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**Ngā whakaaro o ngā ākonga: perspectives and experiences of  
Māori students in outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

A thesis

submitted as partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

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by

**Phil Washbourn**



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
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# Tuhinga Whakarāpopoto: Abstract

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This study aims to develop an understanding of the perspectives and experiences of Māori students in a secondary school outdoor education programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. Lynch (2012) indicated that “there is a clear need, and wide scope, for research into: cultural elements of outdoor education programmes; cultural effects on participants; culturally appropriate research approaches and programme effects on, and experiences of, people who identify as Māori” (p.49). Outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand has been heavily influenced by ‘Eurocentric’ values and practices that contrast with those of Te Ao Māori. In line with a number of calls to re-envision the field, the perspectives and experiences of Māori and the incorporation of Te Ao Māori pedagogies are vital to the reconstruction of an integrated and inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand expression of Outdoor Education for the 21st century.

This study, guided by culturally responsive research methodology, used focus groups to investigate the opinions, thoughts and expectations of Māori students of outdoor education. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the focus group data, and four major themes were identified: the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences of outdoor education; the distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging; the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history; and the complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education, including factors such as affordability, the influence of friends and whānau and prioritising educational pathways. A range of practices and approaches from Te Ao Māori are considered and presented, based on the contribution of the student participants, including pedagogical principles from Te Ao Māori such as *wānanga*, *whanaungatanga* and *tauirā*. Suggestions for practice include developing connections within the community and experiencing Te Ao Māori learning contexts such as *waka ama*, *noho marae* and *mahinga kai*.



# Whakatauki

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## *Me mātau ki tio whetu, i mua ti kōkiri o te haere*

‘Know the stars before you begin your journey’

A pedagogy that would be effective for Māori students in mainstream schools would be one that was understandable in Māori epistemological terms, would address the on-going power imbalances and racism that exists in neo-colonial New Zealand, and would create a context that would reorder the relationships between teachers and students in classrooms and mainstream/public schools.

Joan Metge<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Metge, 1990, p. 190



## Ngā Mihi: Acknowledgments

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# Rārangi upoko: Table of Contents

---

<b>Tuhinga Whakarāpopoto: Abstract</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Whakatauki</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Ngā Mihi: Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>Rārangi upoko: Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Tables and Figures</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>Chapter One</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Kaupapa Whakataki: Introduction.....	1
1.1. Research questions .....	1
1.2. The research context:.....	2
1.2.1. ‘The School’ .....	2
1.2.2. Outdoor education.....	3
1.3. <i>Tūrangawaewae</i> - From where I stand .....	3
1.4. Structure of the Thesis .....	5
<b>Chapter Two</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Tuhinga Arotake: Review of literature .....	7
2.1. Section One: Ideology and practice in Secondary Outdoor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand .....	7
2.1.1. Outdoor education in the New Zealand Curriculum .....	8
2.1.2. A Critique of the dominant values in outdoor education.....	10
2.1.3. Emergent pedagogies and practices.....	15
2.2. Section Two: The Experience of Māori in Education .....	19
2.2.1. Te Kotahitanga, Ka Hikitia and Kia Eke Panuku: the path to culturally responsive pedagogy .....	22
2.3. Section Three: Towards a culturally responsive pedagogy.....	26
2.3.1. Students’ experiences and perspectives in outdoor education ....	27
2.3.2. Developing culturally responsive practice in outdoor education..	30
2.4. Chapter Summary.....	33
<b>Chapter Three</b> .....	<b>34</b>
Tikanga rangahau: Methods .....	34
3.1. Research questions .....	34

3.2.	Theoretical framework .....	35
3.2.1.	Culturally Responsive Methodologies.....	35
3.2.2.	Research with Youth.....	38
3.2.3.	Focus Groups .....	39
3.3.	Recruitment and Focus group organisation .....	41
3.4.	Data Collection.....	43
3.4.1.	Photo Elicitation .....	45
3.4.2.	Post-it notes.....	46
3.4.3.	Recording.....	46
3.5.	Ethical considerations.....	46
3.5.1.	Cultural safety and sensitivity .....	46
3.5.2.	Anonymity and confidentiality .....	48
3.5.3.	Potential Harm identified .....	49
3.6.	Data analysis and reporting .....	50
3.7.	Limitations .....	53
<b>Chapter Four</b>	<b>.....</b>	<b>56</b>
Ngā kitenga: Findings .....		56
4.1.	“We’re in it together” - The importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences outdoors.....	56
4.2.	“You get to go out and actually do stuff” – the distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging.....	62
4.3.	“To learn more about our culture and what happened in History”: the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history.....	67
4.3.1.	“To do what our ancestors would have done”- making connections with a Te Ao Māori perspective on outdoor places.....	68
4.3.2.	“Passing it on”: intergenerational responsibility and learning for the community .....	72
4.4.	“We need to encourage more Māori to do this kind of stuff”: The complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education.....	74
4.4.1.	Factors influencing participation.....	75
4.4.2.	A pedagogical shift: a Te Ao Māori focussed outdoor Education .	81

<b>Chapter Five</b> .....	<b>86</b>
Whakaaro: Discussion .....	86
5.1. Section One: Experiences of Māori students in outdoor education...	86
5.1.1. “We’re in it together” – the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive outdoor experiences.....	87
5.1.2. “You get to go out and actually do stuff” – the distinctive practices of teaching and learning outdoors .....	92
5.1.3. “To learn more about our culture and what happened in History”: the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history .....	96
5.1.4. “We need to encourage more Māori to do this kind of stuff” – The complexity of engaging Māori participation in outdoor education .....	100
5.2. Section Two: Towards a culturally responsive pedagogy for outdoor education: Implications for practice.....	104
5.2.1. Implications for practice .....	105
5.2.2. A Te Ao Māori Focussed course.....	106
5.2.3. Connection with community and the role of the outdoor education teacher.....	110
5.2.4. Contexts of learning.....	112
<b>Chapter Six</b> .....	<b>115</b>
Kupu whakamutunga: Conclusion .....	115
6.1. Recommendations .....	116
6.2. Limitations of this Mahi and directions for future research.....	117
<b>Kuputaka: Glossary of terms</b> .....	<b>120</b>
<b>Āpitianga: Appendices</b> .....	<b>123</b>
Appendix 1: Letters of consent.....	123
Appendix 2: Pseudonym choice .....	125
Appendix 3: Question route .....	126
<b>Ngā tohutoro: References</b> .....	<b>127</b>

# List of Tables and Figures

---

Table 1: Composition of focus groups ..... 43



# Chapter One

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## Kaupapa Whakataki: Introduction

The purpose of this study was to elicit and present the perspectives and experiences of Māori students of outdoor education, in order to provide an alternative perspective on contemporary practices in outdoor education. Initiatives to implement culturally responsive approaches to pedagogy, stimulated by the Māori education strategies: *Ka Hikitia: managing for success* (Ministry of Education, 2009b) and *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating success* (Ministry of Education, 2013b) have led to a critical and creative re-envisioning of practice in many educational contexts as educators seek to address the ‘achievement gap’ between Māori and non-māori populations. Scholars in the field of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand have noted a corresponding research gap into Māori experiences and perspectives of outdoor education (M. Brown, 2008, 2012d; Cosgriff, 2008; Cosgriff et al., 2012; Lynch, 2012). It is this gap, with a wider aim of contributing to improved educational performance of Māori, which this research aims to contribute to.

By grounding this study in culturally responsive pedagogy and research methodologies (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013), my aim is to present the experiences, values and expectations of Māori students in outdoor education as an exploration into culturally responsive practice in outdoor education. This study listens to the “unheard voice” of Māori students in outdoor education research (M. Brown, 2012d, p. 68), to explore how their experiences, perceptions and aspirations might envision new forms of practice. This study seeks to accept Brown’s (2012d, p. 69) challenge regarding “taking students’ perspectives seriously” in such a way as to “enrich future programme development and be illustrative of a responsive approach that accords value to students’ experiences.”

### 1.1. Research questions

There are three research questions guiding this study:

1. What are Māori students' experiences of a secondary school outdoor education programme? This question considers the learning activities they have experienced that are memorable, positive and educative to them as Māori and the barriers to their learning and achievement in outdoor education have they experienced as Māori students.
2. What do Māori students' perspectives and experiences in a secondary outdoor education programme in Aotearoa New Zealand indicate about the extent that Outdoor Education practice is consistent with culturally responsive pedagogies?
3. What are the implications of a culturally responsive outdoor education for existing programmes of learning in 'The School'? This question explores potential activities, contexts and practices that Māori students would like to see included in outdoor education programmes, and ways in which to support their cultural identity.

## **1.2. The research context:**

### **1.2.1. 'The School'**

Throughout this thesis the school that this research project is based in is referred to as 'The School'. It is a relatively large coeducational state secondary school located in an urban centre in the South Island of New Zealand. Outdoor Education is an area of learning within the Health and Physical Education Department of 'The School', and has optional classes at years 10, 11, 12 and 13. The School recently (from 2015) participated in *Kia Eke Panuku* (KEP)<sup>2</sup>, a school-wide professional development programme aimed at introducing culturally responsive strategies and pedagogies to promote the achievement of Māori and Pasifika students. The research participants were all drawn from the outdoor education courses at 'The School' and will be referred to as the *rangatahi*<sup>3</sup> in the

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<sup>2</sup> *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on success* was a Ministry of Education partnership with a consortium led by the University of Waikato. See Glossary.

<sup>3</sup> Rangatahi means youth or young person

findings and discussion as a reflection of their Māori identity. As described further in chapter three, research was conducted on 'The School' site.

### **1.2.2. Outdoor education**

Quay and Seaman (2013) describe the term 'outdoor education', as "a seemingly simple label that actually carries a range of meanings, and is often mobilised...to achieve different purposes" (p. 1). This is as true in Aotearoa New Zealand as elsewhere in the world (Boyes, 2012; Lynch, 2016; Zink & Boyes, 2007). What I will term, in this thesis, as the 'dominant model' of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand derives its values and practices from European and North American traditions (Brookes, 2002; Lynch, 2006). Outdoor education at 'The School' has followed many aspects of this dominant model without a critical appraisal of its cultural basis and potential exclusion of other cultural expressions. This study is specific to the experiences of the students and the practices delivered within this particular school programme.

### **1.3. Tūrangawaewae<sup>4</sup> - From where I stand**

I am Pākehā<sup>5</sup>. I identify closely with *Te Wahi o Pounamu*<sup>6</sup>, the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. This is the land of my heritage, where my migrant forebears arrived on wind-driven ships in the mid-19th century, amongst the first waves of settlers to the new Colony. I am, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) describes, indigenous in the sense that I am one of the "descendants of settlers who lay claim to an 'indigenous' identity through their occupation and settlement of land over several generations or simply through being born in that place" (p. 9). This heritage makes me a native New Zealander, an indigene in modern Aotearoa New Zealand, and I have no other identity to claim (King, 1985). I am of *Ngā Tangata o te Tiriti*, the 'peoples of the treaty'<sup>7</sup>, a reference to my position as a member of the Pākehā

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<sup>4</sup> *Turangawaewae* means 'a place to stand'

<sup>5</sup> *Pākehā* denotes a non-Māori resident in Aotearoa New Zealand

<sup>6</sup> *Te Wai Pounamu* is the accepted term for the south Island, but a variation of this is *Te Wahi o Pounamu*, translated as the place of Pounamu. This term is also used for the locality of Glenorchy, at the northern end of lake Wakatipu, which was a known source of pounamu for Murihiku Māori.

<sup>7</sup> *Tangata Tiriti* is a term for non-Māori New Zealanders suggested by the Auckland Workers Education Association (2006).

peoples who live in Aotearoa New Zealand in partnership with the *tangata whenua*<sup>8</sup>, the peoples of the land. This *mahi*<sup>9</sup> that I present here is a part of my commitment to that partnership. Throughout the thesis I will refer to New Zealand as ‘Aotearoa New Zealand’, reflecting the reciprocal responsibilities of partnership enshrined within the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*<sup>10</sup>. Throughout the thesis I also respectfully use the inclusive term *Te Ao Māori*<sup>11</sup> to indicate the range and variety of customs, practices, histories, dialects and traditions that make up the world of Māori, and which share in the common designation of being “Māori”.

In some respects this research study is an exploration of my place as a Pākehā educator in Aotearoa New Zealand. As a university educated, middle-class, Pākehā male I occupy a position of racial, masculine and socio-economic privilege; I also have access to many other forms of privilege, such as my role as a teacher, my role as an experienced outdoor instructor, and my present position as a post-graduate student. It began to dawn on me as I explored culturally responsive pedagogy and research methodology that I must suspend my understanding, my “Blind privilege and unquestioned authority” (Berryman et al., 2013, p. 5), to allow for a different point of view, and a potentially new way of knowing.

Berryman, Soohoo and Nevin (2013, p. 3) indicate that in order to develop a culturally responsive methodology, I first need to engage in a process of “intellectual decolonisation”, and to approach research as “situated practice” (p. 3). This entails contextualising the research, developing cultural competence, engaging reflexively with the research process and approaching the research with humility or risk the exercise merely being an act of cultural appropriation (Berryman et al., 2013). It is tempting to leap in and simply organise Māori content into the programmes I teach, and ‘do my bit’ by including some learning activities that have a Māori theme or focus. This approach risks failing to engage with the core issue of cultural responsiveness, which is a focus on a relationship with the

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<sup>8</sup> *Tangata whenua* is a Te Ao Māori term for the ‘people of the land’. See Glossary

<sup>9</sup> *Mahi* is labour or work

<sup>10</sup> *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* is the Māori version of the Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840, and the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand (Orange, 2011). See Glossary

<sup>11</sup> *Te Ao Māori* means ‘the world of Māori’

people I teach and how as an educator I connect with them as culturally located individuals (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2007). It is in this light that I felt I needed to begin from a position of listening and hearing

Similarly, one of the goals of a culturally responsive methodology must be to first seek to decolonise the subject area (Berryman et al., 2013). Wagner (1993) referred to “blind” and “blank” spots in research, which requires researchers to draw from areas outside of the “research community” in order to see these gaps. In this respect I am drawing on decolonising (L. T. Smith, 2012) and culturally responsive methodologies (Berryman et al., 2013) in order to identify the gaps in what has been written about outdoor education.

Reti (2012, p. 149) reflects on his ambition for Māori youth to be “resilient individuals who can stand in both worlds”, Te Ao Māori and that of the Pākehā, the modern and the traditional, “strong in their cultural identity and comfortable in *Te Reo Māori*<sup>12</sup>; an amalgam of old and new, past and present”. This study represents a commitment to developing outdoor education programmes that find this balance. Alongside a commitment to culturally responsive pedagogies, I am also interested in connecting learning to the place in which we live and interact, both as a connection to the known community of my learners, but also the layers of history and culture that sit on the land and characterise the wider community that my school and teaching practices reside within.

#### **1.4. Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters, including this introduction. A review of literature will include three sections: A discussion of the critique of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand as a ‘field’ (Boyes, 2012) that is extensively derived from Western, Eurocentric (European and North American) traditions and values will form the basis of the first section; the experience of Māori in education and the historical development of culturally responsive strategies in secondary schools will be central to section two; and this is followed by an exploration of

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<sup>12</sup> *Te Reo Māori* is the Māori language

adolescent experiences in outdoor education and the movement towards a culturally responsive outdoor education practice in section three. Chapter three will detail the methodological framework of the study, discuss culturally responsive methodologies and outline the implementation of the research project, including discussion of ethical procedures, focus groups and research with adolescents. Chapter four will present the findings of the research on the basis of four themes: the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences of outdoor education; the distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging; the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history; and the complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education, with influences including affordability, whānau and friends and considerations of future pathways. Chapter five will discuss the findings in relation to the key research questions and the implications for culturally responsive practice in outdoor education, including some suggestions of culturally responsive practices and contexts. Chapter six will provide a summary and concluding comment, including some recommendations for the practice of teaching and learning outdoors, and directions for future research.

## Chapter Two

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### Tuhinga Arotake: Review of literature

In this chapter I review the literature relating to the experiences of Māori adolescents in outdoor education and the development of culturally responsive pedagogy in outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand. This chapter has three interrelated sections. In section one, current ideologies and practices of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand are critically examined. The origins of these practices are explored to determine the cultural basis for the field and emergent responses to significant critiques of outdoor education are discussed. Section two considers the experiences of Māori in education, and the move towards a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations to improve Māori students' engagement and achievement in education. In the final section, I examine research into the experience of adolescents in outdoor education and explore initiatives for developing culturally responsive pedagogies.

#### **2.1. Section One: Ideology and practice in Secondary Outdoor Education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Zink and Burrows (2006) argue that the starting point for a critical examination of outdoor education is not so much what is happening in outdoor education, but “considering how outdoor education is formed and the processes at work that constitute and support the particular practices that are occurring” (p. 42). This section considers practices within secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, investigates the meanings behind these practices, and identifies ways in which they may be exclusive of Māori. Practices include pedagogical methods and approaches, curriculum related content, programme activities and the philosophical orientations behind these. I critically review the cultural basis of what I will term the ‘dominant model’ of Outdoor education practice within Aotearoa New Zealand, focussing on its basis in Western, Euro-centric values and remote adventurous activity experiences as a basis for individualised development.

Following this I present a number of emergent approaches including place responsive pedagogies (e.g. M. Brown, 2008; A. Hill, 2008; Penetito, 2009; Wattchow & Brown, 2011); Education for Sustainability (EfS) (e.g. A. Hill, 2008, 2012; Irwin, 2008; Lugg, 2007), and a socio-ecological perspective (SE) (E.g. A. Hill, 2012b; Wattchow & Boyes, 2014). These approaches can be seen in part to be a response to an extensive critique of the dominant model of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand, and provide an opportunity to present other cultural, and particularly indigenous perspectives (e.g. M. Brown, 2012b; M. Brown & Heaton, 2015; Cosgriff et al., 2012; A. Hill, 2012b). A culturally responsive approach to outdoor education sits amongst these emergent practices, but will be presented and discussed at the conclusion of section three as a summary of the literature review.

### **2.1.1. *Outdoor education in the New Zealand Curriculum***

Outdoor education has become an increasingly established feature of secondary education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand over the last 50 years (Lynch, 2006). In spite of its growth in popularity, Zink and Boyes (2007) noted an on-going lack of semantic agreement within Aotearoa New Zealand about what constitutes outdoor education, attributing this to the diversity and complexity of its history. The term “outdoor education” originates within educational reform in the United States of America in the early 20th century (Quay & Seaman, 2013), but was not adopted widely in Aotearoa New Zealand until the post war period.

From the 1940’s the growth of interest in outdoor recreation in the wider population was matched by the expansion of outdoor education in schools (Lynch, 2006). From origins in one-off camps and excursions, outdoor education became increasingly programmed and centres offering residential outdoor education experiences proliferated. In the 1970s and 1980s, schools began a transition from outdoor education as a co-curricular practice to formal, in-school-time instruction, formalised courses of study, and formalised assessment (Lynch, 2006). Haddock (2007) reports that ‘Education outside the classroom’ (EOTC) is now a key component of secondary life in Aotearoa New Zealand schools, that it strongly

supports all of the key learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) and that it is an effective pedagogical tool.

Outdoor Education was officially recognised in curriculum policy in 1999 in *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (HPENZC) (Ministry of Education, 1999). In this document, outdoor education appears as one of seven key areas of learning including Mental Health, Sexuality Education, Food and Nutrition, Body Care and Physical Safety, Physical Activity, and Sport Studies (Ministry of Education, 1999). This inclusion in the HPENZC provided outdoor education with a 'place' in the formal curriculum for the first time (Boyes, 2012). As a result of this and other historical factors, including the inclusion of outdoor education training within physical education teacher education (PETE), outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand has often been coupled with physical education (Boyes, 2012; Mikael, Backman, & Lundwall, 2015).

In the HPENZC, outdoor education was defined as a learning area that "provides students with opportunities to develop personal and social skills, to become active, safe and skilled in the outdoors, and to protect and care for the environment" (Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 46). An important aspect of the HPENZC was the incorporation of a Te Ao Māori framework for well-being, based on the *Whare Tapa whā*<sup>13</sup> model of health proposed by Mason Durie (1998) emphasising *Hauora*<sup>14</sup> (Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 31). The incorporation of this Te Ao Māori model was not without critique, particularly relating to issues of cultural appropriation, assimilation and lack of cultural training and development for teachers in the use of the model (Heaton, 2011; Hokowhitu, 2001; 2004, 2008). Intriguingly, for outdoor educators, *whenua*<sup>15</sup> and a relationship to the land was a key element of Durie's original model that was left out of the final model presented in the HPENZC (Erueti, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2005; Hokowhitu, 2004). The

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<sup>13</sup> The *Whare Tapa Whā* model of Māori health proposed by Mason Durie (1998) consists of four dimensions to health, *Taha Tinana*, *Taha Hinengaro*, *Taha Wairua* and *Taha Whanau* that contribute to *Hauora*.

<sup>14</sup> *Hauora* literally 'the breath of life', and has been used in the HPENZC to denote "well-being" or holistic Well-ness.

<sup>15</sup> *Whenua* is the Māori term for land. See the glossary for further discussion

inclusion of whenua as a key element in the model may have precipitated a greater focus on connection to place, and provided fertile ground for an inclusion of Māori traditions, perspectives and stories about the land and the environment. The publication of the *Education outside the classroom guidelines* in 2003 by the Ministry of Education gave further shape to outdoor education practice, emphasising not just safe practice, but also a holistic consideration of learning opportunities outside the classroom setting. The updates of the EOTC Guidelines in 2009 and 2016 provided a model for a more culturally considered practice, using cultural references, including *whakatauki*<sup>16</sup>, Te Reo Māori terminology and examples of culturally responsive practice (Ministry of Education, 2009a, 2016a).

### **2.1.2. A Critique of the dominant values in outdoor education**

Western constructions of nature and discourses of adventure and individual development underlie a set of relatively consistent practices within outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand (Boyes, 2012; Mikaelis et al., 2015; Zink & Boyes, 2007). Outdoor education as a secondary school practice in Aotearoa New Zealand has been heavily influenced by developments in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada, and Australia (Boyes, 2012; Lynch, 2006). Historical similarities exist between practices of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand and these countries, and it is notable that the USA, Canada and Australia share a history of colonisation and marginalisation of indigenous practices and perspectives. The model of outdoor education practice that developed is characterised by a focus on the use of challenging and adventurous activities in outdoor settings for the purpose of individualised personal and social development (Brookes, 2002; M. Brown, 2009b). These practices are underpinned by a set of Western values, including the primacy of the individual (Beames & Brown, 2016), progressivism (M. Brown & Heaton, 2015), Cartesian dualisms in terms of understandings of humanity and nature (Fletcher, 2017; Fox, 2008), a masculine gendering of the outdoors (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001; 2016) and discourses around safety, expertise and leadership

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<sup>16</sup> *Whakatauki* are idiomatic sayings, proverbs, aphorisms from Te Ao Maori

(Brookes, 2011). The adoption of Western values and practices imported from other countries amounts to a form of neo-imperialism, acting to constrain other practices and values (Boyes, 2012), particularly, for this discussion, those of Māori. Brown (2009b, p. 10) warned outdoor educators in Aotearoa New Zealand against an “uncritical acceptance of imported outdoor education theory that has inhibited the development of critical perspectives” and that we must make space for the “voices of Māori, women and recent immigration groups” in our practice.

Payne and Wattchow (2008) describe the international development of outdoor education as having “evolved unevenly over time and in different social circumstances, histories, land and seascapes, climates and cultural milieu” (p. 26), however assert “common characteristics of outdoor education practices, particularly the repertoire of activities... signal how the identity of outdoor education has been constructed.” (p. 26). Significant influences on the international development of outdoor education are seen to include the

...imperial/colonial need to claim, conquer or control new lands and territories, the combination of World War 1 and 2 military training regimes, the privileging of an activity-basis to travelling and surviving in the outdoors, the rise of [practices] aimed at socialising ruggedness, independence, spirit or character building, a pre-occupation with the testing of the self through an outward boundedness...and the rise of technologies. (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008, p. 26)

Further influences in the development of outdoor education include Baden Powell in the Scouts movement and Kurt Hahn in the Outward Bound organisation and the Duke of Edinburgh award (Brookes, 2002, 2003b, 2015; Lynch, 2006; Nicol, 2002; Roberts, 2005). The values and propositions presented by these movements have been remarkably enduring (Brookes, 2015), with Hahn’s ideas, based around developing character and resilience through exposure to outdoor challenge and adventure activities (Nicol, 2002), having a particular impact on conceptions of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand (Boyes, 2012). These ideas continue to provide a reference point for many of what constitutes ‘outdoor education’ (Lynch, 2006).

The migration of adventure based activities employed in Outward Bound courses in the northern hemisphere during the war and post-war period to other locations, including New Zealand, has been argued to have occurred with little question to their local relevance, or of any cultural sensitivity (Lugg, 2004). Scholars in Australia have critiqued the euro-centric and anthropocentric focus of the dominant outdoor education model (Lugg, 2004; P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008; Plumwood, 1999; A. Stewart, 2004, 2008) and this has been echoed in Aotearoa New Zealand (E.g. Boyes, 2012; Cosgriff et al., 2012).

Western values that underpin dominant outdoor practices are evident in the discourses conceptualising the outdoors, reflected in the problematic Western terminology for the 'outdoors' (Fletcher, 2017; Morton, 2017; Spillman, 2017). Words, such as 'nature' and 'wilderness,' reflect the anthropocentric dualism in the western world-view that privileges the human over the 'natural'. Fletcher (2017, p. 226) suggests that a phrase such as 'connection with nature' is "oxymoronic" because of this dualism and a number of authors propose that alternative terminology needs to be developed to emphasise the connections that exist between humans and the natural world rather than maintain a separation (Cachelin, Rose, Dustin, & Shooter, 2011; Cronon, 1996; Fox, 2008; Plumwood, 1991). This distinction between humans and the natural world contrasts with indigenous world-views and terminology, which reflect holistic and interconnected relationships with the 'other than human' (Plumwood, 1991).

This fundamental distinction between the individual and the world of experience outside the individual reflects the influence of Cartesian dualism in Western thought: rationality and human constructions are privileged over what is socially constructed as natural, instinctive or wild (Gurholt, 2008); 'Nature' and 'wilderness' are distinguished from 'civilisation' (Cronon, 1996); and male rationalism over female intuition (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001; Plumwood, 1998). Adventure within popular culture is often presented in masculine and adversarial terms, with men centralised as individuals contesting against the

elements, typified in the notion of '*Man versus Wild*'<sup>17</sup>. The Western use of metaphor and imagery in European conceptions of the outdoors are frequently gendered and privilege the masculine, often portraying nature and the outdoor environment in terms of female characterisations: on the one hand nurturing, productive and 'fertile'; and on the other irrational, wild and uncontrollable (Humberstone & Pedersen, 2001).

Within this western ideological framework, the 'outdoors', and increasingly 'nature', is defined as being in the position of 'the other' (Plumwood, 1991; L. T. Smith, 2012; A. Stewart, 2004). According to Plumwood (1991), a rationalist philosophical position not only separates humans from nature, but also privileges a masculine ethic of "universalisation, moral abstraction and disconnection" towards the environment, which in turn also marginalises indigenous peoples' notions of care and responsibility (p. 7).

A Western, 'Eurocentric' (Fox, 2008 ) framework for understanding the relationship between man and nature emphasises the principality of the human over the "other-than-human" which Stewart (2008) also identifies as privileging the European cultural tradition over the indigenous. Smith (2012, p. 28) describes the legitimising mandate for European imperialism and colonialism to be closely related to notions of humanity that identified indigenous cultures as "less than human" and notes, "...western ways of viewing, talking about and interacting with the world at large are intricately embedded in racialised discourses" (p. 47). Fox (2008) responds to this, by asserting that "any practice grounded in Euro-centric and North American heritages needs to be critiqued and rethought" (p. 39) on the basis of the impact of cultural imperialism and exclusion of indigenous practices. The national sense of identification with adventure that underlies outdoor education practices in Aotearoa New Zealand arises from the legacy of imperialism and colonialism that brought about the settlement of the country (Boyes, 2012; King, 2003; J. Phillips, 1987). Related to this were the exploits of prominent male New Zealanders such as Sir Edmund Hillary and his part in 'conquering' Everest in

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<sup>17</sup> I use this as both a popularised conceptual phrase and also a reference to popular culture, in particular the series of television programmes produced by Bear Grylls.

maintaining an confirming the primacy of this cultural discourse (Kane, 2010; Kane & Tucker, 2007; King, 2003).

The dominant model of outdoor adventure programmes is evolving as it is influenced by contemporary socio-cultural processes. Loynes' (1998, p. 35) describes outdoor adventure as "a social movement of our times", at risk of becoming swamped by "market place values" of efficiency, repetitiveness and cost effectiveness. Ritzers' process of '*Macdonaldization*' (cited in Beames & Brown, 2014), was picked up by Beames and Brown (2014) as a trend in outdoor programmes to increasingly de-contextualise adventure activities and divorce participants from 'natural' or 'authentic' outdoor environments. Activities are thus replicated from place to place, or from group to group. Brookes (2002) described this as the imposition of "neo-colonialist" values on the landscape, in which places are considered as an "empty site on which to establish social and psychological projects" (p. 2). This raised questions of what is driving the learning taking place and to what extent outdoor education experiences constitute authentic learning, meaningful in an educational sense, rather than simply a diverting experience (Beames & Brown, 2014, 2016; Roberts, 2005; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Boyes (2012) described these processes as the "dominant and seemingly unstoppable" face of neo-liberal political principles, valuing the free-market, and consumerism, where "people are seen as autonomous choosers constantly consuming, with an emphasis on individualism through personal choice, advantage and responsibility" (p. 35).

A range of scholars have also raised questions regarding the claims of individualised personal development from outdoor activity and adventure participation (e.g. Beames & Brown, 2016; Boyes, 2012; Brookes, 2003a; M. Brown, 2010; Fox, 2008; P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008; Spillman, 2017). With a focus on the individual, experiences are personalised to what any one individual 'got' out of it, extracting personal meaning from what, in reality, are often very social, and very much participatory group situations (Bell, 1993; M. Brown, 2010; Cosgriff & Brown, 2011; Fox, 2008; Seaman, 2007). Outdoor adventurous activities focussed on the personal growth and development of the individual tend to ignore the

socio-cultural context of experience and learning (Bell, 1993; M. Brown, 2009a; Fox, 2008; Seaman, 2007), despite these experiences involving mutuality, camaraderie, support, and assistance (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2009) and what Seaman (2007) describes as “Kinaesthetically mediated collaborative learning” (p. 3). Fox (2008) states that experience is a “complex, constructed reality” open to interpretation, and that outdoor educators too frequently frame the experiences of students by linear, cognitive and verbal processing. In doing so, they erase layers of complexity in the experience and privilege, often unconsciously, a “Euro-North American” and middle class cultural perspective (p. 36).

Bell (1993) similarly identifies that experience is moderated by “socially constructed conventions constituting social relations” (p. 21). Such analysis foregrounds cultural variations of social convention, and the complex interaction of factors that lend experience its individual peculiarities: no two individuals experience the same event in the same way, and a key aspect of the experience is the social (Bell, 1993).

### **2.1.3. *Emergent pedagogies and practices***

Following the critiques of the dominant models of outdoor education that I have just described, a number of emergent pedagogies have developed in response. These emergent pedagogies and practices arose at the end of the 20th century concurrently to challenge conceptualisations of the outdoors as a medium for learning. From here I will discuss three emergent outdoor education approaches that have gained traction in the literature and have been the catalyst for a change in practices in some Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools: Outdoor education for sustainability, place responsive outdoor education, and socio-ecological pedagogies. In addition to these, I will discuss the emergence of culturally responsive pedagogies as a conclusion to the third section of the review of literature.

#### **2.1.3.1. *Education for Sustainability (Efs)***

In the light of serious global environmental issues confronting the planet, some of the focus has been a return to outdoor education’s role in educating about and for

the environment and particularly in terms of sustainability. (e.g. Higgins, 1996; A. Hill, 2008, 2012b, 2013; Irwin, 2008; Lugg, 2007). At the heart of global environmental crises are a set of modern western values, increasingly globalised, that have driven global economic policies and processes for over a century (A. Hill, 2012a; Irwin, 2008). Individualism, rationalism, materialism and consumerism are key elements of this value set, driven by neo-liberal political policies that promote free-market consumerism (Boyes, 2012).

Hill (2012a) and others (for example Cosgriff & Gillespie, 2011; Irwin, 2012) propose EfS as an educational priority employing a critical, socio-ecological pedagogy which challenges students to engage with the imperatives of human induced climate change and environmental damage. EfS presents the environmental crisis as a core concern for outdoor educators as we progress into the 21st century (Irwin, Straker, & Hill, 2012). A number of scholars have made the connection between a focus on place based education and a framework of sustainability through the investment made by programmes of learning in the local environment (A. Hill, 2008, 2012a). Nordström (2008) suggests a close alignment between multicultural education and environmental education, using sustainability as a unifying approach. This presents the potential for threads of sustainability, place and cultural responsiveness to be woven into a cohesive approach, which focuses on local engagement, decolonisation of space, and stewardship of the environments that students experience every day. It could be argued that this perspective already exists, as Nordström (2008) indicates by citing cultural sustainability as one of the four dimensions of sustainability, alongside ecological, economic and social sustainability,

In secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, EfS has provided an opportunity to step away from the dominant adventure based model of outdoor education (A. Hill, 2012a, 2013; Irwin, 2008; Watson, 2012) towards an engagement with place, local culture and principles of sustainability. The adoption of EfS achievement standards has been slow to establish, attributed to their placement within the social sciences domain of NZQA, lack of scaffolding and relative inaccessibility (C. Taylor, 2010). Hence the creative use of the range of

achievement standards that allow broader contexts for learning (Cosgriff & Gillespie, 2011) has been proposed and EfS, while slow to gain traction, affords a substantial opportunity to revise outdoor pedagogy and practice (Irwin, 2008).

### **2.1.3.2. *The importance of connecting with place***

Within the field of outdoor education place-based pedagogies developed at the intersection of outdoor education, environmental education and community orientated schooling (G. A. Smith, 2002; Woodhouse & Knapp, 2000). Gruenewald (2003) challenged educators to bridge the gap between a critical social pedagogy, which was largely urban based, and a place based pedagogy, which was often focussed on places remote to urban populations. Combining a socio-cultural critical approach with an awareness of environmental issues, Gruenewald (2003) argued that educating about place draws the learner into the socio-cultural aspects of the environment, which “interrogates the intersection between urbanization, racism, classism, sexism, environmentalism, global economics, and other political themes” (p. 6). Bowers subsequently questioned the validity of a critical approach to place as it privileges western frameworks of theory and the assumption of a progressive transformation of culture over indigenous conservatism (Bowers, 2008). Penetito, however, (2009) highlighted the potential of place based approaches to encompass a cultural perspective that would embrace both Māori and Pākehā worldviews, but also provide a subversive perspective to “make visible” a politics of identity and location that privileges Pākehā and silences Māori (p. 8). This critique is increasingly relevant given global environmental pressures, and involves both the “decolonisation” of place and the “re-inhabitation” of spaces, and a development of empathy and social action for both places and their inhabitants (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 4). This perspective locates the field of outdoor education as a potential site of transformative action.

Wattchow and Brown’s (2011) case for a place *responsive* pedagogy argues the need for outdoor education activities to not merely be based in a location, but actively responsive to its socio-cultural, ecological and physical features and stories (M. Brown, 2008, 2012a; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). This aligns with Penetito’s (2009) identification for a place based education as a necessary element

in developing culturally responsive pedagogy. An essential aspect of this approach is an exploration of the socio-historical context of the location. Brown (2008, 2012d), Townsend (2011, 2014), Watson (2012) and Taylor (2014) provide examples of programmes attempting to connect participants with cultural elements of the location, and specifically local Māori places of significance (M. Brown, 2008, 2012a, 2012d), achieving a greater alignment between place and culturally responsive pedagogies (Skipworth, 2017).

### **2.1.3.3. A socio-ecological perspective (SE)**

Associated closely with reconnection with place is a re-focusing of outdoor learning on an interaction with the history and specific needs of a location, environment or community. This “allows us to pause or dwell in spaces for more than a fleeting moment and, therefore, encourages us to attach and receive meaning from that place” (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2009, p. 15). Payne describes this as a “slow pedagogy” (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008) or “eco-pedagogy” (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2009) and in essence this means engaging a ‘socio-ecological perspective’ (SE) (M. Brown, 2012a; A. Hill, 2008; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). As Wattchow and Boyes (2014, p. 25) note, an SE educator “begins with sense of attachment to, and therefore desire to sustain, the people, communities and places where they live and work”. An SE approach lends itself to a cross-curricular focus, where “diversity and difference are accommodated and even celebrated” (Wattchow et al., 2014, p. 13), and “encourages you to look past the individuals and appreciate how their relationships with others and the environment influence their thoughts and behaviours” (Wattchow et al., 2014, p. 19). In this way, an SE perspective is inclusive of a cultural identity and allows an exploration of these interactions and influences, and a reciprocal relationship with outdoor environments.

Wattchow and Boyes (Wattchow & Boyes, 2014) laud the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) for the socio-ecological perspective as a foundation for the health and physical education curriculum learning area, because it includes a “commitment to, and infusion of, indigenous knowledge and practices into the nations curriculum” (p.98). However, as noted previously, this

stands in contrast to Māori scholars (Heaton, 2011; Hokowhitu, 2004), who see elements of cultural appropriation in the construction of the document. The decision to exclude the concept of *whenua*<sup>18</sup> and the decolonisation of beliefs and ideas that it should promote, amounts to a marginalisation of significant cultural values that have been at the core of the colonial disenfranchisement of Māori. Despite this, the adoption of the socio-ecological perspective explicitly within the NZC provides for an opportunity to engage in the decolonisation and a re-inhabiting of both place and culture is possible (A. Hill, 2012b).

To summarise, in this section I have considered the development of a dominant but contested and evolving tradition within outdoor education. The Western, Euro-centric and neo-imperialist attitudes and values of this model are being critiqued by educators seeking to connect with place, environmental sustainability and socio-cultural inequalities. It is possible that indigenous conceptions may be a way to bridge the Western dualities inherent in this model by re-conceptualising outdoor education as an inclusive model within a more holistically conceived relationship with the world around us (Spillman, 2017). This will be discussed further in section three. I now turn the reader's attention to the experience of Māori in education.

## **2.2. Section Two: The Experience of Māori in Education**

In this section Māori experiences of education in Aotearoa New Zealand are critically examined. I begin with an exploration of the experience of Māori in formal education in Aotearoa New Zealand in the past and then move to consider contemporary responses to the education gap between Māori and other (Pākehā) learners in the Aotearoa New Zealand education system.

There is a well identified disparity in educational achievement in Aotearoa New Zealand between Māori and Pākehā, and this has been observed for over 50

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<sup>18</sup> *Whenua* is the Māori term for the land, but implicit in the meaning of this word is a metaphysical connection of people to the land of their birth, and hence their identity. This is a core cultural value in Te Ao Māori and reflective of the Te Ao Māori ontologies and epistemological positions.

years (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003; Walker, 2016). Government reports, including the Hunn report (1960) and the Chapple report (1998), identified a significant achievement gap between Māori and non-Māori. Effective measures were few and far between or tended to 'deficit theorise' (Bishop et al., 2003), by attributing the poor academic success of Māori students to socio-economic factors such as low income and domestic deprivation; connection to crime and violence; and predispositions to manual tasks (Hokowhitu, 2003, 2004, 2008). Bishop (1998; 2003) and other proponents of Kaupapa Māori (G. H. Smith, 2000; L. T. Smith, 2012), argued deficit theorising was effectively a form of blaming the victim, and that the origins of the achievement gap were in a system that was racialised and structured so as to retain economic and political power within the hegemony of Western Pākehā society (L. T. Smith, 2012). Education in Aotearoa New Zealand has thus been seen to be "both a powerful colonising tool and, more recently, a site to develop liberation pedagogies for the reclamation of Māori education" (Hutchings & Lee-Morgan, 2016, p. 24).

Upon contact with European technology and materials, Māori were eager for access to European knowledge, and reading and writing were identified early as key tools for engaging in this new world of material wealth and power (Walker, 2016). Initial schools for Māori, established by missionaries amounted to a device to inculcate Christian values and behaviours, to civilise and to impose the missionaries "divine right" to convert the natives from "barbarianism" (Walker, 2016, p. 19). The control of the curriculum by missionaries, limiting learning to religious indoctrination, represented the first in a long history of the use of education as a tool for racial and cultural control, assimilation and marginalisation, furthering the ends of the Pākehā, and limiting those of Māori, with the terms of education prescribed by the colonial government (Walker, 2016).

As state education liberalised, its function became more than just to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills and increasingly to prepare students for a life of work. Successive acts of parliament played a role in a Pākehā agenda for assimilation, reducing the influence of traditional learning and knowledge, and increasingly channelling Māori into a role as a source of manual labour (Hokowhitu,

2008; Walker, 2016). Māori culture and language were progressively displaced and the “genealogy of Māori knowledge was excluded and disqualified as inadequate, low down in the hierarchy of knowledge” (Walker, 2016, p. 29). Māori success in the higher order European educational structures was actively suppressed, and it wasn’t until after World War Two that a wave of university trained Māori graduates began to establish Māori as a course of study in its own right (Walker, 2016).

The establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975, and the gradual recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi<sup>19</sup> in legislation since the 1980s have been significant for Māori (Orange, 2011). While much of the Tribunal’s work has been to assess land claims, recognition in legislation has had the effect of bringing Māori grievance in systemic racial bias to the fore, and education has been no exception (Orange, 2011). The Education Act 1989 explicitly acknowledged the Treaty of Waitangi, and mandated that state-funded educational institutions consult with local communities, including Māori, and mainstream schools were required to provide instruction in Te Reo Māori if parents requested it (Orange, 2011). At a community level, the significance of legislative gains coincided with an equally significant social action, the initiation of *Kōhanga Reo*<sup>20</sup>, and with the success of *Kōhanga*, the development by Māori communities of *Kura Kaupapa Māori*<sup>21</sup>, Te Reo Māori immersion schools and *Wānanga*<sup>22</sup>. Durie (2004) noted the irony that the economic and social reforms of the 1980s that rendered many Māori in low-paid work unemployed, also saw the development of *Kōhanga Reo* and *Kura Kaupapa Māori*, and a resurgence of Māori cultural identity. The significance of *Kura Kaupapa Māori* in education was to allow Māori to achieve a degree of control of the education process, maintaining their interests, aligning education

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<sup>19</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the British crown and Māori Rangatira from around Aotearoa New Zealand. The Māori version, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* is the founding document of New Zealand.

<sup>20</sup>*Kōhanga Reo* translates literally as “language nests”, these were pre-schools established within Māori communities to re-establish the use of Te Reo Māori, and arrest a decline in use.

<sup>21</sup> *Kura* is a transliteration of “school”, *Kaupapa* refers to a Māori way of doing and living. *Kura Kaupapa* are Schools run by Māori, for Māori using Te Ao Māori concepts and teaching in Te reo Māori.

<sup>22</sup> *Wānanga* are schools of specialised learning

again with traditional structures of Whānau, Hapu and Iwi, and, perhaps most significantly, reversing an apparently terminal decline in the use of Te Reo Māori (Durie, 2003) .

In relation to physical education, Hokowhitu (2003, 2004) presents a broad critique of well-meaning efforts by Pākehā educational leaders to incorporate aspects of Māoritanga into classroom learning. These include *Taha Māori*<sup>23</sup>, an Education department initiative launched in 1975 aimed at “integrating Māori culture into the philosophy, the organisation and the content of the school” (cited in Hokowhitu, 2003); and *Te Reo Kori*<sup>24</sup>, written into the 1987 Physical Education Syllabus to reflect this. Hokowhitu (2004, p. 74) describes these efforts as “tokenistic...simplistic and lacking context”. Palmer (2000) supports this with her finding that Te Reo Kori was more beneficial to Pākehā students, than to Maori already well-versed in *Kapa Haka*<sup>25</sup> and *Tikanga*<sup>26</sup>, and that Māori students could feel “*whakamā*<sup>27</sup>” about the experience, inhibiting involvement and undermining any well-meant intent.

### **2.2.1. *Te Kotahitanga, Ka Hikitia and Kia Eke Panuku: the path to culturally responsive pedagogy***

As *Kaupapa Māori*<sup>28</sup> as a research methodology gained traction, through the work of scholars such as G.H. Smith, L.T. Smith, Mason Durie and Russell Bishop (L. T. Smith, 2011), Māori scholars sought answers to the achievement gap, and Kaupapa Māori methodologies provided a position from which to research the issue by Māori, for Māori and with Māori. Kaupapa Māori methodology underpinned the *Te Kotahitanga* project, followed in turn by *Kia Eke Panuku* (KEP) and this led to widespread professional development for teachers to promote the

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<sup>23</sup> *Taha Māori* is the Māori side, or māori identity applied here as the name for an educational initiative to introduce aspects of Te Ao Māori into education.

<sup>24</sup> *Te reo Kori* (‘the language of movement’) or *Te Ao Kori* (‘the world of movement’) are physical education practices incorporating Te Ao Māori traditions and contexts.

<sup>25</sup> *Kapa Haka* includes Māori performance arts such as *Haka* (posture dance), *Poi* and *Waiata* (songs).

<sup>26</sup> *Tikanga* are customs, conventions, protocols and cultural practices.

<sup>27</sup> *Whakamā* is a term for embarrassment.

<sup>28</sup> *Kaupapa Māori* is a Māori approach, customary practice or agenda, and can be described as a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society.

implementation of culturally responsive pedagogies across Aotearoa New Zealand. For Durie (2007, p. 13), a move to culturally responsive teaching and learning presents “the prospect of an integrated pedagogy where indigenous knowledge interfaces with science and global educational theory.” Additionally, Durie (2004) identified five themes for ensuring Māori achievement in learning, including: positive relationships with teachers, peers and whānau; an enthusiasm for learning; balanced expectations of outcomes; a focus on preparing for the future; and the freedom to learn as Māori. These characterise a culturally responsive pedagogy for Māori.

Hattie (2003, 2009) and Alton-Lee (2003) identified teachers as the single largest determinant of a child’s success in education. Alton Lee (2003), in a national ‘best evidence’ study, analysed teaching practice and identified concerns related to teachers’ ability to form relationships with their students and their cultural backgrounds. Similarly, the early findings of the *Te Kotahitanga* research project (Bishop et al., 2003) led to the development of the “Effective Teacher profile” (ETP), which required the implementation of a programme of teacher professional development, and school-wide support systems to be in place (Bishop, Berryman, Powell, & Teddy, 2007; Bishop et al., 2003).

*Te Kotahitanga* is particularly notable and relevant for this study as the findings from the early work of this project were largely based on data collected with Māori students within Secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand (Bishop et al., 2003). The recognition that teachers attributed educational achievement in different ways than students, parents and principals, and that solutions to educational disparity and disengagement could be identified by the students in ways that the teachers themselves failed to conceptualise (Bishop et al., 2003) further emphasises the importance of student voice in establishing a culturally responsive approach to outdoor education. For the student participants in the *Te Kotahitanga* research, relationships with teachers were central to their narratives of achievement, particularly in terms of expectations of achievement, negative stereotyping and recognition of their identity as Māori (Bishop et al., 2003).

The *Te Kotahitanga* professional development programme, aimed at improving elements of teaching that were identified in the ETP as benefitting Māori students, spawned a decade of research into what was described as a “culturally responsive pedagogy of relations” (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, et al., 2007, p. 2). At the conclusion of the project significant gains in student achievement were reported in schools at phase 5 of the project, including achievement rates for Māori comparable with national averages, higher rates of re-enrolment and retention in senior secondary schooling, and higher levels of achievement at NCEA level 3 (Alton Lee, 2015).

In 2008 The Ministry of Education launched *Ka Hikitia*<sup>29</sup> – *Managing for Success* (Ministry of Education, 2009b), an update and revision of the Maori education strategy that was significant in its shift to a “Māori potential approach”, focussing on providing “the context for a shift in attitudes, thinking and practice required to achieve significant improvements in Māori educational outcomes” (p. 19). This strategy was revised in 2013 to *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating success* (Ministry of Education, 2013b), with a commitment to developing “quality provision, leadership, teaching and learning” and “strong engagement and contributions from parents, Whānau, Hapū, Iwi, Māori organisations, communities and businesses” (p. 6). Both strategies targeted the relationship between teacher and student, and addressed cultural bias and discrimination in classroom practices (Bishop, Berryman, Powell, et al., 2007). At the same time, the Ministry of Education, working with the Teachers Council of New Zealand<sup>30</sup>, produced *Tataiako* (2011, 2016b) to assist teachers in adopting culturally responsive practices, which focussed on competencies that assist “Māori learners achieving education success as Māori”, including the importance of teacher-learner relationships, the importance of identity and language, and the role of parents and whānau in education (Ministry of Education, 2016b, p. 1). This focus places the onus on teachers to develop cultural competencies that support Māori as

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<sup>29</sup> *Ka Hikitia* means to ‘step up’ or ‘lengthen the stride’.

<sup>30</sup> The Teachers Council of New Zealand was replaced with the Education Council of New Zealand (ECNZ) in 2016. *Tataiako* was re-released in 2016 by the ECNZ in partnership with the Ministry of Education to align with teacher competencies for teacher registration.

Māori within the Aotearoa New Zealand education system and linked these competencies with teacher registration requirements. This signal from the Ministry of Education constitutes a considerable commitment to developing the cultural competencies of educators.

The Auditor General's (Controller and Auditor General, 2013) concerns relating to the implementation of *Ka Hikitia* led to the development of *Kia Eke Panuku*<sup>31</sup> (Berryman & Eley, 2017). KEP was a Ministry of Education funded initiative implemented from 2013 to 2016 to develop culturally responsive pedagogies in schools across Aotearoa New Zealand and facilitate the implementation of *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating success* (Ministry of Education 2013b). A consortium led by the University of Waikato delivered a professional learning and development (PLD) model throughout secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand, drawing on recent research into culturally responsive pedagogy, including *Te Kotahitanga*. This gave emphasis to the relationship between teachers and learners, the use of Te Reo Māori, and the contexts in which learning was presented.

KEP facilitated change within schools that centred on connecting schools with Māori communities, enhancing teacher –student relationships and engaging teaching staff with culturally responsive pedagogies. A number of examples of student voice contributed in the initial stages of the project provide a broad view of ways in which Māori students view success in secondary education, including a need for teachers to support the identity of Māori students, and to maintain high expectations of learning (Kia Eke Panuku, n.d.). The “respectful use of student and whānau voice” is one of the key elements of the Te Kotahitanga model for improvement (Alton Lee, 2015, p. 33; Bishop, Berryman, & Wearmouth, 2014). Milne (2013) describes the process of accommodating the voice of students and whānau as colouring in the “white space” of Western academic traditions, and

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<sup>31</sup> A Ministry of Education funded programme. *Kia Eke Panuku: Building on success* involved 93 secondary schools across Aotearoa New Zealand.

working to establish an alternative to “whitestream” schooling, “to make learning equitable for indigenous and minoritised learners” (p. vi).

Bishop and Berryman (2010) describe the reform required of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand to be “both extendable and sustainable” (p.7), to expand beyond enclaves of success, to be enacted across multiple levels (the classroom, the school and the system), and to be supported by infrastructure. Berryman, Eley, Ford and Egan (2015) argue that reform must be led by transformative leaders who are driven by both the moral imperative to change and a keen sense of urgency to see this happen in our schools for Māori students and their home communities. A number of scholars agree that systemic change requires a decolonisation not just of the minds of the student, but also that of the educators and the act of teaching (Bishop et al., 2014; Bishop, Berryman, Wearmouth, Peter, & Clapham, 2011; Hokowhitu, 2004). These ideas are echoed in the outdoor education context by Legge (2012), who encourages educators who wish to be bicultural to “take responsibility for including tikanga Māori in outdoor teaching and learning contexts”, incorporate understandings of the treaty of Waitangi and the effects of colonisation, and to be willing to understand their own “cultural horizons and identity” while “accepting the limits of their cultural competence” (p.143).

In this section of the review of literature I focussed on education as it has influenced Māori experiences and recent initiatives across the education sector to reduce the ‘achievement gap’. I now extend this to explore how outdoor educators have begun to reconceptualise practices towards a culturally responsive pedagogy of outdoor education.

### **2.3. Section Three: Towards a culturally responsive pedagogy**

I begin this section with a broader discussion of the experience of adolescents in outdoor education and then discuss some of the research into the experience of students and teachers in outdoor education, at a secondary level in

Aotearoa New Zealand. I conclude the section by presenting current movements to incorporate a cultural responsive pedagogy into outdoor education.

### ***2.3.1. Students' experiences and perspectives in outdoor education***

Brown (2012d) argues that insufficient attention has been given to student perspectives in outdoor education, and this is supported by Zink (2005) who questions the credibility often given to students voice, arguing that even apparently flippant comments made by secondary school students in outdoor education can be revealing about their experiences as well as the complexities and contradictions of “tacit assumptions” that underlie outdoor education programmes and experiences. Payne (2002) argues that teenage peer influences on experience and decision-making have been misunderstood and misrepresented. Bell (1993) identifies that experience is moderated by “socially constructed conventions constituting social relations” (p.21) and that the meanings and ‘learning’ ascribed to an experience are contestable, but “... always contextual and specific.” (p. 19). Such analysis foregrounds cultural variations of social convention, and the complex interaction of factors that lend experience its individual peculiarities: no two individuals experience the same event in the same way, and a key aspect of the experience is the social (Bell, 1993).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC, 1989)<sup>32</sup> promotes the inclusion of the voice of children in social policy development. This includes the right to have an opinion and for that opinion to be heard, and rights to be informed about and participate in the achievement of their rights (Ministry of Social Development). One impact of the UNCROC has been an increasing number of qualitative studies directly with children and youth (M. Hill, 2006; Valentine, 1999). A number of scholars have similarly noted the need for student voice in outdoor education research (E.g. M. Brown, 2012d; Campbell-Price, 2012; Cosgriff et al., 2012; Zink, 2005), and this is particularly true of Māori. Adolescents, despite making up a significant proportion of the focus of outdoor

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<sup>32</sup> Ratified by New Zealand in 1993, all United Nations member states except the US and Somalia have ratified this convention.

education provision, have been under-researched (Watson, 2016; Whittington, 2006). Following calls from Lynch (2005, 2012) for further research into student experiences, there has been a steady development of research into this area within Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly over the past decade.

Adolescence is both a period of development and challenge for individuals as they negotiate the transition to adulthood, and many outdoor educators identify this as a key period in which outdoor education can play a meaningful role (McNatty, 2016; Sammett, 2010). A growing body of research focussing on gender, adolescence and the outdoors presents evidence that outdoor contexts, and particularly extended courses in the outdoors assists girls in developing confidence, identity (McNatty, 2014), resilience (Whittington, Aspelmeier, & Budbill, 2016), courage (Whittington & Nixon Mack, 2010), relational skills (Sammett, 2010) and to challenge dominant gendering of outdoor spaces and activities (Watson, 2016; Whittington, 2006). Watson's (2016) exploration of the experience of girls in secondary outdoor education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand identified a range of benefits of outdoor education for young women including a space to develop identity, personal competency, and connection with others. This research highlighted areas where gender continues to distinguish the experiences of male and female participants, and in which the masculine identification with the field continues to be privileged and prioritised.

Brown (2008, 2012a, 2012d), Townsend (2011, 2014) and Taylor (2014) present student responses to journeying in the local and storying place as place responsive pedagogy. Adolescents in these studies reported a greater connection with their local areas and communities, and an appreciation for their own and others' personal history. Beames and Atencio (2008) describe these connections with community as building "Social capital", a term used to describe a measure of the "quality and aggregation of social relationships that exist within and amongst communities" (p. 99). Social capital offers the opportunity for a "bridging" of disparate groups within a community, and can be significant in allowing adolescents access to the wider community network. Taylor (2014, p. 29) utilises

this idea in adding “a focus on community” to Wattchow and Brown’s (2011) signposts of place responsive pedagogy.

McNatty’s (2014, 2016) research found that a 28-day outdoor residential course for adolescent girls significantly altered the social dynamics of the group and affected girls’ learning and attitudes in the short and long term, including positive relationships with others and with nature. This change in social dynamics has been proposed by Smith, Steel and Gidlow (2010) to accord with Slater’s concept of ‘temporary community’. Temporary community describes the “short term, sharply delineated duration of residential camps and the sense of community that can result even in a relatively brief time” (p.137). Camps have a context quite different to the classroom, where “social alliances and hierarchies change in response to the demands of the environment and the activities taking place within it” (p. 137).

Another of Smith et al’s (2010, pp. 143-144) findings indicate that school camps are perceived as “fun”, “socially interactive” and “different”: “Camp was a fun experience primarily because it was a good social experience that afforded students opportunities to spend time with - and to interact with – peers in a novel context” (p. 143). This is supported by Zink and Burrows (2008, p. 258) who identify “in-between activities” as a meaningful space for adolescents experiencing the outdoors, and Brown (2012d) who found that opportunities for social interaction and working with peers were regarded as important by the students experiencing a place responsive journey. Camps and outdoor education activities present novel contexts, but Smith et al indicate the primary effect of this is to enable and initiate relationships. These findings have similarities to Davidson (2001), who identified students’ enjoyment of overcoming challenge; the development of confidence and mental strength, and the freedom of choice as the key features of outdoor education in their secondary school.

Novelty, or the appreciation of the outdoors as different, is a theme that recurs within research about adolescent experiences. Zink and Burrows (2008, p. 253) position this at the centre of the discourses about the place and efficacies of

outdoor education, stating, “the educative power of outdoor education resides in this relationship of difference as much as it does in what the outdoors ‘is’”. The outdoors as places and space are not neutral or empty, but are “over inscribed with meanings” (Zink & Burrows, 2008, p. 256), and these scholars question whether universalising this notion of difference or novel experience in outdoor settings actually obscures the “range and variety of experiences children bring with them to school and the different meanings they will ascribe to their experience outdoors” (p. 255). For Māori students this may present as a failure on the part of an educator to recognise or validate Māori values and cultural practices in the outdoors, or a failure to understand nuances within the personal experiences of individuals.

### ***2.3.2. Developing culturally responsive practice in outdoor education***

The values and practices of the dominant model of outdoor education in Aotearoa New Zealand, described earlier in this chapter contrast with Te Ao Māori values and practices (M. Brown & Heaton, 2015), particularly the focus on the development of the individual and a disconnection from place and cultural identity. The dominant model is challenged by a Te Ao Māori perspective, in which the individual, their actions and reciprocal responsibilities connect them to not only living relatives but also both ancestors and descendants yet to be born, to whenua and to the ‘more than human’ environment around them (Walker, 1992, 2016). Brown and Heaton (2015, p. 56) also note that “indigenous ways of knowing have maintained that spirit, mind and body are not separated in experience, that learning is more focussed on being than doing, and experiential knowledge is produced within the collective, not the individual mind”

Skipworth (2017, p. 114) notes that “there is a clear need for greater representation of Māori students’ experiences in mainstream outdoor education settings”. This is supported by Brown and Heaton (2015, p. 56) who suggest that “more attention be placed on the connection between people and places, and the intimate connection between learning, identity and the land” and that we must be responsive to “other ways of knowing that differ from the dominant paradigm

in which they may have been educated”. In a Te Ao Māori perspective, both place and social relationships are central to experience and learning (M. Brown & Heaton, 2015; Metge, 2015; Penetito, 2009) and a connection with the natural environment is a constant engagement with whakapapa<sup>33</sup> (Heke, 2016).

Traditionally these connections helped explain and confirm the cosmogony that supported their view of the world (Salmond, 2014). Far from a masculine domain, journeys into the outdoors were shared by male and female (Brailsford, 1984), and both masculine and feminine elements of the environment connected the individual by whakapapa to places. Gendering and personalising of place is a feature of Te Ao Māori and this is evident in the centrality of Papa-tū-ā-nuku<sup>34</sup>, the earth mother to Te Ao Māori cosmologies<sup>35</sup>, and many features of the landscape such as prominent peaks that represent (usually male) ancestral individuals, such as Aoraki<sup>36</sup> (Department of Conservation). The effect of a Te Ao Māori perspective of place is to invite a relationship with the landscape and to recognise the connection, by whakapapa, of everything in the place (Heke, 2016).

Scholars from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand have established clear links between a sense of place and indigenous ways of knowing (see for example M. Brown, 2008; P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008; Penetito, 2009; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). A culturally responsive pedagogy implies place related identity (M. Brown, 2008; 2015; Park, 1996) and includes the stories of places, and an engagement with the way we have cultured, or sometimes de-cultured places (Slattery, 2001). By exploring the place, a native, or indigene, is exploring an aspect of themselves, and of their identity (M. Brown, 2008; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Penetito, 2009; G. A. Smith, 2002; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). Developing a familiarity with the

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<sup>33</sup> *Whakapapa* – a genealogical connection.

<sup>34</sup> *Papatūānuku*, the earth mother is at the head of most Māori whakapapa, and most features of te Ao Māori whakapapa to Papatūānuku.

<sup>35</sup> Te Ao Māori consists of a number of traditions. In many of these Papatūānuku partners Ranginui at the head of the whakapapa for all of creation. In some Ngāi Tahu traditions, this union was between Papatūānuku and Tangaroa, Atua of the ocean.

<sup>36</sup> *Aoraki* features in the Ngāi Tahu Cosmology as a son of Raki-nui, the sky father, whose *waka* foundered during a storm. The *Waka* became the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, “Te waka o raki”, and Aoraki (Mount Cook) became the highest peak of te-Tiri-o-moana (The Southern Alps).

outdoors, Penetito (2009) suggests, helps an individual understand who they are, *where* they have come from, and what they exist for.

A growing number of practitioners have demonstrated diverse, locally focussed and culturally driven examples of culturally responsive practice. In the last decade a number of research projects in Aotearoa New Zealand have focussed on place and its connection to culturally located pedagogies (e.g. M. Brown, 2008, 2012b, 2012d; C. Taylor, 2014; Townsend, 2011, 2014). Taylor (2014) identifies stories, the sensual aspects of experience and the development of community as key aspects of a place responsive approach, and incorporated Māori stories, history and community personalities in his outdoor programming. Townsend (2011, 2014) and Brown (2012d) also explored a place based programme with secondary students, and made strong connections between a place responsive programme and Māori contexts, content and values, and the potential for the engagement of Māori learners with this approach.

Further examples of culturally responsive practice include Ockwell (2012) utilising *Waka ama*<sup>37</sup> as a context for learning about “*Māoritanga*”<sup>38</sup>; Phillips and Mita (2016), who present the voluntary engagement of tertiary students in river estuary care; and Taylor (2014) who uses pest eradication and trapping as a basis for a partnership programme called *Papa Taiao Earthcare*, utilising expertise of local *Kaumatua*<sup>39</sup>. Campbell-Price (2012) presents integrated, multi-disciplinary practices in the example of a Science Wānanga for Māori students in which students participate in a two to three day experiential programme utilising a combination of mainstream science, presented by tertiary students; and *mātauranga Māori*<sup>40</sup>, provided by Kaumatua and Māori Tertiary students. This combination of scientific traditions creates an “intercultural” space in which to engage Māori who were otherwise disengaged due to “literacy... relevance and

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<sup>37</sup> *Waka Ama* is outrigger canoeing

<sup>38</sup> The term *Māoritanga* is a term that has been widely used to describe the body of knowledge, tikanga and practices of Māori. See the Glossary for a fuller description

<sup>39</sup> A *Kaumatua* is a respected Māori elder, often well versed in Traditional Māori knowledge and values, who provides both support and leadership.

<sup>40</sup> *Mātauranga Māori* is Māori Knowledge, the body of knowledge originating from Māori Ancestors, including the Māori worldview and perspectives, Māori creativity and cultural practices.

context... and stereotypes” (Campbell-Price, 2012, p. 90). These snapshots of culturally responsive outdoor education are a response to calls for more exploration and implementation of programmes that reflect the bicultural character of the New Zealand school system (M. Brown, 2013; A. Hill, 2008, 2010; Skipworth, 2017). Legge (2012, p. 144) challenges outdoor educators to “adopt more persuasive ways for the inclusion of Māori culture, by building ...partnerships with local hapū and Iwi” allowing students to “experience first-hand the diverse realities of māori, and the cultural significance of their lives”.

## **2.4. Chapter Summary**

McLeod, Brown and Hapeta (2011) point to three principles of the treaty that relate to educational involvement: Partnership, participation and protection. Culturally responsive outdoor education, based in partnership with local Māori, and incorporating Māori values and practices contrasts with the dominant model of adventure based outdoor education where the teacher or instructor controls and manipulates the conditions and learning outcomes. A partnership with Māori involves identifying Māori resources in the community that can be drawn on to create a dialogue of information, knowledge and operating this exchange in a reciprocal and equal relationship (Berryman, Ford, & Egan, 2015). This approach, applied in outdoor education, aligns closely with the emergent approaches of place responsiveness and education for sustainability, and the synergies that lie in this intersection have a dramatic potential to re-frame outdoor education practice.

The opportunities for decolonising learning in outdoor education are significant, because of its basis in taking learning into the field, and providing experiential learning activities. Experiences of student participants in outdoor education programmes have been underrepresented in the research literature, and this is particularly true of Māori perspectives. A culturally responsive approach to outdoor education has immense potential, but there remains an imperative to examine the needs and aspirations of Māori students in outdoor education from their own perspectives.

## Chapter Three

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### Tikanga rangahau: Methods

This research study is a qualitative investigation into the experiences, perceptions and attitudes of Māori students of outdoor education within a secondary education programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. In this chapter I introduce the theoretical framework of the research by discussing qualitative, interpretative and phenomenological research using a culturally responsive methodology (CRM). Following this I examine research with adolescents and indigenous youth, particularly as it relates to the outdoors and environmental education, tying in the culturally responsive design of the research project. The next sections of the chapter detail the use of focus groups for data collection, discuss the choice of this method, its application, issues of recruitment, implementation and data management. The chapter concludes with detail of how data analysis was conducted, and a discussion of the limitations of the study.

#### 3.1. Research questions

There were three primary research questions guiding the study: 1. what are Māori students' experiences of a secondary school outdoor education programme?; 2. What do Māori students' perspectives and experiences in a secondary outdoor education programme in Aotearoa New Zealand indicate about the extent that Outdoor Education practice is consistent with culturally responsive pedagogies?; 3. What are the implications of a culturally responsive outdoor education for existing programmes of learning in 'The School'?

Within each research question secondary questions of inquiry included identifying learning activities students have experienced that are memorable, positive and educative to them as Māori; identifying the barriers to their learning and achievement in outdoor education that they have experienced as Māori; and identifying course content and activities these students would like to see included in outdoor education programmes that would support Māori students' expression of their cultural identity within outdoor education.

## **3.2. Theoretical framework**

The research is based in a social constructivist and interpretative epistemology and ontology where meanings are constructed through social interaction and transmission, and the role of the researcher is to interpret these meanings and their implications. In a social constructivist approach, meanings are linked to a socially shaped personal identity (Cohen, Mannion, & Morrison, 2007). The research in this study focused on the “unique and the particular” of the individual case rather than the “general and universal” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 8), and on an “empathetic understanding of human action” (Bryman, 2016, p. 26). Data will be analysed thematically, and as such the study was interpretative as I brought to bear my own lens of understanding on the perceptions and experiences of the participants. A challenge here relates to the need to reflect accurately the meanings that the participants represent, while summarising the range of opinions and perspectives presented. It is at this point that a high degree of reflexivity was required, in order to understand how my own subjectivities affected the analytic process.

This study was phenomenological in nature because it sought to explore the lived experiences of the participants, aiming to describe and understand the essence of lived experiences of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2010; Lichtman, 2013). Van Manen (1990) describes phenomenological inquiry as a process of describing “how one orients to the lived experience” (p.4) and, as a researcher, employing hermeneutics in order to interpret the “texts of life” (p.5). The perceptions and experiences of the participants potentially hold critical understandings that may present opportunities for changes to practice, which is the second objective of the inquiry.

### **3.2.1. *Culturally Responsive Methodologies***

In conducting this research study I was guided by culturally responsive methodologies (CRM). As a Pākehā researcher, focussing on Māori experiences, I approached this study aware of my position of privilege as a white male teacher,

prompting me to seek a culturally responsive approach. Berryman, SooHoo and Nevin (2013) connect culturally responsive methods with culturally responsive pedagogy as a “conceptual companion” (p.5), and this seemed to be a natural fit for the goals of the study.

CRM are not a specific method or theoretical approach, rather a position taken from the belief that research is a culturally contested field which has marginalised non-western epistemologies, and assisted in perpetuating culturally dominant ways of understanding the world (Berryman et al., 2013; L. T. Smith, 2012). Smith (2012), for example, describes research as “...an institution of knowledge that is embedded in a global system of imperialism and power” (p. i). CRM in response to this is described by Berryman et al. (2013) as originating in “an alternative, naturalistic paradigm from which to achieve socially responsible research outcomes for minoritised groups” (p.2). Smith’s (2012) contention is that the positivist position of professional detachment of the researcher in order to maintain objectivity is an element in the colonial construction of knowledge that categorises and appropriates knowledge, defining ‘the Other’ in opposition to the core western values of the coloniser. In culturally responsive methodologies this distance is dismantled, and connections between the researcher and the participants of research are reinforced by mutual understanding (Berryman et al., 2013).

Berryman et al (2013) position culturally responsive research as “situated practice” (p.2), that is “consciously and conscientiously focused on researching how [the] participants [make] meaning” (pp. 2-3). CRM challenges research paradigms that “devalue or dehumanise research participants” and encourages “a research stance where establishing respectful relationships with participants is central to both human dignity and the research” (Berryman et al. 2013, p. 1). By focussing on participants’ perceptions and sense-making, the aims of this study are aligned with CRM in amplifying a voice that may otherwise go unheard, and presenting the perspective of Māori youth in outdoor education, that has been under-represented in research.

Berryman et al (2013) make the point that “being culturally responsive requires the researcher to develop contexts within which the researched community can define, in their own ways, the terms for engaging, relating and interacting in the co-creation of new knowledge” (p. 4). A culturally responsive approach reflects a commitment to a reciprocal and dialogical exchange between researcher and participants (Berryman et al., 2013). Berryman et al (2013) term this the “Responsive Dialogic Space”, indicating a space in which a “relationship of trust and respect [is] nurtured among both parties” (p. 37). It was with this intent that focus groups were selected as a data gathering method.

Berryman et al propose five principles that help to create this space within a culturally responsive research project (pp. 22-23). The first is to be prepared to “learn from multiple sources”, and to come to know the person or group that the researcher intends to work with. The second principle applies to bringing the “authentic self” (p. 22) to the research setting, including subjectivities and “positionalities” (p. 22), and to allow the researched to know the researcher. The third principle relates to bringing “a relational and dialogical consciousness” (p. 23) to the encounter, which means to engage as a person before engaging as a professional; and to be upfront about research intentions, listen, and be flexible to change according the requirements of the research participants. The fourth principle is about enacting on-going critical reflection on the relationships, the benefits accruing from the research, being open to a new relational consciousness and ensuring the co-construction of the research. Finally, as the research concludes, the researcher must assess the shared relationships and agreements established through the process, and ensure the relationships and responsibilities developed within the research remain active.

There are a number of ways in which this study is deficient as a culturally responsive research project. Berryman et al. (2013) suggest three distinctions of culturally responsive methodologies over “traditional methodology”: the research is co-constructed with the participants; the methods are consciously and collectively shaped; and the methods and lines of inquiry are expected to change as the research progresses and participants and researcher become better

acquainted (Berryman et al., 2013, p. 19). This study lacked a full involvement of participants in the design of the key research questions, the methods employed, or the lines of questioning.

A number of factors contributed to this, including the requirements of master's research and ethical considerations that ask for a detailed proposal of the intended research activity, including research questions, methods and ethical procedures prior to engaging participants; the timing of the study in relation to a working school; and the limited experience I have as a researcher to negotiate some of the complexities of this situation. CRM would support the engagement of participants earlier in the research design process. In this study, in order to ensure the cultural needs and ethical concerns of the participants, the proposal for the research was discussed with management and teaching staff at 'The School' prior to initiating recruitment. Ideally this process should have included the students themselves, indicating ways in which they themselves would want to be heard. *Kaiārahi*<sup>41</sup> (this role is further described later in this chapter) were consulted to confirm the proposal, but had a limited role in the research design.

In the final event this study is rooted in conventional research practice, where I, as the researcher, set the parameters of the research and in doing so distance participants from a truly dialogic role that would see them take a hands-on and co-creative part in the formation of knowledge about themselves. As such, while I have attempted to adhere as closely to the spirit of culturally responsive methodology, this study is positioned as an exploratory inquiry to scope perspectives of a population that has been under-represented in research to date. It is hoped that from this further collaborative research may result.

### **3.2.2. Research with Youth**

This study is focussed on teenage students, aged between fifteen and nineteen years. In this age bracket, participants are in transition from childhood to adulthood. Personal values and meanings are in a stage of development characterised by increasingly personal ownership and identification, often

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<sup>41</sup> *Kaiārahi* in the research context are cultural advisors. For more on the role see pages 46-47.

mediated by a combination of family, peer and educational influence (M. Payne, 2002). Youth participants have a number of characteristics that call for careful consideration in research. One of these characteristics is the tendency of teenagers to operate in social clusters where social cohesion is an important factor (Mirkin & Middleton, 2014). Shared meanings of teenage experiences are constructed socially (Bell, 1993; Zink, 2005) and the research design reflected this by using focus groups to explore outdoor education experiences with peers who shared similar (or the same) experiences. Also, individual interviews can be confrontational and awkward for participants in this age category, as they lack some of the social independence of adults. Group interviews offer the participants a more comfortable and social situation in which they can support and contrast each other's contributions (Gibson, 2012). As I discuss below, the choice to use focus groups was centred on the needs and concerns of my participants, in this case teenage students, for whom other techniques may have been more intimidating, and uncomfortable (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

### **3.2.3. Focus Groups**

Developed out of 'non-directive' and 'focussed' group interviews, focus groups are designed to remove researcher bias from rigid interview questions. This data gathering method is useful in cross-cultural research, or with very specific groups whose opinions about a specific issue or phenomenon are required and when used appropriately, can be an empowering process for both researchers and participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The purpose of focus groups is to "promote a comfortable atmosphere of disclosure in which people are able to share their ideas, experiences and attitudes about a topic" (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 23).

Focus groups are therefore a natural fit with CRM, where the dialogue and voice of the research participants, and reduced control and intervention of the researcher over the discussion, are important (Berryman et al., 2013). A responsive questioning structure allows space for participants' views and opinions, promotes dialogue and interaction, and allows a dynamic element to the flow of

ideas and perspectives (Berryman et al., 2013). I opted for this research method as it has been argued that focus groups are less intimidating than one-on one interviews and, moreover, have the potential to be supportive for those in attendance (Williams & Katz, 2001). Focus groups are also useful to elicit participants' feelings, attitudes and values about a particular topic, through conversations and interactivity, and research participants are able to control the information and perceptions they provide (Williams & Katz, 2001). Open sharing of personal points of view occurs most readily where participants have something in common, which is emphasised in the process of the interview; and in which the interviewer, often called the moderator, is not in a position of power or influence within the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

Kitzinger (1994) argues that one of the features of focus groups distinguishing this method from other qualitative methods is the potential for dialogue between participants, and that this feature is rich in potential for producing data. However, this is also a potential weakness of the method, with Markova, Linnell and Grossen (2007, p. 66) stating that "focus-group discussions are not free from the social asymmetries, power relationships, alliances, coalitions, etc. that might be observed in any group". Dialogue includes more than just verbal expression and analysis of interactions, both verbal and non-verbal, can expose power relationships within the interaction between individuals, self and the issue at hand (Markova et al., 2007). Participants 'influence and are influenced', while researchers also play various roles including that of moderator, listener and observer (Krueger & Casey, 2015)

Krueger and Casey (2015) identify a number of considerations for teenage focus groups including the age range, the influence of friends, the length of the focus group and the ability of the moderator to connect with the age group. Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook (2007) suggest restricting the age range of participants in order to encourage better group cohesion, so in my study the focus groups were composed of students in similar year bands. Other suggestions adopted in this study were the use of food (e.g. pizza, snacks and juice suggested by Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson, 2002), interactive activities to shift the

focus, and encouragement from me as the moderator for participants to discuss issues openly, present opposing ideas and be honest (D. W. Stewart et al., 2007).

The ideal size of a focus group is a balance between obtaining a range of ideas, perceptions and opinions, and giving participants space to speak (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Too small a group and the range of perspectives will be limited; too large a group and participants will not have an opportunity to voice their ideas. Focus group sizes can vary but the final size should reflect the needs of the participants and the sensitivity of the topic under discussion (Bloor et al., 2002; Kitinger, 1994; Krueger & Casey, 2015). Several focus groups are required to allow for comparison of data and to obtain acceptable theoretical saturation (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

Despite the utility of the focus group method to this study, there are some inherent weaknesses in this method. Krueger and Casey (2015) present some important issues, including the tendency of participants to intellectualise issues, such that they do not respond to questions as they might in 'real life'; the limited degree to which focus groups tap into emotions that come into play in decision-making; participants may make up answers instead of admitting to a lack of knowledge; and dominant individuals can sway the conversation and responses of other group participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

### **3.3. Recruitment and Focus group organisation**

In this study I sought a broad range of perspectives from Māori students of outdoor education who could share their stories and experiences and 37 potential participants were identified through class rolls and discussions with Kaiārahi (refer to table 1, page 43). Given this, three to five focus groups were planned, with three to eight participants in each group. Homogeneity of groups was a factor in selecting which students would be grouped into particular focus groups.

An important element of the research process, in accessing Māori students, was utilising established relationships with students and the learning community. Participants were sought who currently or recently (last 12 months) had

participated in Outdoor Education courses at 'The School'. The participants ranged in age from 15 to 19 years, and were in years 11 to 13 at 'The School', or had recently left or graduated. Participants identified with a range of Māori iwi, with most identifying multiple iwi and roughly half of the students identified with the local *mana whenua*<sup>42</sup>, Ngai Tahu.

To recruit participants I approached students individually at 'The School' using purposive sampling (Bryman, 2016) where participants were targeted from outdoor education class lists to ensure variety in both age and experience, and to obtain male and female perspectives. This involved an approach to students in class times arranged with the teacher to minimise disruption. These meetings took place outside the classroom and the purpose of the meeting was only indicated to the individuals concerned. For the purposes of this study, students identified on the school roll as Māori were approached, and those who consented to being involved in the study expressly as Māori, were recruited. Some of those who participated expressed discomfort at identifying solely with their Māori ancestry. Confidentiality procedures were explained in detail at this point to allay any concerns.

In addition to current school students, a group of former outdoor education students of 'The School' were identified from the previous year's class lists and contacted by phone and email. These contact details were obtained from 'The School', or through informal networks (word of mouth). These participants had been taught by me for a number of years while at the school, and the personal relationship was an important factor in recruitment. Senior or past students were chosen as participants due to their ability to think abstractly and to make links between cause and effect (MacDonald et al., 2011). Senior students also had more extensive experience in outdoor education programmes to draw on, under a range of teachers, which potentially provided a rich data source.

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<sup>42</sup> Mana Whenua are the tribal grouping who have recognised *rangatiratanga* (tribal sovereignty and responsibility) over a geographical area

Upon completing an initial series of three focus groups with these senior classes, I decided to approach students who had experienced the junior outdoor education programme, but not opted to take the subject further. While this group had less experience to draw upon, I considered it necessary to cover the range of experience of Māori students, as those choosing the senior options were clearly engaged and positive about the subject area. Five focus groups were ultimately established, totalling 15 individuals (see Table 1).

Table 1: Composition of focus groups

Group	Year level	Number approached	Number recruited	Attending focus group	Members (pseudonyms)
FG1	11 OE	6	6	3	Kara, Hana, Tiana
FG2	Ex students	7	5	2	Whiri, Anaru
FG3	12 OE	9	7	4	Rāwiri, Ariki, Kāhu, Hemi
FG4	11 (10OE)	8	6	3	Tāwhiri, Tamati, Nikau
FG5	11 (10OE)	7	6	3	Tui, Aroha, Mere
Total		37	30	15	

In each group, a number of students who had indicated an intent to attend were ‘no-shows’ (see Table 1), reflecting a common experience in research with focus groups (Bryman, 2016). Groups were organised on the basis of year groups which provided a relatively homogenous age and experience profile. As it eventuated, this also provided groups that were either all male (FG2, FG3 and FG4), or all female (FG1 and FG5). This homogeneity allows for the examination of “convergent” and “divergent findings” (J. A. Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 32).

### 3.4. Data Collection

I conducted the focus groups myself, as an existing relationship with the participants was perceived to be an important factor in the success of focus groups as a method of data gathering with youth (Gibson, 2012). Given the culturally responsive approach, I also considered the personal relationship an important factor in keeping the focus group environment comfortable and familiar, in order to facilitate sharing. The literature around focus groups indicates that experience

in the role of moderator is a key element in the success of this as a research method (Krueger & Casey, 2015; D. W. Stewart et al., 2007) and particularly so with children and young adults (Gibson, 2012). I relied on my experience as an educator, and my knowledge of the outdoor programme and experiences that would be under discussion to compensate for my lack of experience in conducting focus groups.

Krueger and Casey describe the moderator's role as being to "ask questions, listen, keep the conversation on track, and make sure everyone has a chance to share" (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 36). The moderator is in a position to respond to participants, and follow their thoughts and stories with probing questions. Kitzinger (1995) suggests the role is not to dictate the discourse with a series of posed questions, but to unravel and unpack the views of the participants around a specific issue or practice. The moderator must come, as Ted Glynn describes it, as one who is "unknowing..., responsive to cultural differences..., and [from a] position that involves more listening than talking." (2013, p. 38, ).

The initial focus groups (FG1-3) were all conducted within a week of each other, and, as noted above, after a number of 'no-shows' by recruited students, two further groups (FG4-5) were sought to expand the sample. The additional focus groups were conducted several weeks after the initial focus groups allowing some modification to the focus group question pathway to explore areas of experience that were emerging from previous groups.

The timing and location of focus group sessions were negotiated with 'The School' to minimise interruption to regular school routine. The site for focus groups one, three, four and five was a meeting room in a central location within the school to maximise attendance. Focus group two, of two ex-students, met after school hours in a classroom familiar to the participants. A comfortable space for the focus group, where participants can be relaxed, is an important element of the focus group methodology (Kitzinger, 1994; Krueger & Casey, 2015; Markova et al., 2007). The initial focus groups (FG1, FG2 and FG3) were scheduled to meet for approximately 90 minutes but the further two focus groups (FG4 and FG5) were

limited to one hour due to a number of constraints imposed by the school timetable.

The focus groups functioned as a semi-structured group interview, utilising photo elicitation and post-it note contributions designed to stimulate, facilitate and engage participant responses to the research questions (see Appendix 3 for the Focus group question route guide). Krueger and Casey (2015) suggest that “...structured activities, such as viewing videos or pictures, or sorting through issues relevant to the research, [are effective] as a way of engaging participants, developing conversation and accessing views on and experiences of the topic under discussion” (p.23). These two methods are described here briefly.

### **3.4.1. Photo Elicitation**

Photo elicitation was conducted using images from photographic files of activities conducted within the outdoor education programme at ‘The School’. Thirty photographs on laminated A4 sheets were accompanied by a projected slide-show of the images, and participants were invited to comment on aspects of their outdoor experience in relation to memories these pictures evoked. The pictures used were accessed from an archive file of images taken from the Outdoor Education programme over a period of about 5 years, and were selected to broadly represent the range of experiences offered in Outdoor Education at ‘The School’. The intent of this activity was to take some of the participants’ attention away from a conversation with the researcher, to focus on the focus group questions and to provide a basis for participants to comment, or illustrate comments with examples. Harper (2002) notes the role of photographs in decentralising the researcher. Photo elicitation has been used widely in research with children to stimulate interaction between the participant and the researcher (2012 ; E. Smith et al., 2010). It can be used to “challenge participants, provide nuances, trigger memories and lead to new perspectives” (Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011, p. 181). Croghan et al (2008) also suggest photo elicitation is able to provide a platform for participants to expand on areas of discussion that might not have otherwise been accessible.

### **3.4.2. *Post-it notes***

Post-it notes (PIN) were utilised as a way of providing a degree of anonymity to the discussion. Participants were given a pad of post-it notes and a pen and encouraged to provide responses to key questions by sticking these to a sheet set aside for a particular question. The PIN contributions were then discussed by the group without identifying the contributors, although in practice participants showed genuine interest in the contribution of their peers and often responded directly to these comments or statements. My role was to open further lines of questioning, based on the post-it responses allowing an emergent, dialogic process to develop within the focus group. In addition the PIN activity allowed the participant an opportunity not to speak, and to contribute without talking. This was intended to off-set some of the relational dynamics that have been highlighted as a potential concern in focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

### **3.4.3. *Recording***

The focus group sessions were recorded for both audio and video, in order to ensure a full and accurate transcription (D. W. Stewart et al., 2007). As a novice moderator, I felt I needed to have a back-up recording should one device fail. The audio recording provided the best sound quality for transcription, but cross checking with the video allowed me to accurately represent who said what, and helped clarify personal interactions. Body language, expressions, and non-verbal communication between the participants could also be noted and provided a rich picture of the focus group interactions. Video helped to establish accuracy of both transcription and representation.

## **3.5. Ethical considerations**

### **3.4.1. *Cultural safety and sensitivity***

One of the key ethical concerns of this project was in the area of cultural safety and sensitivity. Smith (2012) describes research as “inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism”, and a “significant site of struggle between the interests and ways of knowing of the West...and indigenous peoples” (p. 1-2).

In order to minimise potential cultural harm, I consulted with *Kaiārahi*<sup>43</sup> in order to identify possible sources of harm, embarrassment or discomfort in the way participants were identified and the focus groups composed and organised. Kaiārahi are culturally located individuals, who can assist researchers to engage with Māori communities and act as collaborative partners and/or critical peers in the research, providing an opportunity for alternative perspectives to inform the research activity. In this case I approached two senior teaching staff within the school who work with Māori students and have a role in promoting Māori achievement and in pastoral care. As noted earlier the Kaiārahi helped to identify appropriate individuals to approach as part of the process of purposive sampling, and provided feedback on the lines of questioning or data gathering activities within the focus group.

Following ethical approval by the University of Waikato, formal consent was sought from 'The School'. This was granted by the school principal after a meeting to discuss the study and its implications for participants. The guidance of the Kaiārahi was sought for all communication with students and parents, and in the recruitment of student participants to ensure both administrative and pastoral needs were considered. The Teacher in Charge (TIC) of outdoor education and outdoor education teachers were also approached to allow access to potential participants from their classes.

An introduction to the project was presented to the Māori Whānau form class, composed of students who identify as Māori, and who have a strong association with the Māori area of learning in the school, both academically and pastorally. This drew no participants initially, although some members of focus group four subsequently agreed to be involved after I discussed the study further with them. Māori outdoor education students who were not enrolled in the Whānau class were identified from the school management system and discussions with Kaiārahi. These Māori students were approached during class

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<sup>43</sup> Kaiārahi is a cultural advisor from within the Māori community under study. This is usually a recognised figure within the community exercising sufficient authority to provide advice into cultural practice.

time at a time arranged in advance with teachers, and the study project was introduced by sharing the general aims of the study, the timing and place of focus groups. Students who indicated an interest and willingness to participate were then provided with a letter of introduction and consent forms for parents (See Appendix 1). Students were given time to think about and discuss their involvement with parents and consent forms were collected at a later date. Former students approached to participate in the study were all aged 18 years or older and were introduced to the project over the phone. These participants provided their own written consent prior to their involvement after a more detailed description of the study.

All participants were repeatedly reminded of their right to withdraw at any point in the focus group and of their right to pass or withhold comments, and all participants were offered the opportunity to comment further or modify previous comments during the final question stage of the focus group.

### ***3.5.2. Anonymity and confidentiality***

Anonymity for participants in the study was achieved by the use of pseudonyms. A list of possible pseudonyms was provided, derived from lists of Māori babies' names from 2013-15 published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (see appendix 2). Participants chose a pseudonym from this list to represent their expression in the transcript and subsequent references in the research. Māori names were chosen to reflect the fact that the students identify as Māori and the pseudonyms should reflect this. I felt it was important the participants themselves had some choice as to a pseudonym. Other personal information about participants was limited to very general reference to their age, sex and year level, and any other distinctive identifying characteristics were removed or altered in the transcription.

At the outset of the focus groups, a short period of time was allocated to establishing a group operating agreement, which included a discussion about confidentiality and the de-personalising of situations or anecdotes. Participants were encouraged to show mutual respect, turn-taking and the right to hold an

opinion without recrimination using culturally responsive terminology, including *manaakitanga*<sup>44</sup>, *whanaungatanga*<sup>45</sup>, and *aroha*<sup>46</sup>. Any handwriting that could potentially identify individuals was copied and disposed of after focus groups including contributions from activities such as the post-it note activity. All identifying data was transcribed, in the process removing non-relevant identifying features such as names, dates and locations; and subsequently destroyed after transcription.

Photographic Images from school files were used to facilitate discussion and “evoke conversation” (Krueger and Casey 2015, p.81). Potential issues arising from the distraction the images might provide, or the identification of individuals in the Photo-images was minimised by blurring of individual faces and by discussion in the group agreement at the outset of the focus group session.

As previously indicated, the participating school has not been directly identified in the research. To further protect anonymity I have modified the use of specific information about locations, times and events. Any other specific concerns for anonymity were negotiated with the school (Principal and/or Kaiārahi). Place names have also been represented, where possible, with alternative Māori terms, some of which act in the way of a pseudonym, and seek to shield ‘The School’s’ identity by association with these places. Kaiārahi had a separate agreement in which maintenance of the anonymity of participants was stipulated as a condition of involvement.

### **3.5.3. Potential Harm identified**

Discussion within focus group sessions had potential to generate polarising opinions, but the threat of this becoming personal was mitigated by the group agreement at the beginning of the session. The role of the moderator was to depersonalise issues where possible and maintain a positive environment.

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<sup>44</sup> *Manaakitanga* Care, concern, respect, generosity, respect

<sup>45</sup> *Whanaungatanga* to treat others like family; to show care, concern, respect

<sup>46</sup> *Aroha* often translated as ‘love’, also infers compassion and empathy

As a Pākehā researcher I am in a position of some privilege and as a senior teacher in an educational institution, I am in a position of relative power. I remain recognised as a teacher, with participants throughout the focus groups continuing to address me as “Sir”, and as “Mr Washbourn”, and deferring to me with respect due to my usual role as a teacher. My role as a teacher in the school will have had an effect on students’ willingness to share or participate in this study. Elements of this can be mitigated by the steps to achieve humility and familiarise myself to the participants in ways I might not in the classroom. My role as an outdoor education teacher, having spent time outdoors with some individuals, means this level of informality may already have been developed. Regardless, it was important to promote a relaxed and informal atmosphere in order to overcome a sense of the power disparity in the relationship and to achieve a relaxed setting in which all participants could attempt to create the “third space” (Berryman et al 2012) for a co-creation of new knowledge. A commitment was provided to present key findings from my research in ‘The School’ in the future, and to ensure findings were incorporated where possible into the outdoor education programme.

Krueger and Casey (2015) suggest that participants are briefed clearly about the ethical issues prior to the focus group taking place in order that consent for use of focus group data may be clearly understood. The participants were briefed on ethical principles at the beginning, outlining potential issues with confidentiality; at the completion of the focus group session, participants had an opportunity to add to or modify previous comments or to withdraw anything they were not comfortable with being included in the data.

### **3.6. Data analysis and reporting**

Data analysis was conducted using Thematic Analysis (TA) in which themes were identified within the data through a constant comparison process. Bryman (2016) notes that TA has changed over time and is an underdeveloped approach with few specifications for its use in practice. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 77) similarly describe TA as “poorly demarcated” while also pointing to its increasingly

common usage and promoting its utility as “accessible”, “theoretically flexible”, and a “foundational method” of qualitative research that can be applied across a wide range of theoretical and epistemological approaches.

Themes are derived through a process of inductive reasoning with the researcher never completely isolated from the process of analysis. An interpretative stance to research acknowledges that the researcher possesses their own set of meanings and makes sense of research data in light of their own particular understanding and context. The application of an analysis method is important for providing some validity to this process and data analysis in this study conformed to the phases of thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke propose a six step process for TA, but refer to these as guidelines, not rules, and emphasise the recursive nature of thematic analysis, in which the analysis does not follow a linear process of moving from one phase to the next, but movement back and forth occurs as needed. Braun and Clarke’s (2006, p. 87) six phases are familiarising yourself with your data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and finally, producing the report.

Because I had conducted and transcribed the focus groups myself, I was very familiar with the data. In the process of transcribed the focus groups from both video and audio recordings, I re-read each transcript, editing for greater accuracy. Immediately following transcription of the focus groups, the Post-it note contributions were tabulated and used as an initial framework for coding the transcripts. Focus group transcripts were read through and annotated line by line with initial draft codes. An example of this is a code for “shared experience”, which was a summary of a number of similar post-it contributions (e.g. “learn how to do things together in groups”, FG1; “Good Memories with friends”, FG3; “enjoying others company” FG3). Sharing common experiences helped focus group participants develop connections with other group members and often resulted in a code for “storying” of an event, where an experience was expressed in narrative form. In many case this was a joint process, with multiple contributions from several participants. The transition from a recalled experience

to a story usually reflected a specific event or activity, which resulted in an additional code for that activity. Stories also reflect an engagement with the experience which would result in further codes, such as “Fun”, or “Friends”. Some categories developed as participants responded to specific questions, and this included “Barriers” to involvement by Māori students, with additional codes referencing the specific barriers as they emerged. As such, sub-themes emerged under which a number of codes might group, for example, the code “teaching and learning” had sub-codes such as “classroom” or “role modelling” to further clarify the data item.

Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84) describe this as coding at a “semantic” level, using the explicit expression provided by the study participants as a basis for theme development. Coding semantically tends to be descriptive rather than immediately interpretative, but my own conceptualisations, understandings and subjectivities have a bearing on what stood out as an item to code. Memos, summarising key or ‘interesting’ ideas that emerged, were written alongside focus group transcripts, consisting of margin notes and reflective comments written during transcription as well as in subsequent readings once a wider picture of the data corpus had been gained. At the completion of the initial read-through, the full range of codes was reduced into a final code index on a Microsoft Excel spread sheet. On this index, codes were organised into thematic groupings, based on an inductive process of matching similar concepts, referring to transcript memos and mapping connections between codes and thematic areas. Clarke and Braun (2013, p. 121) describe this phase of ‘searching’ for themes as an “active process”, where the researcher constructs themes and collates data relevant to each theme. Each transcript was cross referenced with the code index, and re-read to establish links with other codes and themes. From this process the emerging themes were then tabulated to indicate their interrelationships to the list of codes.

Analysis is inevitably an interpretative act, and thematic coding has the effect of fragmenting data (Bryman, 2016), both of which act to remove and sanitise the voice of the participant. Zink (2005) encourages outdoor educators to

take seriously the way that students construct their experiences of outdoor education, and to explore the ways that the outdoor education field construes experiences as valid expressions of learning expectations. I felt that a close connection needed to remain between participants' words and intent in expressing their experience, so throughout the coding and theming I felt it important to carefully represent, or 'curate' the focus group data, and to reflect the final themes in the literal words of the participants. Themes were developed and given a title that included a corresponding quote from the focus groups that helped both summarise the theme, but also keep the voice of participants to the fore.

### **3.7. Limitations**

This research project as a Master's study, conducted within a limited time-frame, is necessarily constrained in its scope. As noted, I found it difficult in this context to fully engage with principles of a culturally responsive methodology, in which the researched community are integral to the design of the research. Berryman, SooHoo and Nevin (2013, p. 19) describe features of the "traditional qualitative methodology" as "formulaic", reliant on "tools and procedures... to establish research credibility" with methods pre-determined "due to expectations set forth by university review boards that verify the research project protects human subjects". I feel my inexperience as a researcher, the constraints of the research time-frame, accommodation of the school calendar, and the process of presenting a study proposal for ethical consideration prior to initiating contact with participants all compounded to limit the degree to which this study could be developed according to a culturally responsive methodology as proposed by Berryman, SooHoo and Nevin (2013). If this project were to be more closely aligned to a culturally responsive methodology, it would resemble participatory inquiry (Heron & Reason, 1997) in which the researched community construct the research questions and determine the research design. As a result, the study is best considered a phenomenological exploration of the experiences of a small number of Māori outdoor education students within one educational community. While the findings of a phenomenological study are not widely generalizable, they

may be considered using Lincoln and Guba's notion of *transferability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1989), which means the degree of utility of the findings is decided by the receiver of the information rather than the author of it. Other educators must understand their own contexts in order to engage with the issues raised.

As noted, the process of developing themes from the focus group data is an interpretative act, and in attempting to represent the voice of the participants of the study, I had to first address some of my own values and assumptions. Reflexivity is a critical element of qualitative research, as it allows the researcher to explore their own 'lens' of values, self-identity and ideology (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2010) and this is of critical importance as a Pākehā researcher of Māori. My own understanding of the experience of Māori students within teaching and learning programmes I am invested in must be continually questioned in order to identify my personal bias.

Throughout the study, personal reflective note-taking helped to identify questions about my own assumptions. It was apparent that my personal understanding of participants' comments while conducting the focus groups was sometimes initially misguided, and I only realised this at certain points in the analysis, when another meaning to a participant's statement was presented by the context, or comments that were initially mis-heard, or not heard at all, suddenly became clear after viewing and reviewing audio and video recordings. This highlights the subjectivity of the role of the moderator in the focus groups, and the need for a highly reflexive approach to analysing the data set. Personal notes in the margins or alongside the transcript text helped to focus coding and theme development, and a reiterative and recursive process of returning both to the transcript and to the original recordings for clarity helped maintain an accurate reading of the data.

Discussion with my supervisor helped to gain an external perspective on the development of themes, and to confirm or to challenge understandings as I presented them. Kaiārahi were consulted where availability allowed, but personal circumstances limited this. As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, thematic analysis is not a linear process, but is recursive, and the on-going process of analysis and

theme development was evident while writing the findings and discussion chapters that follow.

## Chapter Four

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### Ngā kitenga: Findings

Findings presented in this chapter address research question one by exploring the experiences and perspectives of the rangatahi in terms of positive experiences and barriers to participation, engagement and learning, and achievement. These findings are presented as four themes identified in the data analysis: the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences of outdoors; the distinctiveness of outdoor pedagogy; a desire to connect with Māori stories and outdoor places; and the complexity of influences on Māori participation in outdoor education.

The second and third research questions about the extent to which outdoor education reflects culturally responsive practice, and the implications of a better understanding of Māori students' perspectives for engaging with culturally responsive practice are also addressed, but will be the subject of the discussion in the next chapter. A number of sub-themes were evident weaving their way through the leading themes, connecting and elaborating on aspects of each theme. Sub themes related to each theme are discussed within each of the four themes.

#### **4.1. “We’re in it together” - The importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences outdoors**

For the rangatahi in this study, it is evident that many of the meanings and the value of their experiences were socially mediated, that is, formed and framed by their relationships with those that they shared the experience with, particularly their peers. Friends, in particular, were a strong influence on the students' perceptions of the qualities of the outdoor experiences and the importance attached to them. While the participants often contrasted in their personal responses to the same outdoor activity experience, this was less important than

the fact that they shared the events, conditions and outcomes of the experience. Relationships between individuals in outdoor education were clearly experienced differently to regular school contexts, and this theme, therefore, relates closely to the following theme “The distinctiveness of outdoor pedagogy”.

This finding about the importance of sharing outdoor education experiences and relationships was evident across all five focus groups. Comments such as being “with your friends” (Kara FG1); “hanging out with mates” (Anaru, FG2); that it was “just fun being there with like, my friends and stuff” (Ariki, FG3); or “it was just fun... with everyone there” (Tamati, FG4) typified a sense that “[it] is what made camp fun, getting out with people” (Tui, FG5).

Experiences of outdoor education related by the rangatahi were often characterised by social support, acceptance and inclusion, and a notion of being “in it together” (PIN, FG1). As Whiri (FG2) observed, the photographs used to support focus group discussion were invariably of groups of people: “... pretty much, as you can see, in every photo here, there’s not a single person by themselves”. Whiri (FG2) consistently described outdoor education in social terms, commenting on “team building” and on “people getting together...getting closer together and just getting to know more about each other so we became more comfortable”. He described this as a common experience, “as you can see in the photos it’s kind of the same for everyone... They’re all sticking together they’re cooking dinner together, they’re in the same tent together, and that type of thing and... yeah, just in groups”.

Individuals reflected on deepening relationships with one another through outdoor education experiences that were often challenging and new. The ex-student focus group (FG2) in particular identified the authenticity that developed in relationships due to time in outdoor and experiential activities. Whiri (FG2) expressed this as “... just getting to know everyone and getting out and about, and just... getting to know people as they really are...”. Anaru (FG2) also noted that “we were all really close with each other, you could just see it within the class, how we were all just having banter with each other, saying whatever we wanted.” In focus group four the boys talked about how this was easier when they were

with other Māori, because they “understand that you’re both Māori, so like, that you don’t have to act different around me because I am the same as you” (Tāwhiri, FG4) and how this felt like “good vibes” (Nikau, FG4) when around people they felt they could trust.

Whiri (FG2) elaborated on the importance of the social aspects of his outdoor experience, reflecting that “there was always someone to talk to about it... something... to brag about” or someone to “ask for help”. The participants in outdoor education learned to work together in often challenging and novel situations, where ways of operating may not have been clear to them. Sharing these experiences forged interpersonal connections that were valued and generated an inclusive atmosphere; fellow participants become “pretty much good mates to you at the end” (Whiri, FG2). Outdoor education activities appeared to provide time for these relationships to develop and the novel experiences provided by outdoor education were valued by the rangatahi for their potential as a medium for developing relationships.

Being with a range of people beyond your existing friends was also seen by some of the rangatahi as enriching the outdoor education experience. Mutual understanding and learning from each other is something study participants appreciate about outdoor education. Rāwiri (FG3) enjoyed being with “different people” and within “a big crowd of friends that you hang around with”. The advantages of the larger group are that “you just do more stuff... in a big group you get to learn... more about them and stuff” (Rāwiri, FG3). Ariki supports this, explaining “Cos you’re like experiencing things with them; but in a classroom you’d just be experiencing writing stuff with them.” Rāwiri (FG3) identified the international students in the class as a specific group with whom interaction is stimulated by difference, mediated through the shared novelty of an unfamiliar place and the learning taking place:

... [The international students] get to learn from us, how we are as people, ‘cos we are different from them and we can both experience outdoors and learn about each other and being in the outdoors in a new environment. (Rāwiri, FG3)

Kara, a year 11 student in focus group one recalled her favourite memory as “going to... Kura Tāwhiti... just being with everyone, and climbing in the rock... and also the way there and back, listening to music and singing with everyone ... being with people.” Kara made a connection between the wider experiences that she enjoyed and the opportunity to be around others. Climbing on the rocks as an outdoor experience was seemingly no more important to her than the time with friends, or the trip back in the van listening to music. The outdoor education trip therefore appeared to be far more than an outdoor learning opportunity, with lasting and meaningful memories not limited to just the formal teaching and learning programme. Significant memories were of people and their interactions in a novel and interesting place. This connection with others includes time in transit, the journey by school minivan to and from the site, and communing over music.

The interaction of shared experience, novelty and spontaneity was also evident for focus group four in their discussion of an experience of swimming in an alpine river:

Tamati: You took us for a swim...

Tāwhiri: Yeah. It was fun like... everyone was just laughing.

Tamati: ...even though it was freezing... It was hard to swim in, it was just still fun with everyone there.

The opportunity to swim in a fast-flowing, cold river in a natural environment was perceived by these students as both challenging and novel. The role of friends was important in making this a positive and enriching experience. As Tamati noted, having an opportunity to “fool around” and do something novel, different and spontaneous was important in making it memorable.

Anaru (FG2) recounted an experience of walking in snow to the high point of a ski-field that combined novelty with challenge and a sense of shared adventure and achievement. He commented,

I liked how we climbed to the top of that mountain... That was so fun... It's just not something I've ever done before, and to do it with all my mates,

basically, just going up there and pushing myself to do something I've never done before was fun...

This combination of the social aspect of experiencing something with mates, while also experiencing something challenging and different to anything they had done previously, made this a special experience for Anaru. Challenge and novelty lent an added depth to the activity that enabled participants to create an experience together. Anaru appeared to connect with this experience due to this rich depth of inter-related elements that contributed to it.

This inter-relationship of novelty and challenge with shared experience was seen to have a positive effect in bringing individuals together. Whiri (FG2) identified the key elements in forming group cohesion as “the little things [we] had to do, that Mr W [had] us do...that we didn't want to do”, such as getting ‘up-close and personal’ in group building challenges or camping in wet conditions. He makes a direct connection with the way these activities “kind of got to us and getting us closer together and just getting to know more and more about each other so we became more comfortable”. The activities may not appear at the outset to be pleasant or comfortable for the participants but Whiri sees these activities as important in retrospect for their function in bringing individuals together.

Discussion in some focus groups revealed a narrative that developed amongst students that provided evidence of group meaning-making of events that was particular to the group. In focus group four, the boys made occasional coded references to specific incidents, often without further explanation. An example was when Tāwhiri, referencing a specific event where Tamati slipped, inserted a piece of “banter” as Tamati was speaking:

Tamati: oh yeah that was like a really cool area to...

Tāwhiri [interjecting] Maybe fall over?

This provided a glimpse of a private narrative to the event which was shared by the group of friends. These hidden stories, held in trust to each other within the group were an important aspect of the boys' meaning making of the experience,

although a sense of responsibility to the friend network prevented them from divulging more. The boys in focus group three also provided evidence of these hidden narratives, where at one point Ariki and Rāwiri briefly debated about whether they should “dog on their mates<sup>47</sup>”, and then decided against it. This reinforces that the students created and maintained their own understandings and meanings from the experiences which were not always revealed beyond their trusted friends and peers.

In focus group four, a highlight mentioned on Post-it notes was “Staying awake with teachers drinking milos and having a yarn”, reflecting the rare opportunity students have to get to know teachers informally. These boys particularly enjoyed this part of the experience. In Focus group three the relationships with teachers also featured in discussion. “Respect for teachers” was contributed in a post-it note, responding to a question about important values in outdoor education. Rāwiri (FG3) supported this, commenting “You should enjoy teachers... and also respect them”. I was curious to know if these student-teacher relationships with outdoor education staff differed from other teacher relationships. Ariki (FG3) explained that, the relationship “probably was different”, “cos you’re... doing more stuff with them and you’re around them more, like overnight and on camps and stuff.” A different relationship with teachers, then, is also an aspect of outdoor education that supports and adds meaning to the experiences.

In summary, for the rangatahi in this study, interpersonal connection and relationships are a focal aspect of outdoor education learning and meaning-making, and social inclusion is a valued and motivating factor enabling engagement. While students may describe different responses to the same experience, the mere fact of experiencing it with someone else added layers of meaning and enjoyment to the experience.

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<sup>47</sup> “Dog on their mates” meant to break trust by telling something they had previously kept to themselves

## **4.2. “You get to go out and actually do stuff” – the distinctive practices of outdoor education make learning enjoyable and engaging**

The second theme relates to the difference in style of learning in outdoor education compared with the ‘regular’ classroom and was raised in each focus group. This theme has extensive intersection with theme one, and the distinctive elements that make outdoor education a social experience are a key aspect in that distinction. The distinctiveness of the outdoor education experience was not simply related to social interaction, but also included a range of features of outdoor education pedagogy that contrasted with other teaching practices within the school.

Outdoor education contrasted with classroom based pedagogy because of its ‘hands-on’, active, experiential and relational aspects. Hemi (FG3) makes this comparison between outdoor education and other school subjects as he notes, “... mostly it’s like in classrooms and writing stuff and in Outdoor Ed you get to go out and actually do stuff”. The focus on interpersonal skills contrasts with individualised learning, and the practical aspects of outdoor education allow students to learn without resorting to pen and paper, reading and writing or passive listening. Nikau (FG4) supported this:

...if the teacher’s just sitting there for the whole period... just talking to you, and then making you... copy down what they are saying, or like hoping that you are listening to them talking all period, you don’t really take notice because you just get side-tracked from other things, ‘cos you are sick of hearing them talk.

Passive, ‘traditional’ classroom based learning was identified by the boys in focus group four as a barrier for their own learning. Tāwhiri’s (FG4) comment that

No one wants to sit there for like 45 minutes writing and writing... Writing, answering questions, but if, like what we are doing now, like a teacher asks a question and as a group, as, like, a collective, you all answer the question...

hints at the need for a more reciprocal, interactive and dialogic learning environment, where the teacher interacts with smaller groups, and responds to students as a “collective” rather than single out individuals. Tamati (FG4) summarised these ideas in noting that “making the lesson more interesting so you are not just doing the same thing every time” is what is really important, and applies just as much to classroom teaching in outdoor education as it does to other subject areas. For him, the classroom organisation is also important to his learning, “cos if you’re just in straight lines at a desk sitting next to each other [it’s] not a homely type feel... I’d actually be more comfortable if I was... like with everyone around me, I’d feel more comfortable.” The formality of the classroom was seen as something that could be dismantled, and Tamati (FG4) suggested that “if you made it a bit more relaxed, everyone would be more comfortable”.

Experiential learning outside the classroom, or as a cooperative learning context with peers, was identified as a more comfortable, supportive and engaging learning environment by many of the rangatahi. Whiri (FG2) captured this when he contrasts the passive aspects of other learning areas with the dynamic and social aspects of outdoor education:

... it’s a lot easier to understand it, and because it’s outdoors...it’s based around us and having that moral support from everyone in the group. That’s probably the main big thing compared to other classrooms where you had to be quiet to do your work, this is more together, group activities and getting to know each other, yeah.

Another common thread across the focus groups was that going outdoors was a break from the routine of school and elicited feelings of escape from the city. Whiri (FG2) described this as getting “to know about everything out there that’s not in the city, that you will get to experience anything that’s completely different...umm... just teaches you a much broader knowledge...”

Reflecting on a day of outdoor activities, Kara (FG1) revealed aspects of the day that she didn’t enjoy, including kayaking, feeling exposed on the ocean and then the exertion of a steep climb to the top of an island they had paddled to reach.

However, she “enjoyed the day” and “being out of school” despite the fact “it made me so tired”. A key to her enjoyment was a change of scene from the routine of school.

As already indicated in the theme one findings, each focus group reflected a positive perception of adventure and novelty in outdoor education activities. This was what attracted participants to the subject. Tiana (FG1), for example, exclaimed:

I just love going on great big adventures, going places I’ve never been before and exploring and I feel like it’s just a part of my culture and this [an image of a group in a limestone cave] really resembles that because everyone is there and they are exploring things they have never seen.

Tiana directly connected concepts of adventure and exploration with ancestors and traditional Māori culture. The outdoor education activity was not an individual experience, but was shared by “everyone”, and the novelty and discovery in the experience was mutual, shared and socially reinforced. Exploration appeared to contain aspects of adventure, as participants encountered places they have never been previously, and the outcomes of this exploration were never fully clear at the outset. The exploration experiences related by the rangatahi included relatively safe sites and locations, indicating that risk need not be present to engage a sense of adventure. A sense of strangeness or otherness was sufficient to create anticipation and curiosity for these students, without requiring exposure to sources of harm.

Ariki (FG3) reflected on the tension and synergies that exists between novelty, challenge and fun in outdoor education, commenting that “... you can just try new things and go outside your comfort zone and have fun as well”. The rangatahi thus anticipated being moved out of their perceived comfort zone, but had a similar and related anticipation of finding the experience positive, enjoyable and sociable. Ariki (FG3) recalled one experience caving when “It was just real fun... because it was like flowing really heavy, yeah, it was just real fun being there with like, my friends and stuff, going through it... just a new experience”. Novelty,

challenge and potential discomfort are a part of the package of experiences that study participants expected in outdoor education, but these are framed both as fun and social.

A particular aspect of many study participants' enjoyment was found in spontaneous activities, being provided with choice and options about how and where to participate, and a degree of autonomy in decision making. Tāwhiri (FG4) described how he felt on an occasion where the group he was with was able to explore a new landscape: "I enjoyed the freedom... it was this... open area, and then, when you got out on the top rock, looking out towards the road, you just saw, like, a whole lot of land...". Tamati (FG4) picked up on the importance of personal agency, when asked what he liked about this particular experience: "Just like exploring... finding places, and how to get there and stuff, 'cos it wasn't easy for most of them". This group (FG4) then related a memory of a friend losing a hat amongst the rocks, a memory which functioned to bring the group together. Exploration created adventure, which in turn created stories that united and continues to bind individuals to that experience.

Allowing participants to find their own way, and limiting teacher or instructor leadership was also important for some rangatahi to evoke a sense of exploration. The description of arrival at the year 10 campsite by participants in focus group five captured this:

Tui: We were just able to wander off and do our own thing.

Aroha: Mmmm: [affirmative]

Mere: Yeah, and b'cos like we'd never been there before...

Aroha: yeah.

Mere: ...so it was really cool.

The act of exploring a site which was entirely new and novel to them was "one of the things I like" according to Aroha (FG5) and the sense that "you can do a bit of what you like, and what you want". Exploring the campsite in reality involved very little risk. While it might not have been challenging, and by some

considered to have been a low level of adventure, this simple activity exploring an area was intrinsically enjoyable.

Appreciation of being outdoors, being in a different place and being in nature was expressed in each focus group. Experiencing a change of scene and pace was an important distinction for the study participants. For some, like Tāwhiri, this was a pause or break from the busy-ness of city life, as “it’s not something you see every day” while Tamati (FG4), liked “the view, all the mountains and the space” inferring these were things that were not a part of his every-day experience. For others, like Kara (FG1), this break was far from a restful experience, but still enjoyable. Despite often busy and active excursions within outdoor education courses, an important aspect of the appreciation of being outdoors was this contrast with a hectic urban lifestyle. Tāwhiri (FG4) noted this contrast, commenting:

I felt like, you like just got a moment to take it in... like ‘cos in the city we are all busy and we are secluded [in the outdoors] from the things that we normally surround ourselves by, like it’s just... you get to take a moment and like realise...

References to aesthetic and numinous experiences of the outdoors were made although the rangatahi occasionally found it hard to express these experiences in words. Tāwhiri (FG4) at one point expressed this appreciation for being in the bush, exclaiming “It’s like, Ooosh!” Hemi (FG4) noted how much he enjoyed the view from the top of a strenuous day walk: “It’s just like you appreciate things a little bit more, I dunno, ‘cos it just looks so, looks so good... yeah”. Tamati’s (FG4) conclusion was that experiencing the outdoors as a Māori, “It’s like you feel comfortable ...like its home”.

The boys in focus group three expressed their appreciation of the natural world in reference to starry nights. Hemi recalled, “on camp ... there was like one good night, and like there was stars everywhere” and Ariki supported this, continuing that “You could see heaps of stars ‘cos there’s like no light pollution or anything, so it was just heaps of stars, and it was cool”. This appreciation produced

a feeling of awe, and was a powerful memory shared by the boys. The memory prompted Rāwiri to reflect that he “didn’t really listen to the stories about the stars, especially [on the marae]”. The conversation underscored a desire for a better understanding of the stars, from both a Māori perspective on the natural world and a ‘scientific’ explanation.

In contrast to the appreciation of the natural world in remote locations, Tamati (FG4) reflected on an experience where his class encountered nature within the city. He expressed his pleasure at discovering that a remnant forest reserve exists even within city limits: “Oh...yeah I like that...there’s like this whole... huge area of bush and it’s just in the middle of the town....that was cool seeing that, and that the house was still there”.

In summary, this theme illustrates that outdoor education resonates with participants in this study as a change of scene, and an exposure to places that produce new sensations, feelings, appreciation and perspectives. The pedagogical practices of outdoor education stimulate social interaction, dialogue, mutual meaning-making and an appreciation of the natural world. When shared with others, these experiences become storied memories, and take on meaning through shared accounts of the experience, simultaneously personal and social. Individual meanings cannot be decontextualized by abstraction from the social situation and the physical context of the experiences.

### **4.3. “To learn more about our culture and what happened in History”: the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history**

This theme has two elements and is covered in two sections. The first section relates to a need expressed by the study participants to know more about their cultural heritage, specifically about connections and histories of the places we pass through. The second section relates to a feeling students expressed commonly as ‘passing it on’, and this reflects a responsibility study participants felt for ensuring a Māori understanding of land, places and histories was kept alive.

#### **4.3.1. *“To do what our ancestors would have done”- making connections with a Te Ao Māori perspective on outdoor places***

The study participants reflected a need to know more about their cultural heritage, and to make connections with outdoor places through an understanding of the cultural history of places. For some, this embraced multiple elements of their ancestral heritage, both Pākehā and Māori. For others the outdoors reflected strongly a dis-connection between their experience and that of Māori ancestors, and a lack of knowledge about Te Ao Māori that outdoor education, as much as any subject in the school, was in a position to provide.

Stories about the land, its history and its connection to Māori are an aspect of the outdoor education experience that these Māori youths would like to have more of, and a greater understanding about. Ariki’s (FG3) comment, “if we go somewhere and there’s Maori history there, tell us about it, so we can learn about it... to learn more about our culture and what happened in history” speaks to this. Kara (FG1) similarly noted, “... we could do more stuff about the history” given that she didn’t know much about “my history”. For Tui (FG5) learning about the Māori history of a place “makes it more interesting”, and Mere (FG5) suggests “it gives the place a meaning”.

One of the common ideas expressed was a connection that some Māori students felt with the land. Tāwhiri (FG4) expressed this in the following statement:

Māori have a connection to the roots, like connection to the land, in the aspect that that’s where they are from. Like if you are going into the bush you can understand that that’s how it used to be when Māori first settled, sort of thing.

Some focus groups explored this idea in some detail, and with enthusiasm. Focus Group four discussed whether Māori experience the outdoors differently to Pākehā:

Tāwhiri: I feel like Maori have a deeper, like meaning...

Tamati: Connection, yeah...

Tāwhiri: a deeper connection to the land, like Pākehā have been around for like a while now, so they can still have that understanding, but I feel like Maori should have a deeper understanding.

Tamati: because before the Pākehā came that's how they used to live.

This perspective was supported by other focus groups. Referring to some outdoor places that Māori would identify strongly with, Kara (FG1) suggested the “forest”, “ ‘cos that's what Maori used to do. They used to camp in the forest and survive, that's how they survived, and they would hike in the mountains and all around there to find new places”. Kara's attention here is not on high risk adventure, but learning about how her forebears connected with the land, how they managed to live, and how they explored places. This suggests a different focus from adventurous outdoor pursuit activities, to a more responsive engagement with “the forest” that engages a socio-cultural element in experiencing the place.

The idea of the capacity of previous Māori generations to survive and explore the natural world is a repeated idea throughout the focus groups. Focus group one discussed this:

Tiana: It would be great to learn more about it, so that everyone could...

Kara: cooking ...making fires, like...with the wood!

Tiana: ...Oh Yes ...like they would have done... that would be so cool, how they would have done it... by rubbing it together with another piece of wood [gesturing with hands] boom!

Kara: I've always wanted to know how to do that!

Tiana (FG1) was attracted by the adventurousness of her forebears,

... It would be *Ssoo* cool to do what our ancestors would have done, on a waka, just sail across the oceans...and do what they would have done... That would be adventure [pointing for emphasis].

Rāwiri (FG3) expressed an interest to “learn about rivers and mountains and their names”, perhaps reflecting an understanding that many places have been anglicised with English names, obscuring the Māori history. Rāwiri also expressed a desire to understand the land and to “...Learn about the kind of trees and what the Māoris [sic] used to use them for” and demonstrated curiosity and motivation to learn about traditional food gathering. This included comments about his experiences gathering *kai moana*<sup>48</sup> while on holiday, and trying to find eels in an alpine river during a school tramp:

“I wanted to go eeling,... I was looking in there for somewhere that was calm, the water was calm, but there was just all running stream, so I know that there wouldn’t be any eels around where we were camping”.

This prompted a suggestion that in outdoor education, “you could like learn how to fish...like teach how to fish...instead of diving for fish just go fishing, like with a fishing rod.”

Tāwhiri (FG4) commented about the way he would like to have aspects of Te Ao Māori incorporated into outdoor education, suggesting that the learning could occur “not in free time, but in down time, like sitting down and talking about what had happened there, or, how its significant for a certain tribe, or things like that?”. For Tāwhiri it appears that there is a need for each individual to be known, and this is implied by the act of “sitting down and talking...”; face to face learning is implied as the preferred means of learning, and “talking about what happened here” implies a storytelling medium. There is some connection here with an element of the teaching and learning style that Tāwhiri has experienced in outdoor education, and this connects directly to the second theme of these findings.

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<sup>48</sup> Kai Moana is a term for food gathered from the sea or sea shore and includes shellfish.

Along similar lines, Anaru (FG2) recalled a memorable occasion when a Māori history was presented in connection to place during an outdoor learning experience:

...like down Kura Tāwhiti, Mr W. done that talk with the year tens. I remember that. Just it... made me think about it a bit more, I reckon, since I'm a Māori, but, yeah, 'cos I feel like other people wouldn't, 'yeah, oh he's just talking again'.

Rather than dismissing the teacher's talk as some more irrelevant information, Anaru felt engaged with the learning context when both his identity and the place were foregrounded. Anaru also commented, "I reckon it's good just to show... the ancestors and what they used to do, how they lived life".

Whiri (FG2) integrates a Te Ao Māori worldview into his understanding of the natural environment experienced in outdoor education:

...take a Pākehā's way of it, you see a tree and it's just... one thing, it's either wood or a fence, like in a Maori perspective it's a multiple [sic] tool, it's a growing living thing, we can use it in multiple situations and its always re-usable, there's always something to it... it's kind of like that.

This reflects ideas of a Te Ao Māori cosmology and ontology that emerge from Whiri's upbringing, and he is able to connect this perspective with outdoor education lessons about environmental care. As he noted,

... for me I was always brought up knowing about your body and like its tapu..., your body is like your temple pretty much... I could totally understand I've got to look after this, this is where I will be staying the night, I'll make sure everything's looked after, everything's cleaned after, 'cos its ... a living breathing thing... like your body, that you've got to look after yourself and your surroundings.

Whiri's weaving of traditional Te Ao Māori perspective with his learning from outdoor education provide a glimpse of how these areas of knowledge can be woven together in a culturally responsive pedagogical approach.

#### **4.3.2. "Passing it on": intergenerational responsibility and learning for the community**

The second sub-theme relates to participants' desire to learn and pass on traditional Māori knowledge. As previously noted, the rangatahi were motivated to learn more about the connections to their heritage in the places visited in outdoor education but associated with this was a powerful sense that these things needed to be 'passed on' to future generations.

Intergenerational responsibility was a common concern for all focus groups. Anaru (FG2) commented that, "... we really need to look after [the environment] 'cos they looked after it for us, so we need to do it for the next generation and so on". For Anaru, learning about how to live sustainably was a commitment to coming generations, introducing connections with ideas of stewardship or *Kaitiakitanga*<sup>49</sup>. This care and concern for the land was echoed in Whiri's (FG2) comments about the importance to him as Māori of knowing the land, and understanding how it works:

I like to think of [outdoor education] as learning about the land and kind of relating that to my Maori side, getting to know about the land and how it works... seeing how people respect it, how to look after it properly.

Whiri reflects on his role in passing on what he knows to other students in the outdoor education programme: "they didn't show much respect to the outdoors, and they were kind of keeping it like trash... it was good to be able to pass that knowledge on to them so they could understand eventually".

Tiana (FG1) repeatedly expressed the importance of transmitting knowledge and understanding from one generation to the next, with comments

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<sup>49</sup> *Kaitiakitanga* is often translated as stewardship of the land. See the glossary in the appendices for further detail.

like "'cos then we can get our kids to do it ...like passing on the tradition". Tradition, in Tiana's perspective, included skills such as weaving, but she also emphasised broader cultural knowledge and values when she noted,

Well that's your ...culture, and you have those values, I think you want to continue it on, so that if you ever settle down and have a family you can pass it on to them, and they can pass it on...

A number of individuals referred to Māori who are not familiar with their cultural heritage and without an understanding of Te Ao Māori. Anaru (FG2) commented, "I reckon it would be good just for... those that are Māori that don't know about stuff like this, just to learn and be able to pass it on, that information to other people". Whiri (FG2) suggested that those who "don't actually know anything about their Māori side" would benefit from learning Te Ao Māori concepts, and suggests the teacher should "relate it to their background" by "linking it to the mountains and telling stories, and just trying to get them to know". This connection with tradition could be motivational to Māori, as Kara (FG1) commented, "if your tradition has something to do with it, it's cool".

Who presented the tradition to the students was less important than the fact that it was present in the learning. Tāwhiri (FG4) commented, "It would be cool if there was like a teacher that knew a lot about the place you were going to and then [they] could tell you stuff about the way it [was], if there was anything historical involving Māori there". Whether it was a Pākehā or Māori presenting the information was not important, "as long as they know that area" (Tamati, FG4) and "as long as they have the history behind it" (Tāwhiri, FG4). Tāwhiri (FG4), however, suggested there would be a difference hearing from knowledgeable Māori, "I feel like you'd look up to him, like 'woah, it's this Māori guy knowing all about this land that I can call my own'".

Not all of the rangatahi in this study felt a need to be immersed in Te Ao Māori. Kara (FG1) pointed out that, "some people, or some of them, they want to experience it differently, you know, their ancestors, they want to try and be like them; and some people just want it for, like, the activities. It's fun!" The girls in

focus group five were unanimous on this latter position, making a clear point that their Māori heritage was important, but “We are not hard-out Māori... we don’t, you know, *live like Maori’s*” and that outdoor education with some additional reference to Te Ao Maori “seems like enough” (Tui, FG5). Nevertheless, despite this qualification, Tui was clear that, “people do like to learn about Māori culture” and that there was a connection between Te Ao Māori and the uniqueness of Aotearoa New Zealand that they would not like to see lost. Aroha (FG5) reflected the thoughts of the group when commenting that “you don’t want to grow up knowing nothing” about the Te Ao Māori.

#### **4.4. “We need to encourage more Māori to do this kind of stuff”: The complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education**

The rangatahi in this study expressed a range of influences guiding their participation in outdoor education, many of which interacted in complex ways. These influences include: the cost and affordability of courses and trips; considerations of family; the influence of friends and peers; other study and future thinking priorities including time spent away from school; personal preferences; and feelings of embarrassment or not fitting in. When asked what they might change about outdoor education each focus group approached the issue differently, and the findings reflect a wide diversity of view: from “don’t change anything” (Anaru, FG2) to some quite radical and fundamental changes to the way outdoor education is envisioned and conducted, which will be discussed in the final part of this section.

This theme is presented in two parts. The first section deals with the range of factors that act as both enablers and barriers for engaging Māori students in outdoor education. The second section describes a concept presented and discussed by some study participants of a Te Ao Māori focussed outdoor education course. There is immense scope for ways in which Te Ao Māori could be better

reflected in outdoor education, and the study participant responses capture some of these possibilities.

#### **4.4.1. Factors influencing participation**

##### **4.4.1.1. "It's the cost": Affordability**

Across all of the Focus groups references to the cost of outdoor courses represented the most prominent barrier to participation of Māori (and Pasifika) students in Outdoor Education. The following exchange from focus group three illustrates this and the complex interplay of influences well:

Hemi: I've been thinking about something else as well. We need to like encourage more Māori to do this kind of stuff, 'cos, it's cool.

Rāwiri: The only thing is, they can't afford it.

Rāwiri (FG3) is speaking from experience, as he admits, "It was hard to tell my Dad that the fees were like four hundred and whatever...and he didn't really like that, but he wanted me to do it because he wanted me to get out more." There are a number of aspects of this statement worth exploring further. The first is the obvious barrier created by a course costing hundreds of dollars. The boys readily admit that the cost of the course is easily "worth it" (FG3) in terms of the experiences gained, but this choice is mediated by whānau attitudes and circumstances. Rāwiri's father encourages his participation despite the cost, because he sees the benefit in getting Rāwiri active. This clearly illustrates the influence of whānau, which can act as either an enabler or barrier depending on circumstances and personalities involved.

Aroha (FG5) had a similar reaction to the cost of the year 11 outdoor education course at 'The School':

I didn't want to have to do it because of price...well, I mean the price makes sense for the activities you do, but it's just...not something that I want to do to my parents... and say 'can I have like this much money for a subject at school'.

Aroha's comments were reflected in four out of the five focus groups, in which the burden of cost for outdoor education courses was considered in terms of its impact on parents. The concern students have is for the position in which it places the parents, in order to pay for the course. The value of the course is not in question, but its' worth relative to other learning that occurs in the school is questionable. Aroha clarifies that if this was a priority for her, her parents would support her: "If I really wanted to do it, I mean they probably would put in money for it, but it's not" (FG5). Tamati (FG4) had a similar perspective: "I'd still do it but you know it would be in the back of my head that 'Oh, it cost a lot of money'". The financial cost puts students in an awkward position in justifying the course both to themselves and their parents.

Affordability and potential ways to make outdoor education more accessible were explored by focus group three, who also made a connection with other potentially disadvantaged and minoritised groups. Rāwiri recalled the situation of a "Samoan mate" who had to "drop out" because "he couldn't afford it". Ariki commented further that "now he wishes he had stayed on". Ariki and Rāwiri recognised the loss of one of their group of friends simply due to the cost of outdoor education courses. The identification of this friend as a "Samoan mate" indicates that socio-cultural factors are an important consideration. This example is one of several references from this focus group that suggests an alliance of interests and identification between the Māori and Pasifika boys, in particular, at 'The School'. It is clear that the cost of outdoor education courses is a barrier to participation, and it's possible that, for Māori and Pasifika students seeking the best out of their education, the value of learning promoted in outdoor education is questionable relative to the cost.

#### **4.4.1.2. Friends**

Friends were a very significant reason for participation for the majority of study participants, but this was not universal. As indicated previously, the sharing of experience with friends is a key aspect of the enjoyment and stimulation of outdoor education. Whiri (FG2) described how he became interested in outdoor education:

I think it's from more my friends, when they [did] it in year 10... they just said that it was pretty much real cool, a lot of fun... they just told me the activities that they have done, how much they enjoyed it and getting away from school... and out of the city, something real different, and now I'm hooked on it.

This influence from friends appears to be a common experience, but it can work in the opposite direction. Kara (FG1) concludes that "being with other people...learning to work together with other people" was her reason for taking outdoor education, but on the other hand "some people want to take it but they don't have any friends, so they won't take it."

In Focus group five, Aroha and Tui explained why friends to share the experience with were important:

Aroha: But like... I don't know if I'd want to do it if my friends weren't doing it either because... if I was the one who had to make my own friends I would feel weird about it... because... going out and doing all these activities with no friends is kind of like...

Tui: Yeah, 'cos that is what made camp fun!

Aroha: Yeah, like getting outside with people...

However, not all students were influenced by friends, and some individuals who were motivated to experience the outdoors expressed opinions reflecting the fact they would probably "do it anyway" (Tiana, FG1).

It appears that friendships are both an enabler and a barrier to participation, depending on the balance of mutual interest and motivation within an individual's circle of friends. Lack of friends appears also to relate to a sense of embarrassment at being left alone, and standing out, and this relates to the cultural notion of *whakamā*, discussed below. The motivation to be involved with friends in outdoor education is also tempered by other factors, such as the

financial cost of being involved, other learning and career pathway priorities, and whānau expectations.

#### **4.4.1.3. Whānau**

The influence of whānau on participation was explored in some detail in Focus group four, consisting of year 11 students who had participated in the year 10 programme, but not opted for outdoor education in year 11. Tāwhiri (FG4) states: “...Cos I know a couple of people that...want to do all these things but their parents don’t let them”. The following exchange within focus group four explores this further:

Tamati: ...or... for Māoris [sic], could be that parents don’t believe that it has enough to do with them? Like it’s just done for a camping trip and they don’t learn anything.

Tāwhiri: ‘Cos it’s just like, ‘oh yeah we are going on camp’, but if it was like ‘we are going on a camp where we will like understand about the land and then how Māori used to live’, and things like that, I feel like that would encourage families more.

The boys understand here that outdoor education is competing with other subject areas for selection, and that parents do not often see the value in outdoor education as a pathway to achievement. Outdoor educators need to “sell” courses so that parents (and students) will see the benefits are meaningful, and not just a collection of recreational experiences, or, as Nikau (FG4) puts it, “pretty much just like advertising the product”. Nikau makes a connection with marketing and promotion, possibly suggesting outdoor education has an image problem in the senior school. Tāwhiri connects learning about the land and Māori traditions as a possible attraction of outdoor education to Māori, and a potential influence with parents.

The active involvement of whānau members in the outdoors is a factor in the choice to participate in outdoor education. Kara (FG1) mentioned that her brother participated in senior OE at the school, and that this was significant in her

choice of outdoor education. She also related a story about an uncle who the whānau holiday with who introduced her to outdoor experiences. Tui (FG5) mentioned her father being active in the outdoors, and Rawiri repeatedly referred to gathering *kai moana*, diving and fishing experiences he has had with his whānau. Family involvement in outdoor activities provides opportunities for experiencing the outdoors and reduces the relevance of a formal course of learning in outdoor education. As Tui (FG5) notes, her “dad does this all the time, so he takes me, he’ll probably just take me out on a weekend”.

Convincing parents of the relevance of an outdoor education course that costs a lot of money was a potential issue for Tamati (FG4), who noted that it would be important for outdoor education staff to “[make] it like so that nothing you do is, like, not worth it, everything you do is like for a purpose”. This prompted Nikau (FG4) to suggest teachers need to “sell it” better to parents, which might require promoting the cultural understandings to be gained from a culturally responsive course, or the potential benefits for future career prospects.

#### **4.4.1.4. “Not the path they want in life”: subject choices and future thinking**

For most of the Māori students in this study outdoor education was not seen as a key element of future job prospects, reflected in a post-it note from Focus group four that stated that outdoor education was perhaps “not the path they want to take in life” (PIN FG4), and another that suggested some Māori students were “maybe just not into that stuff” (PIN FG4).

Mere (FG5) is a case in point, having decided other options are more important for her future:

Mmmm, yeah, I don’t know, I don’t find, like just personally, I don’t think outdoor ed, like for me, it’s just not a... a top priority as a subject to take at school, because I feel like I could...oh, I don’t know if I could learn about this stuff, but I could probably do it without actually needing to be like, taught how to do all of this stuff.

Outdoor education is positioned as something which Mere can get by without, as either she can develop these skills and knowledge herself, or she won't need it anyway. This reflects that, for many Māori, outdoor education is not considered relevant when looking at future opportunities and challenges.

#### **4.4.1.5. Embarrassment, whakamā and “being singled out”**

For some of the Māori students in the study, the concern at being singled out for attention was enough to give them pause before choosing outdoor education, or fully participating in some activities within the courses. I have drawn on the Te Ao Māori concept of whakamā (Metge, 1986), as I believe it represents this experience well, and has been identified in other studies with teenage Māori (Palmer, 2000). Hemi, FG3 reflects on being a minority within outdoor education classes, “It’s just, kind of embarrassing sometimes when you’re Māori”.

Tāwhiri (FG4) grapples with some of the issues that Māori from different iwi face when they are learning Te Ao Māori content in formal learning. He suggests that outdoor practice take into account other tribal perspectives,

...not just going to one, like, place, so like Ngai Tahu [places], like going somewhere for like Tuhoe or other tribes, or like just as a whole,...as a whole Māori culture, instead of individual tribes, ‘cos It’s like pointing someone out, no-one likes to be pointed out and not mentioned.

Tāwhiri references the notion of whakamā in this statement as the discomfort of being singled out or passed over and not recognised. This raises one of the critical issues in presenting Māori knowledge in an urban, cosmopolitan learning population, that of both over generalising the Māori experience, or of narrowing too closely to the exclusion of Māori of other affiliations.

Focus group five discussed some of the stereotypes that they experienced around their identity as Māori:

Mere: People think Māori are supposed to be good at outdoor ed?  
Not good, but supposed to be used to like, roughing it.  
Tui like, the old days.

- Mere        Yeah, like hunting and stuff so people just assume that if you're Māori then you like, you already know how to do that stuff.
- Aroha:     Yeah... It's how you grow up, kind of thing.
- Mere:       Yeah ...even though that's not really true.

Being understood as an individual and not being treated generically as “Māori” is important to these young women. This is a subtle pressure they experience, and could have potential to deter them from involvement. Aroha (FG5) comments: “That would kind of put me off, if that's a problem for me then I would kind of go ‘oh, I don't really want to bother with that’.” And Mere supports this, saying, “Yeah, because if you are like joining some kind of activity, people might pin it on you, like ‘Oh she's Māori... she knows what to do’, Like ‘yeah, she can do it, she should know how to do it, kind of thing.’”

#### ***4.4.2. A pedagogical shift: a Te Ao Māori focussed outdoor Education***

In identifying how outdoor education might adapt to better serve Māori students, one suggestion that came up in three of the focus groups was the idea of a Māori focussed course. This prompted discussion that saw some in favour of Māori only courses, and others clearly in favour of a much broader inclusion.

Hemi (FG3) proposed the idea of a Māori outdoor education course in his focus group:

I think it would be good to have, like, your own Māori outdoor ed class..., but like even do... different activities... Stuff that ain't gonna cost that much, but so everyone can get outdoors. ‘Cos... it's basically the cost that, like, gets... most people...

Hemi connects the issue of course costs with the outdoor activities utilised within programmes, highlighting an inclusive approach that would remove cost as a

barrier. For him, Māori together, doing different activities would be a positive thing.

I think it would increase our confidence as well... being around like other Māori, 'cos... in my class, its only, like there's only two, I'm always talking to Manu because... It's just, kind of embarrassing sometimes when you're Māori... 'cos there's only like [ a few] of us Māori in the [whole] class.

The isolation of Māori students within the subject is clearly an issue for some, and a Māori-only course could remove this as a barrier. Ariki (FG3) supported this given his experience as a minority, being one of the “only ones in our class as well”. Identification with other Māori and the awareness of being a minority within the class reflects some of the tension Māori students feel in their involvement with outdoor education.

The concept of bringing Te Ao Māori to the centre of the teaching and learning clearly resonated with some focus group participants, but not all supported this idea. Rāwiri (FG3) didn't think a Māori focussed course would be feasible, as “there's just not many Maoris that would be keen to learn about the actual Māori ways, the maraes [sic] and stuff”. Anaru and Whiri (FG2) were concerned it would break up established relationships, and that OE was fine as the course it was. Mere, Aroha and Tui (FG5) also questioned the degree to which they would like to engage with a Te Ao Māori focussed outdoor education course. Tui commented, “Yeah, well... you know, we are not hard-out Māori... we don't... live like Maori's so [the current course] seems like enough”. Mere and Aroha both agreed, but were careful to be clear that this was a personal position, true “for us” (Mere, FG5), and that this position might not necessarily shared by other Māori students in ‘The School’.

The idea that Māori experience outdoor education any differently to their Pākehā peers also brought mixed responses. Some thought that there was no apparent difference in the experience of Pākehā and Māori in outdoor education. This is reflected in comments like “everyone gets treated the same” (PIN, FG3); “to me it feels like everyone experienced OE the same way” (PIN, FG2); “we all get

the same experience” (PIN, FG3). For focus group four, boys who formed a ‘tight’ friend–group on the year 10 camp, traditional schooling, including the classroom delivery of outdoor education, subdued their natural personalities, and did not allow them to express themselves as Māori (and Pasifika) identities. Tāwhiri (FG4) expressed this by saying that a course of outdoor education for and about Māori “would be funnier...’cos, like... Māoris [sic]... put on this Pākehā... persona because they don’t want to be judged to be different...so you wouldn’t have to be different you could just be yourself...it would be funny”. Tāwhiri’s frank expression highlights the pressure he experienced to assimilate or adopt a Pākehā mode of behaviour within school, to avoid standing out when in a minority. Although he thought that it was “general society that’s made us feel that way”, the boys suggested that within the company and support of other Māori the boys they can relax and be themselves as Māori and Pasifika identities. Tamati (FG4) felt the same, “Cos you wouldn’t act the way you would at home with like a bunch of people you go to school with... ‘cos when you’re with close mates they know what you’re like and they are more comfortable with that”.

This prompted a discussion about what exactly causes them to feel this way, and what could be done about it. Tāwhiri responded that “ I think it’s just... I feel that it’s more than just a class... like it’s beyond the classroom”. There are a number of potential implications to these comments. Outdoor education has the potential to allow them to express themselves in ways that they feel are truer to themselves, but only in the right company. The feeling of a constrained identity is much wider than the learning environment, and is a societal issue, which could be confronted within the learning environment.

Ariki (FG3) was not convinced that a Māori focussed course should be just for students identifying as Māori, commenting “I think... anyone should be able to do it if they want to experience the Māori ways or something”. Rāwiri (FG3) identified with this perspective and could relate to the positive experience of learning more about a Māori perspective for both Pākehā and Māori who were not connected to their heritage:

...I'm pretty sure most Pākehā haven't been to a big hall before and had a lot of mattresses on the ground and everyone with their shoes and socks off, learning Māori and singing Waiata and stuff. It would be... different... for Pākehā... and other Māori that haven't experienced it.

This perspective suggests the boys were embracing a very inclusive approach to learning, and connecting this learning with cross-cultural understanding. This inclusive thinking went further, and Ariki (FG3) made that point that "Some teachers would probably want to do it as well", expressing thinking that goes beyond an individual-focussed model of learning, and opens a door to a discussion of reciprocal learning that would educate teachers as well. Tāwhiri (FG4) expected a Te Ao Māori approach to outdoor education to lead to better involvement, with "everyone pulling their weight"; demonstrating mutual responsibility, "so like no-one would be sitting there complaining"; there would be a focus on inclusion, acceptance and full participation, "like a sense of involvement, like you want to feel like you are involved and contributing with everyone else"; and feelings of "equality" within the group, "supporting and communicating" with each other.

There were a wide range of suggestions from across the groups for Te Ao Māori contexts include *noho marae*<sup>50</sup> trips (Hemi, FG3), Weaving (Kara, FG1), *Waka* (Tiana, FG1), Fishing (Hana, FG1), Eeling (Rāwiri, FG3), going up a Māori mountain (Ariki, FG3), visiting a Māori river (Rāwiri, FG3), Waiata and singing (Hemi, FG3). Learning Māori names for places was common to four of the five focus groups, and Rāwiri (FG3) expressed this as "hearing the Māori side of it". There was a sense that we didn't need to travel far to experience these things, as Rāwiri (FG3) indicated an interest in knowing about: "the area around us from where we'll be, so like... the river, where it comes from or something, or where the beach stones come from... people who lived there, like our ancestors"

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<sup>50</sup> *Noho marae* is a term for an overnight stay on a Marae, with associated traditional Marae practices

Focus group one engaged with the idea of *waka*. Kara compared *waka* to kayaking, an activity she had previously spoken of being nervous about; she felt safer in a *waka*, "...because you've got more people in there as well". Tiana saw the value in collaborating in a common task: "... you feel more like a team because you're both doing [performs rowing motion]... everyone's doing [it]", and Hana took this a step further to connect teamwork with developing friendships because "you are with your friends". Each of the girls in the focus group was attracted to the idea of *waka* paddling for different, but complementary reasons, but it resonated with the girls in this discussion due to its multi-modal connection with personal needs and values, making it a rich prospective context to explore.

The potential of an outdoor education course focussed on aspects of a Te Ao Māori perspective excited some of the young Māori participants in this study. Others felt that the current course met their level of interest and engagement adequately, and did not see the need for major change. This suggests that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to Māori engagement in the outdoors, but for some Māori a transition to a greater focus on their cultural traditions would be important for their development of identity and purpose, and their connection to natural environments.

## Chapter Five

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### Whakaaro: Discussion

The Key research questions for this study were to establish an account of the experiences of Māori students in outdoor education, to identify the degree to which outdoor education was a culturally responsive pedagogy, and to explore the implications for outdoor education practice. The findings in the previous chapter presented the experiences, opinions and perspectives of Māori students of outdoor education in four themes: the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive experiences of outdoor education; the distinctive practices of outdoor education makes learning enjoyable and engaging; the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history; and the complexity of engaging Māori in participation in outdoor education

The discussion of these findings in this chapter will be presented in two sections. Section one discusses each of the themes and how they connect with each other and the wider outdoor education literature. In Section two I consider the degree to which current practices of outdoor education align with culturally responsive pedagogy and I then propose some possible Te Ao Māori pedagogical principles that align with the suggestions from rangatahi about how outdoor education could adapt to meet their needs and be supportive of their Māori identity.

#### **5.1. Section One: Experiences of Māori students in outdoor education**

This section will approach each theme separately, with the understanding that the themes are closely inter-related. In the first two themes the rangatahi's positive association with being out of the classroom and engaged in practical activities was connected to sharing these experiences with others, and in some ways these themes are integral to each other. However, there are clear links with

the other two identified themes as well. For example, the inherent sociality of outdoor education discussed in theme one is an attractive feature to Māori students to enrol and participate, as discussed in theme four; in addition, a learning environment based on mutual support and concern as described in theme two, makes for an ideal setting for learning about Te Ao Māori as discussed in theme three. These interconnections provide a sense of cohesion to the integration of Te Ao Māori principles of learning and relating, which will be discussed in section two of this chapter.

### ***5.1.1. “We’re in it together” – the importance of shared experience and relationships to positive outdoor experiences***

A stand-out feature of the accounts of the rangatahi in outdoor education in this study was the predominantly social nature of their experiences. “Being with friends” was, as Kara (FG1) expressed it, a highlight of her time in the field in outdoor education, regardless of the context of learning. This is not entirely unexpected, as previous studies into student experience in outdoor education have reported similar findings (M. Brown, 2012d; E. Smith et al., 2010). This finding does however contrast with the dominant model of outdoor education discussed in the review of literature, with its focus on individual personal development. Experience as a socially mediated aspect of learning has been suggested by a number of scholars (Bell, 1993; Fox, 2008; Seaman, 2007), in contrast to the individualistic, mechanistic and deterministic learning that tends to characterise much outdoor and experiential education practice (Beames & Brown, 2014; Cosgriff & Brown, 2011). The rangatahi in this study indicate that for them the social learning and engagement is perhaps more important than individual outcomes focussed on skills and personal development.

A focus on individual experience in outdoor adventure activities, without recognition of their cultural heritage, their social networks, and without connecting them to their heritage through the outdoor contexts they learn in, denies rangatahi in outdoor education an opportunity to develop holistically. According to Seaman (2007, 2008), the individualism inherent in experiential learning obscures other ways of knowing and learning, especially those that

include the social production of knowledge and that adhere to a cultural framework of tradition. Brookes (2000, p. 2, cited in M. Brown & Heaton, 2015) similarly indicates that a focus on individual learning and development reduces the capacity “to deal with social and cultural dimensions of experience” and Zink (2010a), argues that our relationship with places are a product of time and culture, and this is mediated by the inherent sociality of the majority of outdoor education experiences. For the rangatahi in this study, therefore, outdoor education was inherently social, and it was this sociality, the influence primarily of friends and peers, that helped them develop meaning from the experiences.

The rangatahi participating in the study frequently indicated the inclusive nature of outdoor experiences, and the enjoyment and stimulation of getting to know others in a setting that was different to their other classroom-based schooling. Whiri and Anaru (FG2) suggested that the highlights of their experiences in outdoor education were due to the sharing of those experiences with people they have come to know in deeper ways than they would have in the classroom. This accords closely with Smith et al (E. Smith et al., 2010) who report that students on school camps experience a more authentic social interaction than at school. In addition to developing deeper connection with friends, an important aspect of their outdoor education experiences was meeting new people, like the international students in the class, and establishing new relationships. Outdoor locations, often novel and sometimes challenging, provide a pretext that presents opportunities to develop these relationships as the participants share an encounter with something new and stimulating. Ariki (FG3) expressed this as “experiencing stuff with them”, and Rāwiri (FG3) commented that “we can both experience the outdoors and learn about each other”. A key ingredient in establishing this climate of inclusion is mutual support.

Support of each other in outdoor education contexts is related to notions of caring in order to develop community. Whiri (FG2) described this as “getting closer together” and “getting to know more about each other so we become comfortable”. Quay (2002) found that teenage students on a five day camp exhibited more caring for one another than in regular classes. This finding

supported earlier work suggesting that caring is a key element in building community in outdoor education (Quay, Dickinson, & Nettleton, 2000), and that adolescents in particular require practice to develop an ethic of caring. Quay et al (2000) suggest teachers and other adults or older peers have an important role in modelling caring behaviour, and that outdoor education in particular offers opportunities to practice caring skills in ways that are not possible in the classroom. Caring as community building is an authentic expression of the Te Ao Māori principles of *whanaungatanga*<sup>51</sup> and *manaakitanga*<sup>52</sup>, and this will be discussed in section two.

The prospect of sharing new and challenging experiences with friends was a significant motivation for enrolment and participation in outdoor education. This was exemplified by Whiri (FG2), whose friends recruited him to outdoor education by telling stories about their outdoor experiences of “something real different” and “getting out of the school and the city”. The girls in focus group five suggested they carefully considered who they would take outdoor education with; that they consider carefully the composition of the group they will be with before opting to take outdoor education; and that participating with friends is an active choice. In contrast, the lack of engagement or disinterest of friends can act as an inhibitor of engagement, as evidenced by Kara’s comment, that “some people want to take [outdoor education] but they don’t have any friends, so they won’t take it”. There is significant support in the literature for the influence of peers on participation (E.g. Sammett, 2010; Watson, 2016; Whittington et al., 2016), and it needs to be considered carefully by educators as they design and assess their programmes. As Zink (2010b, p. 29) suggests, perhaps “starting with social relationships rather than an individual/ group dichotomy when thinking about groups may provide a point of departure to examine accepted practices around groups in outdoor education”.

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<sup>51</sup> *Whanaungatanga* family-based relationships, or those that are characterised by a similar degree of interpersonal support and care.

<sup>52</sup> *Manaakitanga* means care, hospitality, generosity. See Glossary

Strategies teachers use to engage students socially should consider the use of existing relationships and support networks. Arbitrarily separating students into groups where they must establish trust, interdependence and cohesion may foster elements of personal development for some individuals, but for others may undermine engagement due to isolation from support. The influence of peers to engage others or to hold them back from learning was identified by the *Te Kotahitanga* research project, in which students identified the potential for friends to be both supportive and distracting to their learning (Bishop et al., 2003). Hemi (FG3) was referring to this when voicing his frustration that friends can hold each other back. Hemi's (FG3) suggestion that "we need to encourage more Māori to be doing this stuff" contains an implication that Māori students may need social support to be engaged, even if they are self-motivated. Outdoor education is frequently promoted on the basis of its challenge to a participant's 'comfort zone' and students in this situation seek support of friends before confronting their limits and limitations. Aroha and Tui in focus group five suggested that they would feel "weird" about doing all these outdoor education activities without friends. The support and engagement of friends makes all the difference when encountering novel and challenging situations.

Novelty as a feature of outdoor education will be considered further in discussion about the distinctive practices of outdoor education, but it is important to establish the connection of this feature of outdoor programmes and its role in the development of relationships. Novelty and uncertainty contribute to a sense of adventure in outdoor education activities, regardless of the level of risk involved, and this can be an important feature in generating an experience that will connect individuals. Learning to know others on a deeper level, and to base relationships in 'authentic' interaction, makes the context of learning more meaningful. Zink (2010a, p. 29) encourages an exploration of how learning can be re-oriented to "foreground our fundamental sociality" by asking the question of "who are you?" rather than the individual orientation of the dominant model that asks the question "Who am I?". The development of effective and meaningful social skills

and connections through outdoor activities is perhaps more realisable than the ephemeral development of an individual's sense of competence or self-concept.

Kara (FG1) related the holistic experience of being with people, sharing music and being out of school as being the memorable aspects of an outdoor trip, relegating the teaching and learning programme to a contextual element. This raises questions about the affective connection in learning, and the role of group relationship dynamics in facilitating experiences that are meaningful and lasting. There was certainly an individual element to Kara's experiences, and each individual responds differently to these experiences, but in the actual moment of the experience, others were present, and had a role in shaping the experience. Thus, Quay's (2017) term "cultureplace" seems relevant here to describe this interaction of individuals with place, and that far from being autonomous and distinct, individuals' responses to space are contextualised by their relation to others, both human and non-human.

The process of creating of their own stories and narrative accounts about outdoor education initiates a space where students are able to present different responses to the events, while still retaining a part in a story that is bigger than their individual role or experience. The students in this study assisted each other in re-tracing the steps of events, and their narratives reminded each other of minor details they may have forgotten, glossed over or seen in a different light. This illuminated the way in which adolescents co-create meaning from their experiences of novel and challenging situations with friends and peers, creating relational bonds in the process.

The exposure to novel situations and experiences, sharing the experience with others and then telling stories about it could characterise the teenage outdoor education experience. The boys in focus group four, describing their experience of swimming in an alpine stream provide a good example of this. As evidenced by the rangatahi in this study, adolescents in particular appear to find this engagement particularly affirming. Telling shared stories creates a connection between individuals, and gives them a space to shape their own meanings from

events. Smith et al (2010) propose temporary community to describe the social adaptations that students in the outdoors make to new groupings and new experiences. What needs further research is the way these meanings relate to the 'real world' once the students return to regular schooling and home environments as questions remain about the durability of these meanings over time.

### ***5.1.2. "You get to go out and actually do stuff" – the distinctive practices of teaching and learning outdoors***

Outdoor education was seen by the rangatahi as a significant contrast to other aspects of their school routine. While most of their reflections were related to experiences out of school, on trips and excursions, nevertheless the relatively active and interactive, relational and dialogic nature of outdoor education was noted. As Whiri (FG2) summed it up, outdoor education was "a lot easier to understand", "based around us" and about "getting to know each other" (Whiri, FG2).

The rangatahi in this study made it clear that they value novel experiences. Burrige and Carpenter (2013) suggest outdoor education is well placed to foster engagement with learning, through connection to new places and learning contexts. Novelty encompasses the encounter with new experiences, situations, sensations and perceptions. At its simplest, novelty is the experience of something new, but for the Māori students in this study, this is a concept framed in every-day language as "something I'd never done before" (Anaru, FG2), "a new experience" (Ariki, FG3) or "not something you see every day" (Tamati FG4). Novelty challenges the individual to adapt to or accommodate the new, and as a result is intrinsically stimulating. For adolescents in an outdoor education context, this intrinsic stimulation becomes a shared experience, and this creates relational bonds between individuals. The inherent sociality of outdoor education finds much of its basis in this interaction with experiences that are "not something I've ever done before...with all my mates" (Anaru, FG2).

The novelty of adventure based learning activities and excursions out of school was contrasted by the rangatahi in this study with other classroom learning

situations. This response mirrors findings from the *Te Kotahitanga* research, where students identified classroom practices as a barrier to achievement (Bishop et al., 2003). Specifically mentioned in the *Te Kotahitanga* research were copying off the board, limited opportunities to enjoy learning with their teacher, too much time writing and inflexible and boring lesson structures (Bishop et al., 2003, pp. 52-54). These same practices were raised by the rangatahi in this study. In contrast, novelty was consistently cited by the study participants as a positive aspect of their experience. A number of scholars (see for example Beames & Brown, 2014, 2016; M. Brown & Beames, 2017; M. Brown & Fraser, 2009) question the apparent fixation of outdoor adventure education with risk, and suggest that a more contemporary notion of adventure is more akin to “embodied engagement” (M. Brown & Beames, 2017, p. 297). This notion aligns well with a focus on bringing students into contact with new sights and sensations that they experience when they venture beyond the confines of the routine, regularity and order of the school environment.

While notions of embodied engagement with the outdoors might be easy to relate to remote natural environments, even the local environment and community can be sufficiently stimulating if presented in a new light, and supported with insights from socio-cultural storying, multi-disciplinary investigation and hands on engagement. Within the city, natural sites carry layers of history, and the story of these as relatively unchanged places juxtaposes with the constant change in the urban environment, as expressed by Tamati’s description of his experience of a remnant forest within the city limits. This perspective challenges the notion that outdoor education should occur in remote locations for students to appreciate features of the outdoor environment. Taken for granted assumptions about places can be challenged, and ‘home’ can be seen in a new light. A number of scholars (see for example Brown 2009, 2013; Taylor 2014, Townsend 2011, 2014) have presented a case for locating outdoor education activities in the local area, emphasising existing connections to places, but also allowing students to see the places they live in a new perspective.

The enjoyment of being out of school and out of the city expressed by the study participants did not seem to be related to a significant distance from the school, but rather the exposure to new places. Tāwhiri is impressed with the view from Kura Tāwhiti, even though this includes a view of the main highway; Tamati by the presence of remnant bush within the city; while Kara simply enjoys being in the van and listening to music. One of the attractions of outdoor education is definitely a break in the routine of school and its “imposition” as Dewey (1938/1997) described it, of institutional organisation with its schedules, classification, rules of order, rules of conduct and conformity of behaviour (p. 17). For the rangatahi in this study the mere act of going outside the classroom with its “straight lines of desks” (Tamati, FG4) was a welcome change.

An important aspect contributing to the sense of difference from the regularity of school life was the degree of choice and autonomy experienced on camp. This was described by Aroha (FG5) as being able to do “a bit of what you like, and what you want” and by Tui as being able to “wander off” and “do our own thing”. Choice and autonomy were seen as an important and memorable feature of outdoor experiences by the rangatahi, although these notions were variably and individually by each student. Variety and choice, then, are important in the provision of activities, so that individuals can find their own level of challenge, and a context they feel comfortable to challenge themselves in. Bishop and Berryman (Bishop et al., 2003) identify *tino rangatiratanga*<sup>53</sup> as an important principle in the *Kura Kaupapa Māori* movement, and this concept has some application with Māori students in exercising choice and self-determination in their learning. The rangatahi of this study valued opportunities to exercise agency and autonomy, especially in terms of exploring new places, like the campsite and Kura Tāwhiti, for themselves. They valued spontaneity, and opportunities to try new things, like swimming in the river, or scrambling amongst boulders. Beames and Brown (2017, p. 301) suggest that learners “have input into the selection of

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<sup>53</sup> *Tino rangatiratanga* can be translated as independence, autonomy and self-determination.

challenges, rather than have challenges imposed upon them” and that “real world challenges” are both meaningful and demand “investment from the learner”.

Challenge as a feature of outdoor education was often referenced by the rangatahi, and linked to fun, enjoyment and appreciation. An example of this was Anaru (FG2) describing the experience as “pushing myself to do something I’ve never done before”. Beames and Brown (2016, p. 84) position “*challenge that requires mastery*” as a key strand in their concept of *Adventurous Learning*, but it would appear from the rangatahi in this study, that challenges are very personal and contextual, and do not require elements of mastery in order to be intrinsically enjoyable or stimulating. As with the discussion of novelty, challenge does not require risk to be present, as Brown (2017) and Townsend (2011, 2014, 2015) make clear. Presenting learners with novel experiences and challenge can be adequately achieved in the local environment, but with potential for more meaning and relevance. These scholars describe self-powered journeys in the local environment, with aspects of inquiry-based learning, where challenges are contextual and often meaningful as there is a connection to their every-day and on-going experience.

Spontaneity, autonomy and challenge were also connected to an appreciation of the outdoors. The response of Anaru upon reaching a snowy peak; of Tāwhiri responding to being in the bush; Hemi’s appreciation of the view after a strenuous walk, and the boys in focus group four responding to a starry sky are all examples of this sense of appreciation. These experiences are very personal, but were highly relatable; the rangatahi had differing perspectives on what moments, places and contexts were special to them, but were able to relate to the experience of their peers in some way. Allowing students the space and time to experience the numinous and serendipitous is worth further consideration.

The rangatahi in this study valued these opportunities to learn socially outside of the managed environment of the school, but there are complex interactions evident between opportunities for autonomy and discovery and the contexts of learning, which are open to some modification to make these

experiences more responsive to the places visited, and the communities that exist in these places. An important aspect of this, for the rangatahi in this study, was the presence of a Te Ao Māori perspective, and the telling of the Māori stories of those places and communities.

***5.1.3. “To learn more about our culture and what happened in History”: the importance to students of making connections with Te Ao Māori through experience, stories of places and history***

The rangatahi in this study were almost unanimous in their interest in learning more about their cultural history and about their connection, as Māori, to the places they experienced in outdoor education. The rangatahi identified the potential within outdoor education for these stories to be told by knowledgeable educators in addition to and to complement the established programme of activities. There was a corresponding desire for the rangatahi to be able to play their role in passing the traditions, values and skills on to the next generation.

***5.1.3.1. “To do what our ancestors would have done”- making connections with a Te Ao Māori perspective on outdoor places***

Tāwhiri (FG4) viewed outdoor education as one way of connecting with the land, and to learn more about their ancestors’ experiences, even if it was not a focal point of the learning context. Merely being in natural outdoor settings was evocative, and helped them “understand that’s how it used to be when Māori first settled” (Tāwhiri, FG4). Tiana (FG1) typified the response from most of the rangatahi, commenting “it would be great to learn more about it” and “so cool to do what our ancestors would have done”.

The rangatahi in this study wanted to hear stories, they wanted the history and they wanted the exposure to the rich traditions surrounding the places that they experience in outdoor education. The attraction of stories supports a number of scholars who have proposed the power of storytelling to connect students with places (see for example (P. Payne & Wattchow, 2008; A. Stewart, 2008; Townsend, 2015; Wattchow & Brown, 2011). The key aspect of this in terms of the needs of the rangatahi of this study is to make these stories inclusive of Te Ao Māori

traditions, histories and cultural concepts. Storying place is an important aspect in re-telling the history of Māori and the significance of places, and providing a depth of experience that helps connect students with places and how place is tied to personal identity. In this way, developing a familiarity with the outdoors helps an individual understand who they are, *where* they have come from, and what they exist for (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Geoff Park puts this succinctly: “a sense of place is a fundamental human need” (Park, 1996, p. 320).

Rāwiri (FG3), for example, wanted to know about Māori names of rivers, mountains and their history, where his cultural traditions had been obscured by names of colonists and explorers. This is an attempt to decolonise the landscapes at the centre of the experiences of ‘The School’s outdoor education programme. Rāwiri also wanted to know about the plants that could be found in a place, and how these were used in traditional Māori practices. A number of other participants expressed an appreciation for local sites of interest, such as Kara and Tiana (FG1) explaining their experiences at *Motu Koere*<sup>54</sup> and Tamati speaking about *Pūtaringamotu*<sup>55</sup>. This may involve educators specifically choosing learning contexts where this rich history exists, and where there are people to tell it, instead of removing students from what they know, to travel to what they perceive as ‘strange’ and remote contexts that the dominant model of outdoor education tends to seek out.

Wattchow and Brown (2011, p. 189) refer to stories as a “pedagogical strategy” to connect nature and culture, and once modelled and practiced, learners can be inducted into presenting their own stories and cultural knowledge. Paul Sinclair, an Australian historian, wrote “stories bring nature into culture and ascribe meanings to places, species and processes which would otherwise remain silent to the human ear” (cited in Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 189). In order to do this, an educator must know their places well, and have a reserve of stories to tell at the right moment, the result of a process of “apprenticing ourselves to

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<sup>54</sup> A pseudonym for a local Island that the girls sea-kayaked to and walked around

<sup>55</sup> This is an area of remnant forest within the urban confines of the city in which the study was based. In this case the little known Māori local name for the site is used.

outdoor places” (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 190). Investing in place and culturally responsive pedagogies means interweaving stories, localised knowledge and specific information with the activities and social interaction that occurs within the class setting.

Tāwhiri’s suggestion that story-ing and learning about Te Ao Māori connections in “down-time”, “sitting down and talking about what happened there... or how its significant” reflect this concept of “in-situ, face to face” teaching and learning (Wattchow & Brown, 2011, p. 189), suggesting that this type of learning could be supplementary to the body of learning already being delivered. It also suggests a pedagogical relationship with students, characterised by of a degree of flexibility and responsivity, and that educators are not only responsive to inquiry from engaged and interested students, but foster this with teaching moments that will stimulate and inspire students to want to know more. This face to face, dialogic and reciprocal teacher-learner interaction is consistent with elements of Bishop et al.’s (2007) *Culturally responsive pedagogy of relations*.

The re-storying of place is a key argument of Penetito (2009, p. 19) who describes it as “breathing life into history”, as “a counter-balance to the condition of historical amnesia, a learned forgetting, that is so deeply embedded...”. Brown (2008, 2012b), Townsend (2011, 2014, 2015) and Taylor (2014) use storying in which students themselves research and present stories associated with the places they pass through. This allows the learner some autonomy in choosing what to research, and allows them to connect to their own networks of knowledge, including local tradition. In re-telling these stories, they are preserved and may be passed on to future generations, and this is the focus of the second sub-theme, which I will now discuss.

#### **5.1.3.2. “Passing it on”: intergenerational responsibility and learning for community**

The second aspect to this theme involved student’s implicit view that learning about their heritage and Te Ao Māori involved a responsibility to take their own turn to pass this on. This perception of responsibility was common to

all focus groups, and was reflected in terms that align with the Te Ao Māori notion of *kaitiakitanga*<sup>56</sup>, such as Anaru's (FG2) comment that "... we really need to look after [the environment]... 'cos... they looked after it for us, so we need to do it for the next generation and so on." This principle of stewardship is integral to a Te Ao Māori perspective on engaging with outdoor environments. This reflects Reti's (2012) ambition for Māori youth to "venture into the outdoors with the mind-set to give back to the outdoors..." (p.149), and reflects the reciprocity of responsibility in Te Ao Māori across generations.

Bishop et al (2003, p. 12) apply the Kura Kaupapa māori principle of *Taonga tuku iho*<sup>57</sup>, or "treasures from the ancestors" in contemporary contexts as a metaphoric phrase for cultural aspirations, respecting individuals' *tapu*<sup>58</sup> ("specialness") and teaching individuals to acknowledge their *mana*<sup>59</sup> ("Potentiality for power"). In an educational setting this means "Māori language, knowledge, culture and values are normal, valid and legitimate, indeed are a valid guide to classroom interactions" (Bishop et al., 2003, p. 12). For Māori students, including those in this study, the presentation of knowledge, skills and stories relating to their cultural history appears to be a strategy that will engage them, but also to connect them to their heritage. These *Taonga* are then their responsibility to pass down again.

The rangatahi in this study wanted to do some of the things their ancestors would have done. Each student had a different picture of this. For some, like Tāwhiri (FG4) it was learning about surviving in the bush; for some, like Rāwiri (FG3) it was learning the names that were given to rivers streams and features of the environment; for others, like Tiana (FG1) it was experiencing modes of travel like walking through the forest, or paddling waka. This has some connection to embodying an experience to gain a better understanding of the place, and greater

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<sup>56</sup> *Kaitiakitanga* is guardianship, stewardship or trusteeship over valued resources

<sup>57</sup> *Taonga Tuku iho* is an heirloom, something handed down, a piece of heritage

<sup>58</sup> *Tapu* is often regarded as sacred, set apart and dedicated to the Atua; individuals also possess *tapu*, which can be gained or lost; closely related to *mana*

<sup>59</sup> *Mana* is the degree of prestige, power, authority or integrity of an individual, and is closely related to the notion of personal *tapu*.

appreciation of the life lived by *tipuna*<sup>60</sup> in previous generations. This connection with the past was frequently expressed as an obligation the rangatahi felt to “pass on the tradition” (Tiana, FG1), or “pass it on, that information to other people” (Anaru, FG2).

#### **5.1.4. “We need to encourage more Māori to do this kind of stuff” – The complexity of engaging Māori participation in outdoor education**

The final theme relates to the complex and personal range of influences that interact in the decision to engage in outdoor education for Māori. The rangatahi in this study were all positively inclined towards outdoor education. They had positive memories of their involvement and expressed interest in participating in the outdoors in the future in some form. Not all, however, saw the value in continuing to participate in senior secondary outdoor education programmes in the future within ‘The School’. Their perspectives on this were complex, indicating a number of competing priorities under consideration, and individual differences in terms of the personal orientation of the particular young adult.

A powerful reaction was expressed regarding the cost of outdoor education courses. For some students this was not a primary issue, but had some bearing on their decision to choose to take outdoor education further. For others, and friends associated with the rangatahi in the study, the cost of outdoor education was a considerable barrier. Zink and Boyes (2007) identified the cost of outdoor education as the most significant barrier to teaching outdoor education reported by educators. Recent interpretations of the ombudsman (Patterson, 2014) on school fees and the resulting Ministry of Education circular (Ministry of Education, 2013a) forced many schools to re-appraise both the way course costs are passed on to students and also the very high costs of many outdoor education programmes (Irwin, 2015). Campbell-Price and Cosgriff (2017, p. 10) insist that “fundamental questions of equity related to access still persist”, and this study’s

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<sup>60</sup> *Tipuna* are ancestors.

findings support this. Providing affordable outdoor education activities that can be fully inclusive irrespective of financial background is something that the students in this study saw as a priority. While the rangatahi in this study were clear that cost is not a single deciding factor, it is significant in their decision-making, and its impact on decision-making when choosing outdoor education places pressure on relationships both with whānau and friends.

Addressing the high cost of outdoor courses can be seen as a direct challenge to the dominant model of outdoor education, as it questions activities that often demand high levels of leadership and expertise, investment in specialised equipment, travel, and extended time away from the school site (and consequent teacher relief costs), all of which contribute to costs to schools and those passed on as ‘course contributions’<sup>61</sup> to whānau. Any discussion of inclusive and culturally responsive practices in outdoor education must include the barriers and equity issues presented by course costs. A course designed around an accessible level of cost, with few demands on equipment, and which allow students to learn from their own experience rather than have the experience moderated by another, may provide a firm basis in which to promote Māori achievement, and to generate authentic cross cultural learning for those who engage with it.

For some rangatahi, cost was only one factor in decision-making that also considered career and education pathways, personal goals and objectives, whānau and friends. Adolescent decisions are made, Payne (2002) suggests, individually and autonomously with a basis in personal considerations that consider the needs of the individual before the influence of peers and whānau. Students in this study, however, identify whānau as a key concern in their decision-making, particularly with respect to covering the cost of outdoor education courses. The rangatahi in this study indicate that they carefully consider parental perspectives and positions on course selection, but also that parents are motivated to support the choices and autonomy of their rangatahi. Nikau and

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<sup>61</sup> Following the ministry education circular 2013/06 (Ministry of Education, 2013a) schools can no longer charge “fees” but may ask for parental “contributions”

Tāwhiri (FG4) suggested that it was important to get parents ‘on board’, and to overcome the sense that OE was not important, and would not lead to work or further education opportunities. This amounted to a need to promote outdoor education more or, as Nikau (FG4) expressed it, “sell it” to whānau, “pretty much like advertising the product”. This is not advertising in the sense of marketing the course with glossy brochures, high definition video and streamlined websites, which are used to appeal to the international market (Campbell-Price & Cosgriff, 2017). This was an appeal from Nikau to engage with their parents to understand what outdoor education is about, and this raises the need for better communication and interaction with whānau.

Berryman and Ford (2014; 2015) propose that more could be done to connect whānau to what happens in schools in partnership and collaboration. “Productive partnerships”, described as a two-way, mutually respectful relationship between schools and communities, is one of five guiding principles that underlie *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating success* (Ministry of Education, 2013b, p. 17). It is this sort of relationship that Nikau is hinting at, and might be especially relevant to Pasifika or other minority immigrant students whose families who have had limited exposure to outdoor education as a subject in school. Berryman, Ford and Egan (Berryman, Ford, et al., 2015) describe collaborative, “*mahi tahi*”<sup>62</sup> processes that “foster relational trust and a sense of *Kotahitanga*”<sup>63</sup> (unity of purpose) between the school and whānau” (p. 20).

While whānau and friends have some influence in their decision making, another key influence identified by the rangatahi in this study was a set of interrelated concepts that I have connected with the Te Ao Māori concept of *whakamā*<sup>64</sup> (Metge, 1986). Palmer (2000) investigated the experiences Māori students of *Te Reo Kori* during physical education, and found that a common experience for Māori students was to feel a degree of embarrassment about their identity as Māori. The experience of being singled out or identified for attention

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<sup>62</sup> *Mahi tahi* means to literally work as one.

<sup>63</sup> *Kotahitanga* is a term for togetherness, solidarity, collective action

<sup>64</sup> *Whakamā* means to be shy, bashful, embarrassed

as Māori was referenced by a number of the participants in this study. The girls in focus group five spoke of their feelings of discomfort in the expectations of their fellow students to be confident outdoors, or to know about Te Ao Māori, and the feeling that they didn't live up to this expectation. Other study participants made reference to this experience in terms of being isolated as one of the few Māori in their class.

Irwin (2010) identified that when working with young Māori, assumptions should not be made about their level of cultural knowledge and that learning to speak Te Reo Māori “did not mean they were also knowledgeable of local history, legends or place names”. Putting this expectation on Māori students might lead to embarrassment and even shame. Irwin (2010, p. 78) urges discussion, interaction and sharing between Pākehā and Māori to create “negotiated experiences” where Pākehā and Māori “learn to share their place in the land”. While the rangatahi in this study do not all profess to fit stereotypes for Māori, they simultaneously identify with the expectations of these stereotypes and are aware of their lack of knowledge about their heritage. Palmer's (2000) findings indicate that educators delivering Māori content need to be familiar and trained in Te Ao Māori or risk generating embarrassment in Māori students. Legge (2010) supports this, indicating that cultural bias is difficult to overcome, and that Pākehā educators need to approach teaching and learning about Te Ao Māori as learners themselves, secondary to community members who hold mana and expertise.

As Māori, the rangatahi of this study considered that they would benefit from more information that is relevant to their own heritage, and to insights into how to respond to the environment around them from a Te Ao Māori perspective. Outdoor education provides a unique opportunity within the school curriculum to take steps to decolonise learning about the places around them and presents an opportunity to engage with their cultural heritage and to affirm their cultural identity, while also offering the experiences, relationships and personal challenge of adventurous experiential outdoor learning.

## 5.2. Section Two: Towards a culturally responsive pedagogy for outdoor education: Implications for practice

In this section I begin by discussing the extent to which the perspectives of the rangatahi in this study indicate that outdoor education as it is currently practiced is culturally responsive, which was the focus of the second of three research questions guiding the study. Following this, I will discuss some of the implications for practice, drawing on suggestions and implications from the focus groups.

The rangatahi in this study made it clear that many aspects of outdoor education courses were positive for them, including the opportunity to interact with peers, to experience new activities and places, and the stimulation and satisfaction of being exposed to and overcoming challenging situations or tasks. This focus on relationships, reciprocal interaction and dialogue as key features of outdoor education practice align well with aspects of both the Te Kotahitanga effective teaching profile (ETP) (Bishop, Berryman, Powell, et al., 2007; Bishop et al., 2003) and Alton-Lee's Best evidence synthesis (BES) (Alton Lee, 2003). The effective teacher profile concepts of *wānanga: engaging in effective learning arrangements with students* and *Ako: using a range of teaching strategies* (Bishop et al., 2014) sit well alongside experiential learning strategies. Alton-Lee's (Alton Lee, 2003, p. vi) ten characteristics of quality teaching for diverse students includes "pedagogical practices [that] enable classes and other learning groups to work as caring, inclusive, cohesive learning communities", which aligns closely with the experiences of the rangatahi participating in this study. Pedagogy promoting "Self-regulation", "reciprocal role taking", "opportunities for application and invention", "interactive work" and "collaborative group work" are amongst other features of outdoor education practice experienced by the students that align with Alton-Lee's characteristics of quality teaching.

Where outdoor education as a field does need to better serve Māori is in the contexts of learning, and in making a connection between the learner and the

places that they are learning in. Outdoor education has the potential to provide many opportunities to bridge a cultural gap, and to engage Māori as Māori without impacting the development of relationships that is distinctive of outdoor education. A significant issue across the field of outdoor education, however, is the variety of practices and the perpetuation of western values that continue to dominate and exclude Te Ao Māori perspectives, contexts and practices. There is substantial opportunity for outdoor education practices to better support Māori in their identity and their connection with the outdoor environments. As Penetito (2002, p. 101) asserts, Māori are “hungry to learn about their ancient history as well as their interpretations of colonial history”.

There is evidence that outdoor education in practice is becoming responsive to place (e.g. C. Taylor, 2014; Townsend, 2011, 2015; Watson, 2012 ) and culture (e.g. Campbell-Price, 2012; Heke, 2012; C. Phillips & Mita, 2016) and there is a growing body of literature (e.g. Beames & Brown, 2016; H. Brown, 2016; Wattchow & Brown, 2011) and professional development opportunities to support this. Professional Journals such as Education Outdoors New Zealand’s (*EONZ*) *Out and about/Te Whakatika* and Physical Education New Zealand’s *The Physical Educator* have had features relating to culturally responsive content, contexts and teaching strategies. However, the capacities of teachers to deliver culturally responsive programmes remains a critical factor. Legge (2010, p. 98) suggests that “becoming bicultural as a Pākehā ... is problematic. It means having to gain knowledge, understanding and applications of values and beliefs that are unfamiliar, to achieve a sympathetic understanding of the Māori way of viewing the world”. This takes considerable time, effort and commitment from already busy educators (Skipworth, 2017).

### **5.2.1. Implications for practice**

This discussion now considers the implications of the opinions, perspectives and experiences of the study participants in terms of a culturally responsive pedagogy, and some of the ideas proposed as avenues for change and adaptation with outdoor education programmes. As Cosgriff et al (2012, p. 232)

suggest, “outdoor educators will need to refine and adapt their pedagogy by choosing teaching styles and developing contexts that encourage exploration of Māori values and beliefs in the outdoors”. For a number of the participants in this study, the need for a much more focussed approach to exploring Te Ao Māori perspectives about the outdoors was apparent and important. While some of the participants liked the courses as they are and did not see a need for substantial change (for example, Whiri and Anaru in focus group two, and Tui, Aroha and Mere in focus group three), a need for more learning about and encounters with Māori history, beliefs and practices was consistently expressed across all focus groups.

In critically discussing what the findings mean for a culturally responsive practice of outdoor education, three key areas and implications are targeted. The first relates to the importance of a Māori focussed course that embraces Te Ao Māori pedagogies, and I present three of these: *wānanga*, *whanaungatanga* and *tauirā*. The second area of discussion relates to connecting with and making partnerships with communities, and the role of teacher in developing culturally responsive practices. Thirdly I will discuss a selection of the practical contexts proposed by the rangatahi in the study that also offer a solution to the inaccessibility of course costs.

### **5.2.2. A Te Ao Māori Focussed course**

Hemi suggested “I think it would be good to have, like, your own Maori outdoor ed class”. This is not a new idea, and has been implemented elsewhere successfully. Brown’s (2008) account of *Aoraki Bound*, Campbell-Price’s (2012) example of science *wānanga*, Legge’s (2010, 2012) *E noho Marae*<sup>65</sup> with Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) students and Townsend’s (2011, 2014) Journey based outdoor programme all provide practical examples of how a Te Ao Māori focussed course could function. A feature of these examples is the use of the outdoors as a context for multi-disciplinary learning instead of merely a vehicle for personal and social development. Arguably personal and social development

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<sup>65</sup> Noho marae is a term for staying overnight on the marae, and is an experience of the cultural practices of hospitality as well as a connection with the local Māori community and expertise.

will occur in these contexts and the findings from this study that suggest novelty and challenge, key elements in the social experience, can be incorporated into multidisciplinary inquiry and socio-cultural learning activities and opportunities. I now present three Te Ao Māori pedagogies that may have relevance to developing culturally responsive outdoor education programmes: *wānanga*, *whanaungatanga* and *tauirā*.

#### **5.2.2.1. Wānanga**

One application of Hemi's suggestion could be modelled on *Wānanga*<sup>66</sup>, or traditional schools of learning, where tribal members were mentored and coached to become *Tohunga*<sup>67</sup> or experts, and were the cultural equivalent of higher learning institutions (Walker, 2016). Walker describes traditional Māori epistemology, where "all knowledge emanates from the gods" and is "embedded" by the *Atua* "in the natural world to be discovered by humans" (Walker, 2016, p. 21). As Walker describes them, *whare wānanga* were schools where the "transmission of knowledge was a sacred enterprise" (Walker, 2016, p. 21). A modern *Wānanga* format, effectively a retreat or extended stay to focus on learning, could present Te Ao Māori models of learning, such as a pedagogy based in relationships, role modelling and utilising extended *whānau* for their skills, knowledge and expertise (1995, 2015). This approach accords well with developing trends in education towards so-called 'modern' or 'innovative' learning environments, where interdisciplinary team teaching is a common feature. However, it also requires skilled, knowledgeable and culturally competent educators. This form of practice is almost certainly best achieved in partnership with local Māori networks of knowledge, *iwi* affiliation and connections of relationship.

One of the questions that a *wānanga* approach presents, raised by other boys in Hemi's group (FG3), is whether Pākehā students would be welcome in such a class. The consensus reached in the focus group was that anyone would be welcome but it needed to be the sort of course that was run in a Māori way, based

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<sup>66</sup> *Wānanga* are schools of higher learning, where specialist knowledge was passed on by *Tohunga*

<sup>67</sup> *Tohunga* were experts in fields that required specialist knowledge.

on a marae and learning Māori outdoor knowledge , tikanga and Te reo Māori. Legge (2010, p. 99) suggests that *noho marae* experiences are an opportunity to “open the eyes of Pākehā and other non-Māori... students, about their own cultural identity, and to see that they have a role in supporting Māori identity”. Rāwiri’s (FG3) thinking was inclusive, and he considered a Te Ao Māori focused course would be something international students would also enjoy. Not all focus groups supported this concept, but the enthusiasm of those students that did respond to this idea positively suggests it is worth considering more deeply.

### **5.2.2.2. Whanaungatanga**

The rangatahi emphasised the need for inclusion and support repeatedly, and these values align with the Te Ao Māori concept of *whanaungatanga*<sup>68</sup>. Bishop et al (2003, p.14) present whānau as a “primary concept that contains both values and social processes” and can function as a metaphoric basis for theorising classroom interaction “fundamentally different from those created when teachers talk of method and process using machine or transmission metaphors to explain their theorising/imaging”. Whanaungatanga is the practice of applying the values of the whānau, and this is a potential model for teaching and learning practices within outdoor education. Bishop (2003) suggests this approach as establishing the classroom as an active site of learning for all learners, collaboratively constructing learning outcomes; establishing trust connectedness and commitment; and a degree of power sharing between teachers and learners. Bishop et al(2003) present this as the Te Ao Māori practice of *ako*<sup>69</sup> or “reciprocal learning” (p. 13), where the teacher is a partner in a conversation of learning, and the student is able to participate in learning using “the sense-making processes they bring to the relationship, and share these with others...” (p. 13).

Metge (1995, p. 189) presents whānau as a metaphor for the “rights and responsibilities, commitments and obligations, and supports that are fundamental to the collectivity.” Whānau is a commitment to more than just a defined group,

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<sup>68</sup> *Whanaungatanga* is a sense of familial connection or a relationship through shared experiences.

<sup>69</sup> *Ako* means to learn, but has an element of reciprocity to it, where teacher and learner are engaged in the act of learning together.

but to the extended connections to that group. Rāwiri (FG3) expressed this commitment to international students within the course, including them in a discussion of the implications of a Te Ao Māori focussed course. Whanaungatanga is the act of living in connection to whānau, and has associated tikanga (customs) including “warm interpersonal interactions, group solidarity, shared responsibility for one another, cheerful cooperation for group ends, corporate responsibility for group property” (Metge, 1995, p. 189). These characteristics of operation are similar to those promoted to develop social development on any number of outdoor education activities, and are features regularly referred to by rangatahi in the focus groups.

The attributes of whanaungatanga can be summarised in Te Ao Māori notions of “*aroha* (love in the broadest sense, including mutuality), *awhi* (helpfulness), *manaaki* (hospitality), and *tiaki* (guidance).” (Metge, 1995, p. 189). Whanaungatanga represents an approach that aligns with many values within the dominant model of outdoor education practice, but when positioned as Te Ao Māori concepts, social support, teamwork, inclusion and mutual cooperation become supportive of a Māori cultural identity. While not named as such by the rangatahi, these concepts were referenced. Tāwhiri (FG4) refers to *whanaungatanga* values and principles when he talks about “everyone pulling their own weight”, “contributing with everyone else” and “supporting and communicating” with each other, and these are consistent with current values and practices in outdoor education. A whanaungatanga approach, however, centralises inclusive and socially supportive practices as a Te Ao Māori model, and gives recognition to cultural values from Te Ao Māori that are accepted in wider society.

#### **5.2.2.3. Taurira**

Tāwhiri (FG4) made mention of the importance of Māori role models, and Whiri and Anaru (FG2) referenced the role of the teacher in modelling behaviour. Metge (2015) presents role modelling as an important aspect of traditional Māori education, and there it is important to present Māori students with role models. It is important to ensure, where possible, Māori role models are presented to

students. This has been a useful strategy in other outdoor programmes seeking to establish a place and culturally responsive approach (M. Brown, 2008; C. Taylor, 2014; Townsend, 2011, 2014).

Metge (2015) presents *Tauira* as an informal method of education that reflected significant cultural values within Te Ao Maori based in a process of modelling behaviour, learning by doing, and gradual progression at the pace of the learner. The pedagogy began while the children were young, observing adults conducting their daily lives and progressively being engaged in family and village tasks. When interest in a particular knowledge was shown, students would be given additional tasks and challenge at their level of competence. This developed knowledge and skills in stages, allowing children to learn at their own pace, but also identifying talented individuals for further development.

In this way knowledge was passed to those who were willing and eager to learn, and individuals would be given knowledge according to strengths, interests and needs (Metge, 2015). This method was firmly rooted in relationships and identity, and underpinned by the functioning of whānau. Metge (2015) describes this traditional Māori education as ‘learning as part of living’ (p. 18), which had a significant role in establishing an individual’s identity as Māori. Māori children in a marae based setting learned in a fundamentally different mode to the formalised European education in schools. In the contemporary era, given change within education towards collaborative and innovative learning, this model of education may be increasingly relevant.

### ***5.2.3. Connection with community and the role of the outdoor education teacher***

When Rāwiri (FG3) expressed a desire to know about “the area around us” he was referring to the local community of the places visited by the class, and a connection not just with place, but with the “Māori side of it”. Taylor’s (2014, p. 29) “focus on community”, based on Beames and Atencio’s (2008) notion of developing social capital was concerned with connecting with the wider community, and this has potential to engage local Māori communities where

cultural knowledge still resides within local Iwi. Rawiri's (FG3) enthusiasm for noho Marae is concerned with making this connection. Connecting schools with local Māori, discovering stories about the landscape, and coming to understand Te Ao Māori and the perspective of Māori on local issues, has potential to begin bridging cultural divides. Beames and Atencio (2008) identify reciprocity as an important aspect of building social capital, enabling 'bridging' to occur within and across communities. As an educator this means stepping back and promoting the voice of Māori in the community, which enriches both the learning and the interconnectedness of the students we teach. It also means becoming known to the community yourself, and developing trust with those who partner the educator in teaching.

Zink and Boyes (2007, p. 78) note that many outdoor educators in Aotearoa New Zealand are "enthusiastic teachers" who have developed outdoor skills "separate from their teacher training", but who nonetheless passionately devote considerable personal time to ensure programmes continue. Skipworth's (2017) study of outdoor education teachers reveals that a lack of a consistent training pathway to outdoor education, the need to engage with the local area, and the effort involved in up-skilling are significant factors affecting the "change of mind set" of educators towards place and culturally responsive outdoor education.

Developing culturally responsive practice requires time, effort and resourcing (Skipworth, 2017). Teachers may be uncomfortable about the prospect of teaching tikanga Māori or Māori content due to a lack of knowledge or skill in the area, lack of confidence, a fear of contravening cultural propriety, uncertainty, unease and self-consciousness (Legge, 2012; Palmer, 2000; Salter, 1999). Legge (2012) notes that attempts by Pākehā educators to be bicultural, and to present Te Ao Māori concepts in their teaching run the risk of "cultural distortion" by bringing a Pākehā agenda to bear on things that they do not fully understand (p. 142) and cautions educators to be "willing to learn about their own cultural horizons and identity, in addition to accepting the limits of their cultural competence" (p. 143). While the rangatahi in this study indicated that it did not matter whether the teacher was Māori or Pākehā, "as long as they know that area"

and the “history behind it” (Tāwhiri, Fg4), the potential for a Māori expert was preferable. This suggests, as Legge (2010, p. 144) proposes, that Pākehā will always contribute to the “Māori Project” as “outsiders”, but what is important is to be confident of the support and encouragement of Māori. In practice, the implementation of a culturally responsive pedagogy is always dependent on the educators themselves, and the challenge has to be placed in front of educators to question their practice and the degree to which it supports their student’s needs.

#### **5.2.4. Contexts of learning**

Finally, I briefly discuss potential outdoor contexts of learning that may be more responsive to the cultural values, practices and cultural traditions of Te Ao Māori. Collaboration with whānau and the community will have some bearing on the choice of activities within a programme, with potential for more culturally relevant contexts for Māori as well as Pasifika students and other minorities. The rangatahi in the study made a wide range of suggestions, but I will only consider three contexts here: *waka ama*; *noho marae* and *mahinga kai*.

##### **5.2.4.1. Waka ama**

Waka ama is one of Aotearoa New Zealand’s fastest growing sports, and has developed a unique sub-culture that has incorporated many Te Ao Māori concepts into the sport’s protocols (Ockwell, 2012). Waka Ama demands teamwork and unity, allows social performance to be investigated as a context for personal development, and may reduce costs if run in association with local clubs, which can also foster community engagement. Waka Ama provides a cultural reference to traditional forms of transport and associated tikanga, such as the karakia spoken prior to paddling, the reference to atua and whakapapa in the management of equipment, and the need for strong relationships and trust, or *whakawhānaungatanga*, within the group (Ockwell, 2012). Kara (FG1) immediately saw advantages to waka over individual or double sea-kayaks she had experience with, in that more people were involved, and it was potentially safer in a larger craft, and more reassuring for someone unfamiliar with paddling of any description. As such, Waka Ama provides a contrast to individual pursuits that

predominate in the dominant model of outdoor education, and access to a range of cultural concepts and practices that connect with Te Ao Māori.

#### **5.2.4.2. *Noho marae***

*Noho marae* is a practice that is not new to schools, but is rarely a feature of the dominant model of outdoor education practised in Aotearoa New Zealand. The rangatahi in several of the focus groups raised the possibility of outdoor education based on the marae. Legge's (2010, 2012) auto-ethnographic depictions of attending noho marae illustrate some of the tensions for Pākehā educators undertaking culturally responsive teaching and learning on the marae, but also highlight the rich possibilities for developing cultural understanding. Marae based outdoor education raises a number of possibilities, including integrating and understanding of the local Māori community, incorporating tikanga into the learning process, and utilising local outdoor sites of significance to Māori. A number of scholars have described the potential of noho marae as an element of outdoor education

#### **5.2.4.3. *Mahinga Kai***

*Mahinga Kai* is a "traditional food gathering practice with significance also attached to the food gathering sites" (C. Phillips & Mita, 2016). Rāwiri (FG3) talked about looking for eels while tramping, and learning the names of trees and ferns and others, and Kara (FG1) referred to "learning how to survive like Māori used to do". While actual food gathering in the urban setting may be problematic, mahinga kai as a topic of inquiry opens the door to a wide range of multidisciplinary approaches to learning, including, for example, measuring for water quality, waterway health assessments, investigating historical land use changes and access to waterways. Mahinga Kai presents questions about the post-colonial landscape, about mutual responsibilities for shared resources, and about the future lifestyles of the generations to come. As such it aligns well with a Te Ao Māori view of the world, and makes for an intriguing context for learning in the local environment.

To summarise this section, the implications of a culturally responsive pedagogy for Māori in outdoor education involves incorporating contexts and concepts from Te Ao Māori into regular practices. Some practices suggested here, like wānanga, could be relatively immersive and require significant investment in knowledge, skills and relationships; others such as the incorporation of Māori place names, local learning contexts and values such as whanaungatanga, will have very little impact on the current practices of outdoor education. Developing culturally responsive practice, however, will signal a re-valuing of a personal identity that is otherwise not acknowledged.

## Chapter Six

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### Kupu whakamutunga: Conclusion

This study has been based in trying to understand the learning experiences of a group of Māori students in the specific context of outdoor education in ‘The School’, and how educators in the field can support Māori to achieve Mason Durie’s aspiration for them to “live as Māori, to participate as citizens of the world and to maintain good health and a high standard of living” (cited in Glynn, 2013). The findings of this study add to the small body of literature exploring experiences and perspectives of Māori students in education, and establish a Māori student voice in the field of outdoor education.

In accordance with findings in a number of other studies (M. Brown, 2012c; E. Smith et al., 2010), the inherent sociality of outdoor education experiences was confirmed by the study participants. I believe this makes a case for a re-focussing of outdoor education practice towards a greater emphasis on collaborative learning and the utilisation of outdoor contexts that enhance and explore this sociality.

The rangatahi in this study appreciate the unique pedagogical approaches inherent in outdoor education practice, and aspects of outdoor education that promote collaborative teaching and learning need to be further enhanced by recognition of the cultural background of participants and the bodies of knowledge that are supportive of their identity.

The desire expressed by the study participants for more story-ing of places from a Te Ao Māori perspective indicates the need for employment of a socio-ecological perspective and a multidisciplinary approach that engages culturally and critically with issues. Re-storying place has the potential to decolonise, for both human and non-human, the narratives of place, and in doing so re-affirm the identity of Māori students in outdoor education.

Māori students of outdoor education need to find sufficient value in the subject to be meaningful, either in terms of future career potential or in terms of supporting their identity, and this needs to be communicated to whānau. Establishing relational skills and connections founded in Te Ao Māori values and experiencing contexts that resonate with Te Ao Māori may provide the impetus for a greater connection of Māori to outdoor education.

## **6.1. Recommendations**

The inter-relationship of each of the themes of the importance of shared experience and relationships, the distinctiveness of outdoor pedagogy, a desire to connect with Māori stories and outdoor places, and the complexity of influences on Māori participation in outdoor education, makes a case for an interrelated and cohesive set of recommendations for the practice of teaching and learning outdoors. These recommendations are:

1. Maintain and enhance a focus on cooperative and collaborative learning opportunities in which students have an opportunity to exercise their autonomy and choice, and to establish challenges that are meaningful and achievable for both the individual and the group.
2. A focus on story-ing places, and connecting with communities, in particular the community that participants live within and a decolonisation of spaces by presenting a socio-ecological approach to the story-ing, taking into account local Māori knowledge and traditions. For this to be sustained teachers need resourcing, professional development and facilitation to establish relationships with local experts to support knowledge base from which to apprentice themselves to the local area.
3. Engagement and partnership with communities and whānau based on relationships of reciprocity and the building of social networks of engagement and mutual commitment and the opportunities this might provide Māori students.
4. Cost equity and affordability. Access to outdoor education learning opportunities needs to be equitable, and establishing programmes that reduce

the cost in terms of course fees, teacher release and instructional charges is a challenge to be overcome. The excessive and exclusive cost of outdoor education courses needs to be challenged and creative outdoor education course design needs to consider local activities that retain novelty and challenge, but to which students can connect to and establish better relationships to place and community.

5. Incorporation of Te Ao Māori pedagogies and principles into programmes of outdoor learning, including whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whakapapa, tauira and noho marae experiences as well as the exploration of contexts that resonate with Te Ao Māori, such as Waka Ama, Mahinga Kai and Kaimoana gathering and the learning of Te Ao Māori terms and place-names.
6. Further exploration of student voice and perspective in seeking to understand how learning is experienced, and how we can better support individuals and groups in expressing their cultural identity in outdoor education.
7. An important and relatively urgent need exists for opportunities for teacher education and training in cultural competencies in the outdoor field and professional teaching and learning development in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy. As Skipworth (2017) indicates, this is a significant impediment to culturally responsive outdoor education practice.

## **6.2. Limitations of this Mahi and directions for future research**

Some of the methodological limitations of this study have been discussed in chapter three. To summarise, this study is qualitative, interpretative and phenomenological which means that the findings are not generalizable, but can be considered transferable (Lincoln and Guba, 1989). This allows the reader to take what they may from this snapshot of an outdoor programme and utilise these findings as they apply to the reader's context of teaching and learning. From my own perspective I can see immediate applications for my own practice, and as this was the primary intent of the inquiry, it has exceeded expectations. I can only hope other educators can see the implications for their practice as clearly.

This study was based in a large, co-educational urban secondary school with its own unique blend of cultures. The phenomenological aspects of this study determine that this is a study of the particular: it is a representation of the voice of a small group of students from a minority population within the school.

While I believe focus groups to be an effective and appropriate method for eliciting adolescent opinions and perspectives, this method also presents a situation where participants can influence the expression of others in the group, and as a result the views that are presented are moderated by those present. Other methods focussing on individual perspectives may have revealed personal positions that were not expressed in the group and allowed more nuanced and detailed exploration of perspectives that were only lightly touched upon in the group situation.

In terms of future research directions, other student perspectives from diverse minority cultural and ethnic backgrounds are still largely silent within outdoor education discourses. In particular, I would suggest the voice of Pasifika students needs further investigation, but also the voice of a growing population of other minority cultural groups and ethnicities, such as Asian, Philippine and African students, for whom outdoor education may be a very foreign concept or experience.

Additional research into Māori perspectives in a greater range of outdoor education contexts, and across schools would produce a broader picture of the experiences of Māori students in outdoor education with scope for further exploration of the distinctive perspectives of particular iwi, or Māori girls' distinctive experience, or of ākonga of Kura Kaupapa Māori who are immersed in Te Ao Māori.

The role of shared experience in shaping values, meanings and action in about and for the outdoors is another area of potential research. The role that novelty plays in connecting individuals and groups of individuals with places through the shared generation of stories is another area of potential exploration.

Finally, this study was always an inquiry based in my own practice as an educator, concerned about how to best serve the needs of those I teach. The true test of this *mahi*<sup>70</sup> is in its outcomes in ‘the classroom’. It is the job of the educator to help rangatahi understand their place in the wider world and perhaps in doing so find their tūrangawaewae, to be confident in their own identity and to assist them in understanding the issues faced by Māori moving into the 21st century.

I finish with a quote from Joan Metge (2015, p. 4):

...through their unique relationship with this land Māori have built up a storehouse of treasures that will enrich us all, individually and as a nation, and render distinctive our contribution to world affairs, if we have the wisdom to recognise their value and the will to access them.

Kua mutu tāku tuhia

Ngā mihi nui

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<sup>70</sup> Mahi is best translated as work or labour, often collaborative

## Kuputaka: Glossary of terms

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All Māori translations have been derived from the Te Oka Māori Dictionary online, <http://maoridictionary.co.nz/>, by John Moorfield (2003-2018). Where additional information is supplied it is referenced accordingly. Māori terms in their first usage in the text of the thesis are italicised and a meaning is supplied in footnotes.

- Ako** To learn, study, teach advise;
- Akonga** Student, learner, pupil.
- Aotearoa** A Te Ao Māori term for New Zealand.
- Aroha** ‘love’, also infers compassion and empathy
- EOTC** ‘Education Outside the Classroom’.
- Hapū** Kinship group or sub-tribe; primary political unit in traditional māori society; comprised of a number of Whānau with a common ancestor.
- Hauora:** To be fit, well, healthy, vigorous, in good spirits. [“the breath of life”]. This term is used to denote “Well-being” in the NZC (Ministry of Education, 2007), and is composed of four dimensions: *Taha Tinana* (Physical well-being); *Taha Hinengaro* (Mental and emotional well-being); *Taha Whānau* (Social well-being); and *taha wairua* (Spiritual well-being).
- Iwi** ‘Tribe’, extended kinship group, people or nation;
- Kaiārahi:** Guide, counsellor, leader. In this study this term applies to a role of cultural guidance.
- Kai moana:** Seafood, shellfish, food from the sea.
- Kaitiakitanga:** Guardianship, stewardship or trusteeship for land, places, resources, *Taonga*, and sometimes property.
- Kaitiaki:** An individual who provides care and protection or guardianship.
- Kia Eke Panuku:** “Towards success”, a professional development programme for schools. <https://kep.org.nz/about>
- Kaupapa Māori** A Māori approach or customary practice, Māori agenda, principles, or ideology - a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society. It is also a research methodology.
- Kaumatua** An elderly person of status in the whānau.
- Kohanga Reo:** “Language nests”, Te Reo Māori and Kaupapa Māori immersion pre-schooling.
- Kura Kaupapa Māori:** Special character Te Reo Māori and Kaupapa Māori immersion schools at primary and secondary level.

<b>Mahi</b>	Work, labour, performance, occupation, accomplishment; can be a corporate or cooperative task.
<b>Mahi Tahī</b>	Working together, teamwork, unity.
<b>Mahinga Kai</b>	Food gathering, food gathered from the land, sources of food on land.
<b>Mana:</b>	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma; closely related to personal tapu.
<b>Manaaki/ Manaakitanga:</b>	Hospitality; protection; generosity and care, looking after others, respect, concern for others
<b>Mana Whenua:</b>	Territorial rights, power from the land, authority over land or territory, jurisdiction over land or territory.
<b>Māoritanga</b>	The term <i>Māoritanga</i> is a neologism that has been widely used to describe the body of knowledge, tikanga and practices of Māori.
<b>Mauri:</b>	The life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity.
<b>NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement):</b>	Certificates of achievement over three levels that form the focus of Secondary education in Aotearoa New Zealand.
<b>Noho marae:</b>	A period of stay on a marae, which frequently involves shared accommodation and sleeping communally.
<b>Pākehā</b>	Māori term for non-Māori residents of Aotearoa New Zealand.
<b>Rangatahi</b>	Youth, young person.
<b>Rangatiratanga</b>	Sovereignty, right to exercise authority, self-determination.
<b>Tapu</b>	To be set apart, sacred, dedicated to the atua; individuals possess tapu which can be gained or lost.
<b>Tauira</b>	Student, apprentice, skilled person; model, example, template.
<b>Taonga</b>	Treasure, applied to anything considered to be of value including socially or culturally valuable objects, resources, phenomenon, ideas and techniques.
<b>Taonga Taku iho</b>	Heirloom, something handed down, cultural property, heritage.
<b>Te Ao Kori</b>	‘The World of movement’; a term for aspects of Te Ao Māori incorporated into physical education.
<b>Te Ao Māori</b>	The world of Māori <i>The</i> term used here to signify both the diversity and congruence of a people who are not united, but share the experience of living as Māori in a Pākehā world.
<b>Te reo Kori</b>	‘The language of movement’; a term for aspects of Te Ao Māori incorporated into Physical Education programmes.

- Te Reo Māori** The Māori language, including local dialectical variations.
- Tikanga** Customs, conventions, protocols and cultural practices; the correct way to do something.
- Tino rangatiratanga** Self-determination, autonomy.
- Tīpuna** Ancestors.
- Tūrangawaewae** Usually translated as “a place to stand”; a place where one has rights of residence and belonging through kinship and whakapapa. See also Royal (2007).
- Rangatahi:** Youth, the younger generation.
- Te Wahi ō Pounamu/ Te Wai Pounamu:** Traditional Māori terms for the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Tino rangatiratanga:** Independence, autonomy and self-determination.
- Wānanga:** Schools of specialised and advanced learning; contemporary Wānanga are associated with tertiary study programmes.
- Whakamā:** Embarrassment, shame, shyness, humility.
- Whakataukī:** Idiomatic sayings, proverbs, aphorisms from Te Ao Māori.
- Whānau:** Extended family, family group, basic unit of traditional Māori society.
- Whanaungatanga:** Relationship, kinship, sense of family connection.
- Whare Tapa Wha:** Mason Durie’s (1998) Model of traditional Māori Health uses a metaphor of a wharenuī, with four walls supporting the wellbeing (*Hauora*) of the individual.
- Whenua:** Whenua is used to denote ‘land’ and also ‘placenta’.

# Āpitianga: Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Letters of consent

### **Nga whakaaro o nga ākonga: Māori Student perspectives on outdoor education.**

#### **Tena koutou katoa, nga mihi nui,**

Kiaora, my name is Phil Washbourn, and I have been teaching Outdoor Education at [The School] for 15 years. I am a teacher with a passion for the outdoors and the unique landscape and environment of Aotearoa, and I am committed to sharing this enthusiasm with my students.

I am not teaching at The School this year, as I am on study leave in 2017. I am studying for a **Masters of Sport, Health and Human Performance** through the **University of Waikato**. As a requirement for this degree, I am required to choose a topic and conduct research. This research will help me to write a Thesis, which will be examined by the university.

**The study I have chosen is to find out about the attitudes, values and experiences of Māori students in Outdoor Education at The High School.**

#### **What would you have to do?**

I would like to ask you to help me out by taking part in some group interviews, called "Focus groups". This would involve meeting for about an hour and a half to discuss your views and opinions on outdoor education. Each focus group will include between 4-8 students. I would like to hear both positive and negative points of view.

If you would like to participate in this project, please complete the consent form attached to this letter, and return it to your [form teacher/ outdoor education teacher], who will pass it on to me. Your parents will need to give their consent as well, by reading this information and signing the consent form. They are welcome to call me to talk to me about any concerns they have on the number provided.

#### **When will this happen?**

I will hold a short meeting after school on **[date to be confirmed]** for those who choose to take part to explain the study further. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions and find out some more details about what will be expected. During the meeting we will organise participants into groups and arrange times to meet for the focus group session.

The focus groups will not be a part of your regular classes. This is a voluntary activity, and although it will help the school in the long-run, for the moment it will be for the purpose of research. If focus group sessions are held out of regular school times, transport can be provided to get you home.

#### **What happens once the focus groups are finished?**

Once the focus groups are finished I will record and write out all of the focus group conversations (this will be called the transcript), and use this information to write my thesis. All participants will disguise their identity by use of a pseudonym (a name change). Afterwards, notes, documents and recordings will be kept until the requirements of the university are met, then destroyed or erased.

Once I have finished, a copy of the research will be available for anyone to read from the University of Waikato Library. I will provide a summary of the research to the school, which any of you will be able to access. It is possible that I might write research articles and give presentations (for example, to teachers at other schools) about what your ideas and opinions mean for teaching outdoor education.

### **Who else is involved?**

Throughout the project I will be supervised through my study by a Lecturer, from the University of Waikato.

(XXX) and Matua (XXX) will be helping me as Kaiārahi, or advisors, and can help sort out any issues you might have with the research. They may also help me as I study the transcript to make sure I get the right idea about your comments.

### **What you will be doing in the study:**

- You need to complete consent forms, signed by you and your parents /caregivers and return them to your form teacher or Outdoor education teacher;
- You need to attend the 10-minute introductory meeting [**date and location**] to find out more details and ask any questions you have, and find out your focus groups;
- You need to attend the 90-minute focus group session, and contribute your ideas;
- You need to keep the focus group discussions confidential (not to talk about comments people have made outside the focus group).

### **During the study you have the right to:**

- Know and understand what your comments and contributions will be used for in the research;
- Ask any questions about the study that come to you during your participation;
- Refuse to answer any particular question in the focus group;
- Withdraw yourself from the study at any time during the focus group process;
- See a summary of findings from the study when it is completed;
- Bring any problems or disputes about the focus groups to myself or the Kaiārahi. If the researcher or Kaiārahi cannot resolve the issue, the research supervisor will be asked to mediate.

Once the focus groups are finished, all of the information from the focus groups will be kept by me for use in my research. If you have any questions or concerns about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact me using the following contact details:

Researcher: **Phil Washbourn** [wsp@the.school.nz](mailto:wsp@the.school.nz)

## Appendix 2: Pseudonym choice

### Nga whakāro o nga ākonga: Māori Student perspectives on Outdoor Education.

I would like to participate in the Focus group research project. My details are as follows:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Form class: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer the following time for the Focus group Session:

[E.g.s] [Monday 2:45pm-4:15pm] [Tuesday 3:00pm-4:30pm] [Thursday 2:45pm-4:45pm]

## Pseudonyms

A pseudonym is a name we use in research to protect the identity of the people in the focus groups. This lets them to speak freely and say things that will not be traced back to them by other people.

Choose a name from the list below. These names are from lists of the most common Māori names given to babies from 2012-2015, produced by The Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua. Whenever something you have said is recognised (quoted) in the research your pseudonym will be used in place of your name.

Boys		Girls	
Nikau	Tai	Maia	Kaia
Wiremu	Manaia	Kara	Mereana
Kahu	Tama	Manaia	Maraea
Ari	Mikaere	Ariana	Waimarie
Kauri	Te Ariki	Ana	Tui
Niko	Ariki	Anika	Amaia
Rawiri	Te Koha	Ataahua	Miriama
Tane	Hoani	Aroha	Awhina
Tamati	Manawa	Tia	Hana
Rawiri	Hemi	Ria	Anika
Anaru	Matiu	Huia	Kora
Tangaroa	Manaaki	Terina	Tiare
Ihaia	Tawhiri	Hana	Te Ao

Pseudonym First choice (from lists or choose your own): \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Pseudonyms (in case others choose the same): \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that every effort will be made to protect my identity through the use of pseudonyms, but this is not a guarantee of confidentiality. All comments and opinions quoted directly in the research findings will be protected with a pseudonym. No-one other than me will have access to the actual names.

## Appendix 3: Question route

(from Kreuger and Casey (2015, pp 88-95))

<p><b>Warm up</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ask everyone the same question</li> <li>-Get everyone to talk early</li> <li>-Easy to answer quickly (30sec)</li> <li>-Factual</li> <li>-Not important for analysis</li> <li>-positive feedback encouragement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How are we finding [year 11/12/13/life after school]?</li> <li>- What is different about this year?</li> <li>- We are ordering pizza – what is your favourite?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opening</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easy to answer</li> <li>- Establish commonalities in the group</li> <li>- Humanise each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What OE have you been involved in?</li> <li>- What other outdoor experiences have you had?</li> <li>- How can we show <i>Manaakitanga</i> and <i>Whanaungatanga</i> in this group?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Introductory</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introduce the topic</li> <li>-Get people to start thinking about their connection to the topic</li> <li>-Describe experiences</li> <li>-Provide clues about participant views</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are your favourite memories from Outdoor education?</li> <li>- What are your least favourite memories?</li> <li>- What things do you find a bit weird or uncomfortable about outdoor education?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transition</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Move the conversation to key questions</li> <li>-Logical links betw Introductory Qs and Key Qs</li> <li>-Move conversation closer to Key Qs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What does outdoor education mean?</li> <li>- What do we have outdoor education for?</li> <li>- What is the most important thing we get/learn from OE</li> <li>- Where do we get these ideas about outdoor education from? Whose ideas are they?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-These questions drive the study</li> <li>-Typically 4-6 questions</li> <li>-Typically the first questions developed</li> <li>-Greatest attention in analysis</li> <li>-Allow sufficient time for full discussion (10-20 minutes each)</li> <li>-Pauses and probes may be necessary to allow participants to think through answers</li> <li>-Typically begin with these questions 1/3– 1/2 way through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does being Māori mean you experience OE differently from Pākehā?</li> <li>- What are some of the ways that outdoor education allows you to feel good about being Māori?</li> <li>- How does being Māori affect your experience of outdoor education?</li> <li>- What are ways in which outdoor education excludes or undervalues Māori?</li> <li>- Are there Māori values that you can identify in the OE programme at the moment?</li> <li>- What Māori values can you see making an improvement in the way we teach outdoor education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ending</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Bring closure</li> <li>-Reflection on previous comments</li> <li>-“All things considered...”</li> <li>-Summary question</li> <li>-Final question</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Given what we have discussed, how could we make changes to OE to be more responsive to a Māori?</li> <li>- If there was one thing you could change about OE, what would it be?</li> </ul>

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