.6). The voices that emerged from this research are a powerful reminder of the importance of engaging with Māori communities in partnerships. This is an area of future research to be conducted by tertiary organisations.

#### *8.4.2.2 Create relationships with Māori communities*

TEOs must recognise and foster relationships with Māori communities and whānau to become actively involved and to understand how to respond to Māori student needs. This study concurred with others (Chauvel & Rean, 2012; Curtis et al., 2012; Durie, 2001; Wiseley, 2009) that connection between whānau in supporting and motivating individual Māori tertiary students powerfully links to educational success and completion. Although challenging, it is imperative that TEOs recognise and foster relationships with Māori communities to become actively involved. TEOs are responsible for educating their staff to understand their accountabilities for equity and improving Māori education success. This may mean addressing workload policies and professional development opportunities to enable teaching staff time to care for Māori students’ needs.

#### *8.4.2.3 More professional development for teaching staff*

More professional development and enhanced resources are required to strengthen teaching staff knowledge and teaching practices related to supporting Māori success. Professional development for teaching staff (alongside adequate resourcing to facilitate time for this) should centre on effective teaching strategies and known “good practices” (Bishop et al., 2003; White, 2009), and developing knowledge of Māori language and cultural practices (Hall et al., 2013). This is notably so in universities. Sciascia (2017) proposes that students benefit from regular practitioner and institutional reflection on their pedagogical and cultural

practices. Current imbalances between research and teaching incentives whereby research performance outweighs teaching quality may be to the detriment of teaching-student experiences. If TEOs were to develop a framework of standards for tertiary teaching (applicable to a NZ context), such frameworks *must* include incentives for effective teaching practice to meet Māori learner need. This view is also promoted by Ako Aotearoa (n.d.); presently they are underway with developing a framework of standards for assessing quality tertiary education teaching (Ako Aotearoa, 2016; Frielick, 2017).

#### *8.4.2.4 Conceive educational transitions as continuous processes.*

Conceiving educational transitions as continuous processes requires reconsideration of theory, policy and practice to more closely meet contemporary Māori tertiary students' holistic needs. By re-conceiving transitions as processes of continuity, a related factor in TE contexts is student mobility. Adapting systems to enable students to change their programme as their goals or situations change is crucial - for instance, by facilitating easy credit recognition and transfer arrangements. One goal of the NZQF was to improve credit transfer options, and to some degree this has occurred. Yet more mechanisms to inform students in advance of how they could transfer to higher-level study are needed.

The NZQA should make its policies regarding the quality and accessibility of credit transfer more transparent in order to pave the way for educational transitions to occur as continuous processes. The TEC would be wise to send messages about the importance of TE organizations to strengthen the clarity of pathways available for students and address the present information and power discrepancy between students and TE organisations.

Popular pathways must be made more transparent and clear so Māori students understand earlier how they may transition to higher level study. When a student wants to transfer to another TEO (or a workplace), this should not be viewed as a 'failed' completion by the TEC resulting in a penalties to the institution and student. Student mobility should also entail the ability to more easily mix and match courses from different types of TEOs, and, to be able to more easily enrol in just one or two courses instead of in a full programme. This may mean a revision

of student loan criteria. Or, perhaps, as the NZPC (2017) note, it may necessitate establishing a, “student ombudsman to advocate for students who lack bargaining power in negotiating with providers about credit transfer” (p. 358).

Re-conceiving transitions as a process of continuity may promote institutions and staff to view Māori students holistically. Employment and whānau responsibilities, sports and health commitments, marae and cultural service activities linked to a collectivist culture are all factors that were identified in this study as impacting on Māori students’ engagement. The TEC must allow TEOs the flexibility through funding and regulations to be better positioned to support students in balancing all these commitments through flexible programme options. There may be some TEOs who are already providing this for flexible programme options for their students, however, when listening to the perspective of Māori student voice it becomes apparent that more needs to be done. This might be achieved through offering more weekend block course options, evening classes, varying semester lengths, negotiating class times and assignment due dates and marae-centred delivery locations.

#### 8.4.3 Recommendations for Pākehā educators and researchers

##### 8.4.3.1 *Decolonising through reconciliation starts with understanding Pākehā Self*

This study raised the importance of understanding *Pākehā identity* (Amundsen, 2018; Newton, 2009), which may begin with, for instance, recognising and tracing our ancestry and whakapapa connections. It is our responsibility for self-interrogation of personal position within the research agenda (Berryman, SooHoo & Nevin, 2013) and an important aspect is understanding Pākehā identity to take steps towards decolonisation. Decolonising processes begin with self-interrogation and understanding self.

##### 8.4.3.2 *Respecting Cultural Identity*

Another clear implication for Pākehā working across Māori education and research spaces is the utmost importance of respecting cultural identity. This means valuing our own cultural identity and the cultural identity of the research participants. Overt behaviour of a Pākehā researcher who values Māori cultural identity is an individual who is taking decolonising steps towards reconciliation. This might be

through learning Te Reo Māori, gaining knowledge of Māori history and Māori tikanga and keeping abreast with contemporary Māori social justice issues. Recognition of the politics of the use of Te Reo Māori and tikanga Māori is another way of respecting Māori cultural identity, for instance, learning how to correctly say Māori students' names (Seed-Pihama, 2017), collaborating with Māori whānau and iwi to better understand what Māori learners need to enjoy educational success as Māori (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013; Education Council, 2010). Respecting cultural identity will ultimately influence the direction of future research.

#### *8.4.3.3 Enter and commit to a long-term relationship*

Pākehā researchers who enter and commit to long-term relationships with Māori illustrate an understanding of ethical accountability in Te Ao Māori. A research relationship that focuses on partnership in planning and decision-making reflects an understanding of the differential power relationships that are inherent in the research process. Berryman, SooHoo and Nevin (2013) propose that to maintain the original integrity of both researcher and participants (and their respective cultures) and at the same time to co-construct something new, the primacy of relationships is crucial. Moreover, Berryman et al. (2013) argue that through constant problematizing of inherent power differentials between researchers and study participants, researchers are able to remain open to “reflexive turns” within their own research paradigm. An awareness of enduring and long-term responsibilities is key to a culturally responsive methodological approach.

#### *8.4.3.4 Be transparent and humble*

It is important for Pākehā working across Māori education and research spaces to be open and upfront about the purpose of their involvement. During my doctoral research, I “arrived as a respectful visitor” (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013). What did this mean? I realised the importance of Māori participants to ‘feel’ me as well as see me. I let them know who I am as a person. I listened, and waited to be invited. I used all of my senses, paying attention to body language and cultural cues. The research was about learning alongside each other, co-constructing new knowledge with other people in a relationship of mutual trust. Being humble and

transparent with no hidden agenda created the ability for me and the participants to be comfortable with complexity and tensions.

#### *8.4.3.5 Listen and Reconcile*

Being a Pākehā educator or researcher working alongside Māori necessitates gaining an understanding of where Māori sit within a wider education, political and social agenda. The present socio-cultural context in Aotearoa privileges Pākehā New Zealanders through its dominant Westernised ideology, reflected and reproduced in social structures such as education and health organisations (Mikahere-Hall, 2017). It is important for Pākehā researchers to commit to researching in ways that seek better conditions and social justice for Māori and other marginalized groups. I argue that Pākehā need to use the privilege of our voice to foster a more equitable society—there are many of us who wish to achieve this and it is our responsibility to act on this belief. Education in Aotearoa needs a decolonising reconciliation approach to address ongoing disparities between Pākehā and Māori. It is imperative for Pākehā to listen for ways that this can be done with the strength of both Pākehā and Māori working together.

### **8.5 Concluding Remarks – He Kupu Whakatepe**

To conclude, my final remarks relate to celebrating the life cycle of this research process itself. I acknowledge those people with whom the seeds of this research began; those people who participated in the exploration of effective transition experiences, and; those people who contributed to the context of the environment during the lifespan of this research. As I draw this thesis to a close, necessarily parting with the reader, I share my final thoughts, conclusions and the implications of what this research means. Although the thesis writing aspect of the research project is drawing to an end, new seeds have been generated, lying in wait for further research.

My role as a Pākehā researcher in Māori educational spaces was neither easy nor straight-forward. It seemed there was no single 'right way' to carry out the research, yet there were a multitude of 'wrong ways'. Furthermore, my position as a Pākehā researcher was influenced by wider aspects of my identity such as being middle-aged, middle-class, heterosexual and female. In this regard, my

approach to researching with Māori might be totally different to other Pākehā researchers. Evolution of one's Pākehā identity is a continuous process of situating our self in relation to Māori and within our wider Aotearoa society.

The historical and structural legacy of colonialism continues to reinforce old patterns of white power and privilege still evident through the injustices faced by Māori today within education arenas (Amundsen, 2018; Bishop, Berryman, & Wearmouth, 2014; Smith, L., 2013). It may be helpful for Pākehā to become aware of what our role is in relation to past and future evolution of Māori identity. A 'decolonisation through reconciliation' approach to research and education 'talks back to' research as an institution of knowledge that is embedded in a global system of imperialism and power. The irony of my position in this as a doctoral research student enrolled in a westernised university does not escape me!

I hope that through the vehicle of this thesis I have made my position clear about the responsibility of Pākehā within our presently 'privileged' position to foster a more equitable society. I state elsewhere (Amundsen, 2018) that, "possibilities for Pākehā researchers (in collaboration with Māori) to transform the social structures that influence education theories, praxis and outcomes need less underestimation and more prioritisation" (p. 148). I believe it is timely for discussions surrounding knowledge claims of disciplines, content of knowledge, and about the silences and invisibilities surrounding certain peoples, practices and ethics.

When it comes to evaluating whether I have realised my values during this undertaking, I hope readers will recognise where I have tried to illustrate their emergence in my research practice. I endeavoured to contribute to participants' reasons for social hope, in connection with the CST approach underpinning this research. Through developing my capacity to critique my own thinking, I hope that others alongside me might also be encouraged toward a vision of a democratic and free society where appropriate infrastructures can be created. This will not happen automatically; time and effort are needed.

I like to think that Pākehā and Māori communities can continue learning from one another, through sharing honest stories of our experiences with each other. However, if we are to use research to improve education and serve the public good for *all*, we need a willingness to peel back the layers and identify those invisible

gaps which divide people, in order to create new identities for a better social future. Based on the rationale I have presented in this thesis, educational transitions conceived as processes of continuity provide a beacon of hope for a way forward to improve educational achievement for Māori TE students in Aotearoa.

New ideas begin as seeds. If these seeds are nurtured by our social interactions, opportunities and experiences of our surrounding environment, their roots may take hold. If positively cultivated, continuity with the past and a strong base to construct and re-construct our future may help to develop a strong identity from which to branch out and in so doing, make a difference for others. Pākehā must use the privilege of our voice to foster a more equitable society—it is our responsibility to act on this belief.

Trees in a forest do not impose their branches over others they find themselves next to, but instead, their branches grow layer upon layer to allow through light fostering mutual growth. By not imposing ourselves over top of those people we find ourselves next to, but instead, by allowing enlightenment to foster our growth alongside each other, we can create new understandings and interpretations together. Such conversations have no conclusion; the future identity of Aotearoa peoples is in all of our hands.



*Mā te rongo, ka mōhio;  
Mā te mōhio, ka mārama;  
Mā te mārama, ka mātau;  
Mā te mātau, ka ora.*

*Through listening comes knowledge;  
From knowledge comes clarity;  
From clarity comes wisdom;  
From wisdom comes life and vitality.*

No reira tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Ethical Framework – Diana Amundsen

##### ETHICAL FRAMEWORK – DIANA AMUNDSEN

This is my ethical framework, my 'code of conduct' in my position as a Pākehā researcher working across Māori spaces.

1. My description defines each Māori concept based on my understanding of what the concept means.
2. I link aspects of the concept to the way I will conduct the research and interact with participants.
3. I symbolise this Ethical Framework in the depiction of a Waka Hourua (Twin-hulled canoe).

#### ETHICS: KAUPAPA MĀORI, UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO, DIANA AMUNDSEN



*Image retrieved from: <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Māori/Whakapapa/images/bags.jpg>*

## 1. STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

This document acts as my ethical framework, my ‘code of conduct’ for my role as researcher. There are three distinctly different kete (*baskets*) of ethical principles yet they each have varying degrees of overlap with each other, as reflected in the following table. All are relevant and important for this research to proceed effectively and must be embedded in the entire research process. This document unpacks each kete to understand the principles contained within. I outline my understanding of each principle, and provide links as to how I will embed these principles throughout the research process and in the way I interact with participants.

| Three Kete of Ethical Principles           |  | Overlaps among principles |            |
|--|--|---------------------------|------------|
| <b>Kaupapa Māori Ethics (KM)</b>           |  | <b>DA</b>                 | <b>UOW</b> |
| 1.   | Whakapapa  | 8                         | 4          |
| 2.   | Taonga Tuku Iho  | 4, 5                      | 4          |
| 3.   | Whānau & Whānaungatanga                                    | 5, 8                      | 4          |
| 4.   | Tino Rangatiratanga  | 1                         | 5          |
| 5.   | Kaupapa  | 6                         | 3          |
| 6.   | Āta  | 6,8                       | 2,3,6      |
| 7.   | Kaitiakitanga  | 6                         | -          |
| 8.   | Ako  | 4                         | -          |
| 9.   | Mana – a) Atua, b) Whenua, c) Tangata, d) Reo, e) Ao Tūroa | 2, 6, 7, 8                | 4          |
| 10.  | Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga                    | 7                         | 3,4        |
| 11.  | Te Tiriti o Waitangi                                       | 1, 2, 3                   | -          |
| <b>Diana Amundsen Research Ethics (DA)</b> |  | <b>KM</b>                 | <b>UOW</b> |
| 1.   | Fairness   | 4                         | 1          |
| 2.   | Honest Communication                                       | 9                         | 5          |
| 3.   | Partnership  | 11                        | 2          |
| 4.   | Lifelong Learning  | 8                         | 4          |
| 5.   | Family   | 1,2,3                     | -          |
| 6.   | Sustainability   | 7, 9e                     | -          |
| 7.   | Inter-Cultural Competency                                  | 9, 10, 11                 | 3          |
| 8.   | Relationships & Belonging                                  | 1,3, 9                    | 3          |
| <b>University of Waikato Ethics (UOW)</b>  |  | <b>DA</b>                 | <b>KM</b>  |
| 1.   | Informed and voluntary consent                             | 1,2                       | 9c         |

|    |   |             |               |
|----|---|-------------|---------------|
| 2. | Avoidance of Conflict of Interest and unnecessary deception                     | 2,3         | 6             |
| 3. | Social and cultural sensitivity to age, gender, culture, religion, social class | 7, 8        | 10            |
| 4. | Respect for persons   | 1,2,3,8     | 1,2,3,9c      |
| 5. | Justice   | 1,2         | 4,10          |
| 6. | Minimisation of harm to participants, researcher, groups or institutions        | 1, 7, 8     | 6, 9c, 10, 11 |
| 7. | Respect for privacy and confidentiality   | 1, 2, 7, 8, | 9c            |

## 2. KAUPAPA MĀORI PRINCIPLES

### 1. Whakapapa<sup>2</sup> (one example is give here, the remainder are available on request)

*Concept:* Whakapapa is the heart of traditional Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). Whakapapa means genealogy, history and stages of development and is a framework which categorizes all living and non-living, known and unknown phenomena in the earthly and spiritual worlds. Relationships are mapped and recorded so that knowledge is organised, preserved and passed down generations. Knowledge that whakapapa encompasses is based on mythology, legend, history, tikanga (custom), philosophies and spirituality.

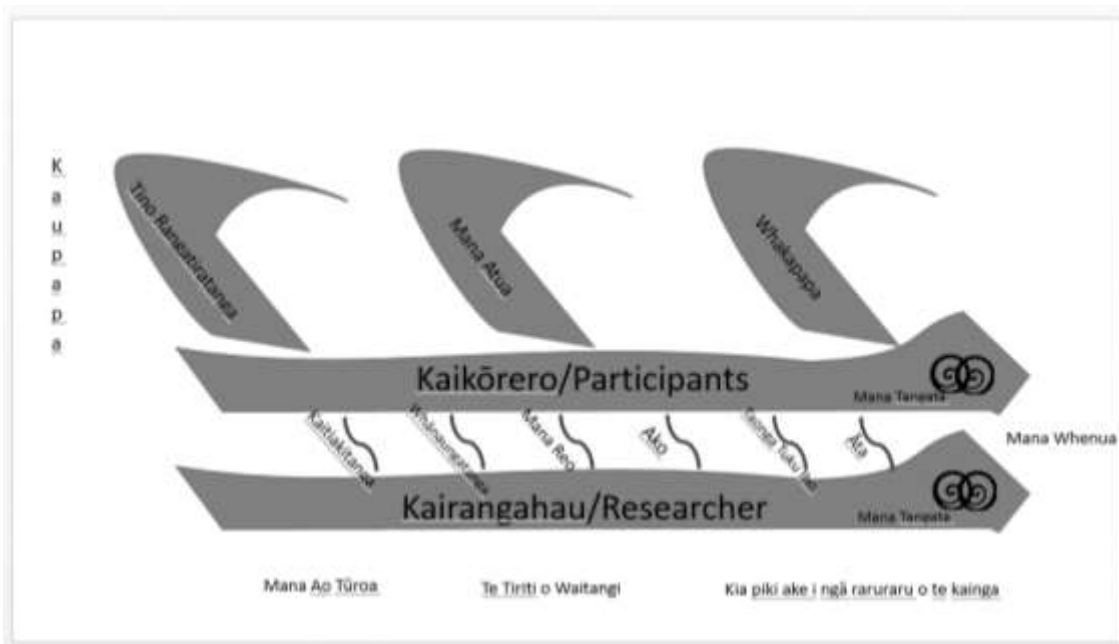
*Links to my research:* I understand that for Māori (and for some non-Māori too, including me), whakapapa is always the starting place because it opens up the whole person. It helps me to create a relationship and connections with each participant. I will find out where they come from and who they are. *No hea koe? Where are you from?* This question asks a much deeper question than in English. It provides an understanding about who this person is (identity) and where they come from (background), what is their place in connection to tipuna, iwi, hapu, whānau and geographic connections. I will do this early on when meeting new participants and building a relationship. It is essential for me when dealing with Māori participants because they are central to the narrative.

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<sup>2</sup> The definition of whakapapa taken from <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/whakapapa-genealogy/> combined with my own understanding.

### 3. WAKA HOURUA (TWIN-HULLED CANOE)

I depict the above-mentioned Kaupapa Māori ethical concepts through the symbol of a Te Waka Hourua as per below:



#### 3 Sails

- At the front of the sail is the Kaupapa, collective vision
- Tino Rangatiratanga is self-determination which leads the way.
- Mana Atua is the spirit in the centre to provide balance.
- Whakapapa is at the back to show where we have come from and what we connect to in our past.

#### Twin Hull

- The relationship between the Kaikōrero and the Kairangahau shows that we are journeying together in the same direction, inextricably bound together, each dependent on the other, so Mana Tangata is vital.

#### Connectors

- The relationship is connected together through the principles of kaitiakitanga (caring), whānauatanga (getting to know each other), mana reo (language and communication), ako (teaching and learning with and from each other) taonga tuku iho (values handed down from previous generations) and āta (going slowly, respectfully and carefully to build well-being in the relationship).

## Time, Place, Context

- Place - Our waka is sailing in nature, the sea, the sky, the winds. In other words, we are in a wider environment around us to which we are connected (mana ao tūroa) and for an effective journey we need to work with the environment to suit personal strengths and situations. Mana whenua is the connection to birth, land and place.
- Time – The period of history in which we are sailing is guided by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The treaty binds Māori and Pākehā Zealanders in a partnership in which we must act reasonably and with utmost good faith.
- Context – The socio-economic issues that currently exist in New Zealand provide the context in which this waka is journeying. The need to assist in the alleviation of negative experiences for Māori communities is embodied in the principle of Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga.

## 4. DIANA AMUNDSEN ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

### 1. Fairness<sup>3</sup> (one example is given, the remainder available on request)

*Concept:* Fairness refers to the state or quality of being free from bias, favouritism, and self-interest, preference in judgment or injustice. It is being unprejudiced – without pre-conceived opinions or judgments and unbiased – not favouring one party over another. This means having an equitable distribution of resources, benefits and access to means. Researchers have a key role in advancing fairness as a societal commitment, and must do this through ensuring a fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of research.

Links to my research: Fairness means that no participants should bear an unfair share of the direct burdens of participating in research, nor should they be unfairly excluded from the potential benefits of research participation. For that reason, in my research design, it is a personal choice for each participant whether to be anonymous or acknowledged. Benefits of research participation

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<sup>3</sup> My own interpretation of the concept mixed with the definition from the Free Dictionary. <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/fairness>

may be direct, where, for example, a student participant learns new and helpful information about effective transitions to education as a result of participation in a focus group hui. Some benefits may be indirect, where their contributions to the advancement of knowledge around transitions for Māori students may lead to improved conditions for future Māori students. I will ensure that my distribution of koha is fair, without imposing undue burdens on myself as the researcher that would make it too difficult to complete the research. Results of the research will be made available in a culturally appropriate and meaningful format, such as an accompanying oral presentation to a report if that is preferred.

**5. UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO ETHICAL PRINCIPLES** (See Ethics Application FEDU010/15, Appendix 2).

- 1. Informed and voluntary consent**
- 2. Avoidance of Conflict of Interest and unnecessary deception**
- 3. Social and cultural sensitivity to age, gender, culture, religion, social class**
- 4. Respect for persons**
- 5. Justice**
- 6. Minimisation of harm to participants, researcher, groups or institutions**
- 7. Respect for privacy and confidentiality**

## Appendix 2

### Approved Ethics Application FEDU 010/15

The following e-mail was received on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 containing approval of my ethics application:



The Ethics Application that I submitted was returned with the Approval number (FEDU010/15 "stamped" at the top of the first page, as per below:



## Appendix 3 Participant Letter

**Title:** **Ngā Huarahi e Taea. Pathways to the Possible: Transition Experiences of Māori Students into Tertiary Education.**

Tēnā Koe \_\_\_\_\_ *student name* \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Diana Amundsen, a doctoral student at the University of Waikato Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato. I am undertaking research called *Ngā Huarahi e Taea. Pathways to the Possible: Transition Experiences of Māori Students into Tertiary Education* as a requirement for my doctoral degree.

This is a regional study focusing on the *Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership*: the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, the University of Waikato at Tauranga, and the Waiariki Institute of Technology. Students are being invited from the four above-mentioned institutions. I am emailing you because I am in the process of gathering information by having kōrero (talks) with selected Māori students on this topic.

My aim is to draw together the experiences of about 12 Māori students in the Bay of Plenty who have had the experience of transitioning into tertiary education and start to express a helpful outcome for future students entering into tertiary study. I have put together a list of people to talk to who are currently enrolled in studies. Your name is on my list. Therefore, I would like to ask you to participate in this study.

I can imagine that you must be quite busy with your studies, and to acknowledge your time and participation there will be a koha to show appreciation for your participation. If you want to know more details about my research project and particularly about the hui process, please read the information sheet included with this letter. There is also a consent form.

If you are interested in participating in this research process, please send me a text on 027-543-4224 or email me on [diana.amundsen@boppoly.ac.nz](mailto:diana.amundsen@boppoly.ac.nz) to register your name. Once I have received everybody's response I will make contact with you to set up a convenient time and location for our hui to take place. If I don't hear anything back from you within three weeks, before \_\_\_\_\_ date, then I'll know that you have decided not to participate.

I am hoping my efforts will be helpful for universities, wānanga, polytechnics and staff to make some positive changes for Māori students in education who deserve to have their experiences recognised. The focus of my research is on the transition experiences of all Māori students, including those fresh from high school and those who are coming back into study after a break since secondary education. I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you are keen to be involved. Kia kaha!

Diana Amundsen

07-557-8945 (work)

Email

diana.amundsen@gmail.com

## **Appendix 4**

### **Participant Information Sheet**

***Title:***                **Ngā Huarahi e Taea. Pathways to the Possible: Transition Experiences of Māori Students into Tertiary Education**

#### **Information About The Research:**

This project seeks to better understand how Māori students effectively transition into tertiary environments. The particular area I am researching is of utmost interest to me as it relates closely to my professional area of work. In my current role as Learner Facilitator working to support both students and tutors/lecturers, I have been involved with many tertiary learners, including a growing number of Māori learners who transition into tertiary study. This has highlighted my awareness of the challenges they face, the barriers to be overcome and some potential solutions to overcome these circumstances. I believe it is important to understand more about this topic area in order to influence tertiary institutions to consider their strategic planning and resourcing in this area for future students to better enable positive engagement.

My data collection is being carried out in a participatory research design with Māori students who have transitioned into tertiary education and are currently enrolled in their first year of study at the institutions comprising the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership: the Bay of Plenty Polytechnic, the Waiariki Institute of Technology, Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and the University of Waikato at Tauranga.

#### **Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to respond to my offer for your involvement in this study and there will be no further consequences for you. Furthermore, all students' participation is entirely voluntary and I want to make it very clear that you are entitled to withdraw from the study at any point you may want to. If you agree to take part in this research with me, you and I may decide together to record the discussions to be able to listen again to everything you say so I do not miss anything. If you want to read a copy of the transcribed (written

up) interview and suggest any changes, you may do so. If you decide you do not want to be recorded, I will respect your decision and instead take notes of our kōrero (conversation).

### **Time Requirements and Your Role**

You are being invited to participate in a two-phase research project. Phase 1 has already been completed and we are now commencing Phase 2. The following provides more details about the three phases.

#### **Phase 1: Pilot Stage – This has already been completed.**

In this phase of the research, three Māori students who are currently enrolled in each of the Bay of Plenty Tertiary Education Partnership institutions were involved in helping to develop ideas for the focus and direction of Phase 2.

#### **Phase 2: Kaikōrero Whānau (Research Participant Kinship Group) – you are being invited to participate in Phase 2.**

My approach is to engage with you as *knowing participants*, not as *objects* of research. Therefore, as you will find out at our first meeting, your role will include opportunities for you to make decisions and contribute to the research findings.

The research plan I am presenting here is a summary version of the one I will present to you at our initial group hui. First, we will meet together for an initial whakawhanaungatanga (getting to know each other) hui with 12 other participants. After that, we will have a mixture of kanohi-ki-te-kanohi hui and phone conversations as per the suggested schedule below. The purpose of our discussions each time will centre on your transition experiences into tertiary education. Each person will be given a koha for the kanohi-ki-te-kanohi hui to acknowledge his/her gift of time and travel to this hui as well as the time for the interim phone calls.

Kei hea? (Where shall we meet?) Once I have received all the student's responses about who is interested in participating, I will contact everyone to set up the exact dates, times and places for our hui. I anticipate the hui should last no more than two hours. After that, I would like to meet with you one-to-one to discuss the topic of your transition experiences into tertiary study. This meeting will last about one hour and I will ask for your permission to record our conversation. During our hui together, we will have a kōrero about what you were doing before you came into study, how your study is going for you at the moment, what are some things that may have helped or hindered you to get settled into your programme, and anything else

you think is relevant. After that, I will provide you with a written copy of what we discussed so you can review and amend things if needed.

Although the main language of the hui will be English, Te Reo words will be welcomed too. The last part of the research will involve you, along with other participants re-grouping for the final hui to reflect on the research, your role and experience of being involved in this project. This part of the process would be recorded in some way (either voice or video). Each person will be given a koha to acknowledge his/her gift of time and travel to both the group hui and all of the individual hui. This is a proposed schedule of our communication and interaction times.

| <b>Activity</b>                   | <b>2016</b> | <b>Time<br/>Commitment</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Hui<br>Initial Whakawhanungatanga | Jun         | 2.5 hrs                    |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi Hui           | Jul         | 1 hr                       |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 30 min                     |
| Phone Call                        | Aug         | 30 mins                    |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 15 min                     |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi Hui           | Sep         | 1 hr                       |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 30 min                     |
| Phone Call                        | Oct         | 30 mins                    |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 15 min                     |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi Hui           | Nov         | 1.5 hrs                    |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 30 min                     |
| <b>2017</b>                       |             |                            |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi Hui           | Mar         | 1 hr                       |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 30 min                     |
| Phone Call                        | Apr         | 30 mins                    |
| <i>Review Transcript</i>          | Jul         | 15 min                     |
| Kanohi-ki-te-kanohi Hui           | May         | 1 hr                       |

|                                    |                    |                  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Review Transcript</i>           | Jul                | 30 min           |
| Reflections on Mātauranga<br>Māori | Jun                | 2.5 hrs          |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>3 semesters</b> | <b>15.25 hrs</b> |

**6. Confidentiality and Anonymity or Public Acknowledgement**

7. I will be taking the utmost precautions to protect both your confidentiality and anonymity in my research publications. I will base my research on the assumption that you will want to have your name and identity protected and kept anonymous, until I hear otherwise from you. However, despite all precautions, there is a possibility that participants may be identifiable, nevertheless. Furthermore, anonymity cannot be protected in a focus group situation. In this research, you may choose whether you wish to keep your involvement as confidential and anonymous as possible, or whether you wish to have your name and identify publicly acknowledged and included in this research.

8. All the raw data we gather will be kept confidential and stored securely. My research project is based on the information collected from the people involved and I will put this into a written thesis. In some cases, participants like to have their role in the research acknowledged and included in any resulting publications. In other cases, people do not wish to be identified, and in this case I will make the data anonymous to protect confidentiality. Once the thesis is completed, marked and passed, a copy will reside in the University of Waikato's Research Common digital repository where it is available widely. I can also provide a summary of the outcomes to you if you wish to receive a copy. I will share the general findings from this research project in future conference presentations or academic writing. I want you to know that any recorded interviews and transcripts will be deleted and destroyed five years after this research project finishes.

If you would like to know any more details about this study, you can contact me by reply email [diana.amundsen@boppoly.ac.nz](mailto:diana.amundsen@boppoly.ac.nz) or my supervisors as per below:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Professor Brian Findsen</b><br>Chief Supervisor<br>Te Whiringa<br>School of Educational Leadership and Policy | The University of Waikato<br>Private Bag 3105<br>Hamilton, NZ<br>Email: <a href="mailto:bfindsen@waikato.ac.nz">bfindsen@waikato.ac.nz</a> |
| <b>Dr Te Manaaroha Rollo</b><br>Co-Supervisor & Cultural Mentor<br>The University of Waikato                     | Private Bag 3105<br>Hamilton, NZ<br>Email: <a href="mailto:rollo@waikato.ac.nz">rollo@waikato.ac.nz</a>                                    |

A consent form is provided with this email. Completing this form and returning it to me shows your agreement to participate in this study. You can return it to me by reply email or give it to me when we meet for our hui. Thank you very much for your support.

Naku noa, na

Diana Amundsen

PhD student – University of Waikato

Cell: 027-543-4224

[diana.amundsen@gmail.com](mailto:diana.amundsen@gmail.com)

## Appendix 5 Participant Consent Form

**Title:** Ngā Huarahi e Taea. Pathways to the Possible:  
Transition Experiences of Māori Students into  
Tertiary Education

Tick the box

- I have read and understood all of the information supplied in the accompanying letter and information sheet about the study being conducted by Diana Amundsen(PhDstudent).
- I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I can withdraw from the study at any time and I can withdraw my data at any time until data analysis begins.
- I understand that I will receive a transcript of our one-to-one face-to-face and phone call discussions for review and possible amendment.
- I have a choice as to whether the information I share will be kept confidential and my anonymity protected as much as possible, or whether my name will be acknowledged and included.
- The resulting doctoral thesis will be made available on the University of Waikato's Research Common digital repository.
- I consent to being a participant in this study and will adhere to the terms of this research.

\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature Here

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Tick one that applies

- I wish for my involvement to be kept as confidential and anonymous as possible.
- I wish for my involvement to be publicly acknowledged and included.

# RESEARCH WHĀNAU HUI

## WHEN

**June 27th, 2016**  
**10am – 1pm**

## WHERE

**Pomare T7**  
**Windermere**

70 Windermere Dr, Poike, Tauranga 3112

**Invitees - DoW Students - Waiariki BoPPoly Students - Te  
Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī Students - PhD Research -  
Student Voice - Diana Amundsen - Student Voice Matters!**

**LUNCH PROVIDED**

**RSVP BY THURS  
23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE!**

## HUI TIME

**10:00am Start**  
**12:00pm Lunch**  
**1:00pm Finish**

## WHAT TO BRING

**Yourself**  
**A smile**  
**An open mind**

## TRANSITIONS

**What are your transition  
experiences?**

**What are things that  
helped you get into study?**

**What things made it hard  
to study?**

## BENEFITS

**Meet new people**

**Be part of some exciting  
new research**

**Future students may wish  
to follow in your footsteps**

## Appendix 7

### Ko wai tēnei? Who is this?

1. What is your full name? (find out the correct pronunciation)

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2. What do you prefer to be called? Do you have a nickname?

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3. What does your name mean? Where does it come from? Who named you?

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4. Where were you born?

---

5. Where did you grow up?

---

6. What other countries have you lived in?

---

7. How many languages do you speak or understand – a little or fluent?

---

8. What is your favourite food and why?

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9. What is your favourite type of music?

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10. What is your programme of study? Do you have a part-time job? Where?

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## Appendix 8

### Semi-Structured Interview Guide

**Title:** Ngā Huarahi e Taea. Pathways to the Possible: Transition Experiences of Māori Students into Tertiary Education.

This is a semi-structured interview. Each individual question does not have to be asked, and may be asked in a different order than appears here, although the topic flow should be followed as much as possible.

#### Introductions and Demographics

*Find out background, e.g.*

- iwi, hapū, whānau,
- age,
- current living situation,
- programme of study enrolled in,
- last year of secondary school,
- past educational achievements,
- jobs, hobbies etc.

#### Prior to Enrolment in Tertiary Education Institute

*Sample questions that may be used*

- Can you tell me what you were doing before you enrolled in your current programme?  
*Probe for what type of work, any other study, being a parent...*
- What made you decide to sign up for this programme of study?
- Why did you choose to study with this institution?
- How did you know what to do to enrol or register for this programme?
- What was that process like?
- How were you feeling towards your study before you started this programme?

- What does 'educational success' in tertiary education contexts mean to you? Think about academic achievement, accomplishment of personally significant goals, development of Māori cultural skills and knowledge...)?

### **Initial Impressions**

- What was the first day (or week) of your programme like for you?
- How many other students or friends did you know at this institution?
- What did you know of their experiences?
- How challenging did you think the study was going to be for you?
- What sort of support did you think was available for you? (e.g. Student Support, support from Tutors or Lecturers, Information and Help Desk, other students, formal/informal...etc)
- How confident were you to make use of any support that was offered to you?
- What would have helped to make your first few days/weeks easier or better for you?

### **Beyond the first week**

- How would you describe your personal transition experience into tertiary education?
- What things helped you to get settled into your new environment/situation?
- What things made it hard for you to get used to tertiary study?
- How well do you think secondary school (college) prepared you for this level of study? ...If you have recently come from high school
- How well do you think your life/work experiences prepared you for this level of study?
- Were there any events or experiences that triggered your decision to study?

- What role has your whānau played in helping or hindering you to stay in your programme?

### **Current Study Update**

- How long have you been studying here?
- How is your study going, in terms of your achievement of the programme requirements?
- What are some of the achievements you are most proud of?
- What do you think is the likelihood that you will complete/withdraw from this programme? Why?
- How confident do you feel now in this study environment?

### **Transition Experiences**

- How long is it since you first enrolled? Pause, if relevant, follow up with...
- Think back to when you first began to study. Can you talk about any pressures you had to deal with? Such as...prompt as necessary
  - work/life balance
  - financial burden of study
  - extent of mentoring or role modelling
  - cultural and social isolation
  - extent of culturally responsive teaching and learning
  - extent of Māori culturally related curricular content
  - anything else?
- What are the impacts of any barriers you faced to tertiary learning? (e.g. financial, psychosocial, situational, and institutional)? (Prompt as necessary)
  - How did/do you overcome those barriers? (Probe for specifics here)
  - Are there any significant events or situations which inspired you to successfully overcome these barriers?
- Can you describe the usefulness of any supplementary academic and pastoral support that you may have had, such as:
  - Study resources
  - Peer support
  - Staff support – tutors and/or student support
  - Professional relationships

- Specific cultural support
- Anything else?
- If a student has been in or knows of someone who has completed a foundation programme...What do you think are the strengths and limitations (if any) of foundation learning for Māori students transitioning into tertiary education?
  - If you could picture a really great transition from your previous situation into this tertiary study, what would you say are the main things that would be helpful?
  - What else do you think I should know about what makes an effective transition to tertiary education environments for Māori students?

### **Educational Success and Support**

- How important is pastoral care provision for Māori learners transitioning into tertiary environments?
- What do you think about having additional numeracy or literacy support for Māori students studying at tertiary level?
  - *Ask again...*What does 'educational success' in mean to you personally?

## Appendix 9 First Cycle Coding Example

R: Yeh, yeh, so you've already made efforts to look at what is coming up next and to start looking at that?

P: Yeh, yeh, and if I've learned anything from teaching, or maybe just Uni, it's um, to always plan ahead.

Cos this is actually my second time at Uni. The first time, cos I'm 37 now, I turn 38 in a few days actually, and the first time I went was straight out of high school and it was just a totally different mind frame for me in terms of motivation and stuff like that, I didn't plan, I just dealt with things as they came along, like assignments and stuff, rather than like this time. I'm really motivated this time and I look ahead as much as I can handle. Yeh, just to plan better and get my head around it. More, what's the word? Prepared, yeh, more prepared.

R: What's the difference in your motivation now compared to the first time you went to Uni?



**Diana Amundsen**

New learning from being at university?  
Importance of planning.



**Diana Amundsen**

This participant has experienced a school-to-tertiary transition as well as the current post-school-to-tertiary transition experience. Important to draw out comparisons.



**Diana Amundsen**

Reference to motivation  
Importance of planning for 'success' at uni?

P: The first time I studied a slightly different programme and I was 19, and I had just come back from living overseas for a year on a school-based exchange, so my motivation for school wasn't very high, like I'd just gone from this high of living in Europe as a 17 year old, and then coming back to Tauranga, my head just wasn't really, ah, in it. I wanted to get that high again, so I went down to Otago, I went there more for cultural reasons because Otago is well known as a party town, and it was my first time flatting on my own, and meeting lots of people and stuff and blah, blah, so school was really a side effect of having to live down there. I mean, live and learn. You know, I kind of regret it, but I don't regret it either. You learn from everything.

So then I travelled, and now I'm back, and now I know that this is what I want to do, cos I've always worked in hospitality, sort of service, so I kind of see it as a shift into something that is still people-orientated and uses people skills. So far, I really enjoy being in the classroom. There's plenty of options with it too, I've already started looking around.



**Diana Amundsen**

Reference to motivation again. Important factor in effective transition?



**Diana Amundsen**

Sounds sure this time!

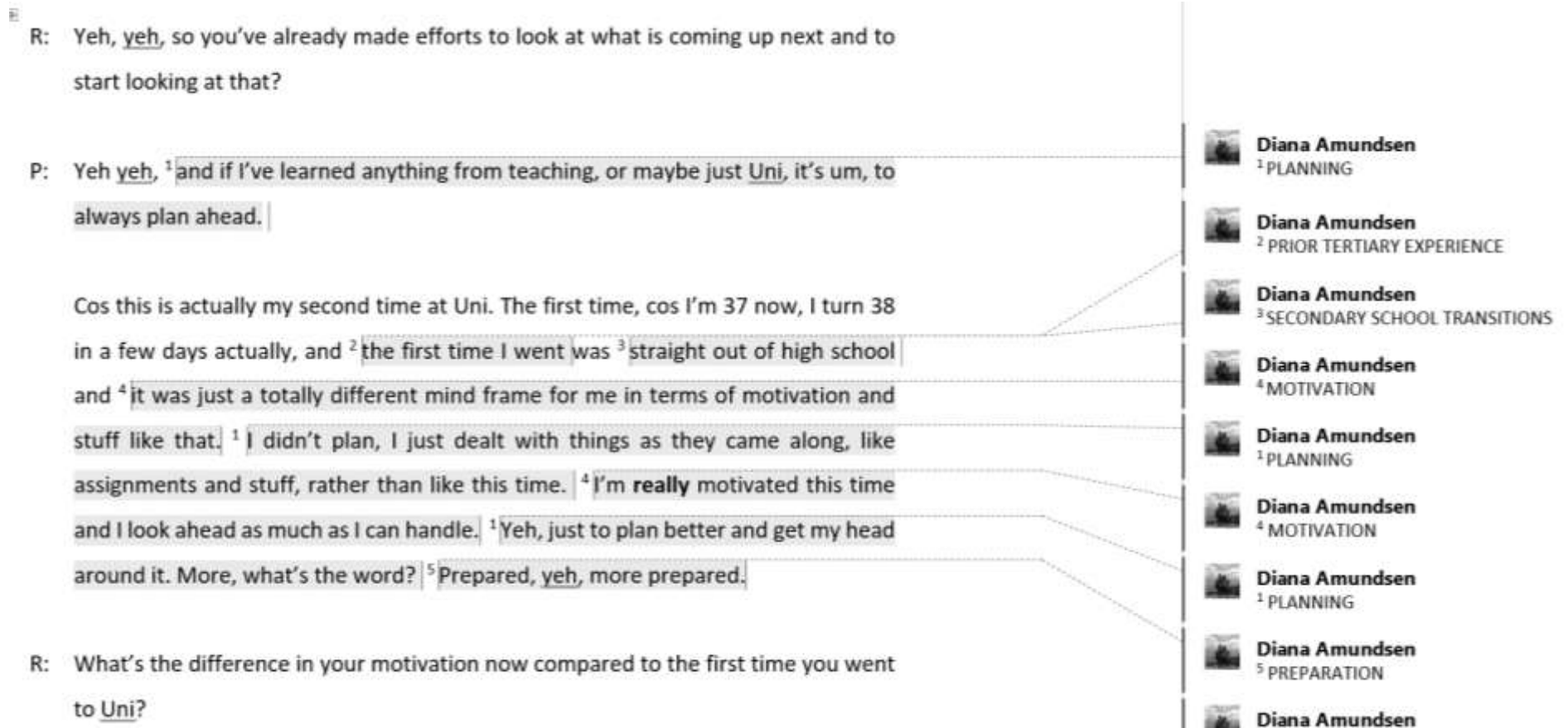


**Diana Amundsen** December 29, 2017

Thinking about career and job options beyond the course.



## Appendix 10 Second Cycle Coding Example



P: <sup>6</sup>The first time I studied a slightly different programme and I was 19, and I had just come back from living overseas for a year on a school-based exchange, <sup>4</sup>so my motivation for school wasn't very high, like I'd just gone from this high of living in Europe as a 17 year old, and then coming back to Tauranga, my head just wasn't really, ah, in it. <sup>7</sup>I wanted to get that high again, so I went down to Otago, <sup>8</sup>I went there more for cultural reasons because Otago is well known as a party town, and it was my first time flatting on my own, and meeting lots of people and stuff and blah, blah, <sup>4</sup>so school was really a side effect of having to live down there. I mean, live and learn. You know, I kind of regret it, but I don't regret it either. <sup>9</sup>You learn from everything.

So then I travelled, and now I'm back, and <sup>4</sup>now I know that this is what I want to do, <sup>5</sup>cos I've always worked in hospitality, sort of service, so I kind of see it as a shift into something that is still people-orientated and uses people skills. <sup>4</sup>So far, I really enjoy being in the classroom. <sup>7</sup>There's plenty of options with it too, I've already started looking around.



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>6</sup>COURSE DECISION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>4</sup>MOTIVATION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>7</sup>GOALS



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>8</sup>INSTITUTION SELECTION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>4</sup>MOTIVATION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>9</sup>PERSONAL GROWTH



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>4</sup>MOTIVATION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>5</sup>PREPARATION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>4</sup>MOTIVATION



**Diana Amundsen**  
<sup>7</sup>GOALS