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# MĀORI CULTURAL IDENTITY AND EDUCATION

A thesis

submitted in fulfilment

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By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Underachievement of Māori students in mainstream schools has been a major topic of discussion by politicians and educational researchers in recent years. Research has shown that a secure cultural identity can enhance a person's overall well-being and furthermore improve their chances of educational success. However, in reality, statistics show that a high percentage of the Māori population have little or no knowledge of their language and culture. The research question in this study will ask Māori whānau how they perceive cultural identity in relation to their children's education.

Principles of Kaupapa Māori, Takepū and indigenous research and qualitative research methods have been used to ensure that participants were culturally and ethically respected. Participants interviewed in this study are members of my own whānau and some close friends. As an insider researcher I was committed to ensuring that my whānau were treated with respect and dignity throughout the research process.

The interview data has exposed some unexpected issues specifically relating to their educational experiences and cultural identity. In the context of historical records and education for Māori, the findings of this study suggest that the educational experiences of Māori whānau have been, and continue to be, strongly influenced by government policies enforced before and during the period in which they attended school. All the whānau interviewed acknowledged their ethnic identity as Māori, however, most of them had little or no knowledge and understanding of Te Reo Māori nor had they taken part in cultural practices. Government policies restricted the use of the Māori language, disengaged them from their culture and curriculum provision limited expectations for both males and females. Mixed ethnicity and urbanisation were also identified as

factors in the loss of their cultural identity. Data also shows that cultural identity loss has progressed on to future generations and influenced Māori whānau priorities and choice of school.

The aim of this study is to provide educational policy makers with an in-depth understanding of the perspectives of Māori whānau determine their specific needs in education and propose some suggestions on how to improve achievement of Māori whānau in mainstream schools.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I dedicate this thesis to my tipuna, past generations of my Māori whānau whose life experiences I have read and heard about throughout my childhood.

To my great great grandfather Wiremu Pere, a staunch Māori leader and politician who fought with a vengeance to free his people from Pākehā oppression and colonisation. An outspoken Member of Parliament, who refused to speak English in the House of Representatives firmly acknowledging his right to speak his indigenous language to express his beliefs and opinions in parliament, much to the dislike of other members. Wiremu Pere witnessed turbulent times in New Zealand colonial history between Māori and Pākehā in the late 1800's including land confiscation and legislation, Te Kooti conflicts and government policies and efforts to assimilate Māori into the Pākehā world. It is his legacy of determination to fight for the rights of Māori that I have chosen to research Māori whānau in mainstream schools.

To my father William Rapihana Hawaikirangi-Pere who after my mother passed away, single handedly raised me and my 9 brothers and sisters. His strength and determination matches that of Wi Pere although not in the political world but rather in the world of a father, a family man. We would often listen to his recollections of his childhood, his earlier years of attending a native school in Gisborne, being strapped for speaking Māori and eventually leaving school at an early age to enlist in the army at fifteen. After marrying my mum, Katie Kaikou Matiu, in the 1950's they moved our whānau to Hamilton to find work and provide for their large family. When my mum died a few years later, my father was left with the enormous task of taking care of his ten children, without the support of his family back in Gisborne. One memory of my childhood is my father's

words “Never give up, Charmaine”. I have led my life with this same attitude and determination when times were tough. This attitude is his legacy and it is with this attitude I have begun the journey to re-identify with my language and culture and pass my knowledge on to my daughters and future mokopuna.

Throughout this journey I have encountered some special friendships. One of which is Wendy Drewery, my supervisor at Waikato University. Her willingness and patience to sit back and listen to my life experiences and support my quest for self-identity often went beyond her supervisor role. The advice and direction she gave me inspired me to believe in myself and continue the enormous task of overcoming my struggle with the express my thoughts and ideas into academic writing.

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To my whānau, my brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews who have supported me throughout this study. Without you I could not have completed this thesis. It is with deep love that I set before you all, a goal in life, to look beyond the horizon, your opportunities are endless. Seek and find your god given gift and use it to benefit your whānau, hapū and iwi.

To my three daughters Jordan, Jessie and Kaea. Who have put up with their mother’s endless hours on the laptop writing this thesis and who have endured the journey as I have. Listening to my ranting and raving each time I discovered something new and exciting in the endless rows of literature on my bookshelf. This thesis is only the beginning of the journey, and one day I hope that you three will read it, remember the

hard work that went into it and commit yourselves in whatever future aspirations you have for your own families in the future.

It is out of respect and admiration that I also acknowledge Nan and Pa, my older daughters' grandparents. Nan particularly has been a major influence during my journey in education. At the beginning of my teaching career, she supported my application into the Bachelor of Teaching programme by asserting "Char, it's about time you went out and made something of your life, go to university and be a teacher". Harsh though it sounded back then, I took her advice and will never regret it. Her loving guidance and direction began a pathway in my life that I could not have imagined. Thank you Nan.

I would also like to thank all the participants in this study, my friends and whānau. For it is all of you that have helped me complete this research. Thank you for sharing your experiences for which I have based this study. Your honest and truthful comments has made this study unique and will hopefully inspire future generations of our whānau to seek knowledge, discover their ultimate identity and be true Māori in every sense of the word.

Last but not least I would like to thank the students and staff at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa Whirikoka Campus, who over the last 9 months have opened my eyes to the importance of cultural identity not only as part of my life and education but also part of my overall well-being. For without my cultural identity I cannot exist or be who I am today.

## FOREWORD

Fifteen years ago I decided to enrol my two older daughters in mainstream schools hoping that they would excel in the English language and become successful in the European world. Although I identified myself as Māori, enrolling them in Kura Kaupapa was out of the question. My perspectives on education at the time were that cultural identity was not a priority, they would not 'fit in' to a Māori environment and like me they also had no connections to their Māori identity. Unbeknown to me at the time was how important cultural identity was in relation to their overall well-being and how this could impact on their educational achievement and overall well-being in the future. My hope was that they would grow up proud of being Māori despite their education in the mainstream. This was not to be. Enrolling them in mainstream schools has resulted in a disconnection from their Māori identity that I believe has influenced their academic achievement and disconnected them from actively taking part in the Māori world, today and in the future.

My values and beliefs about education have changed dramatically since then and I have reconnected myself to aspects of my cultural identity. Nine years ago I enrolled my youngest daughter in Te Kōhanga Reo at the age of one and she is currently attending full immersion Māori classes and successfully achieving in all areas of the curriculum. She is proficient in both Māori and English and excels in all cultural activities at school. It is my view that many parents give their children the opportunities in life that they themselves never had. I was giving my daughter the opportunity to be connected to her Māori identity and this has proved to have had a positive influence on her academic achievement and overall well-being.



This study will examine how Māori whānau with children in mainstream education perceive the academic, cultural and social effects on their children's identities as Māori.

I have chosen two whakatauki to describe the journey from the beginning to the end of this study. At the forefront of this thesis I have chosen a whakatauki that will emphasise the importance of Māori identity in relation to teaching and learning. As the seed (cultural identity) can never be lost, the only way back to Rangiātea is to reactivate the seed by developing aspects of our cultural identity that will encompass and sustain our overall well-being.

E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea.

*I will never be lost, for I am a seed sown in Rangiātea.*

Situated at the end of this study I have chosen a whakatauki that will provide Māori whānau with the opportunity to examine and reflect on their beliefs and values about their cultural identity and provide a framework for developing the cultural identity that was never lost, but can be ignited with the desire to improve the chances of success in education for themselves and future generations of their whānau.

Rurea taitea kia tū ko taikākā anake

*Strip away the bark and expose the heartwood*

*Ko Maungahaumi te maunga*

*Ko Waipaoa te awa*

*Ko Te Whānau-a-Kai toku iwi me te hapu*

*Ko Rongopai te marae*

*Ko Charmaine Hawaikirangi-Pere toku ingoa*

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## **CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perspectives of whānau who identify themselves as Māori and who choose to enrol their children in English medium mainstream schools rather than in Kura Kaupapa Māori. Statistical data shows that 90 percent of Māori students are in English-medium schooling rather than immersion or bilingual schooling (Census, 2006). Current research information and national and international achievement data continue to show sustained Māori underachievement in general education. The Education Review Office recently stated that out of the 32 percent of the primary schools and 45 percent of secondary schools that were evaluated there was evidence of some improvement over time, however in the remaining 68 percent of primary and 55 percent of secondary schools there was no improvement in Māori student achievement. ERO concluded their report by stating that “Many New Zealand schools are not yet demonstrating sufficient commitment to ensuring the progress and achievement of Māori students” (Education Review Office, 2010, p.30).

In comparison to Māori medium schools, results show that Kura Kaupapa graduates are achieving significantly better than their Māori peers in English mainstream schools (Ministry of Education, 2005; Takao, Grennell, McKegg & Wehipeihana, 2010; Murray, 2005; UNESCO, 2010). In the tertiary sector the results are distinctively similar. According to Māori educationalist, Professor Linda Smith, “The achievements in Māori education have been determined if not remarkable. Māori participation rates in tertiary education are high and Māori educational institutions has proven to be sustainable and resilient in the face of inequalities in the system” (Smith, 2006, p. 251).

Current research also tells us that “The answers to Māori educational achievement and disparities do not lie in the mainstream, for given the experiences of the last 150 years, mainstream practices and theories have kept Māori in a subordinate position, while at the same time creating a discourse that pathologised and marginalised Māori peoples' lived experiences” (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009, p.741). Mainstream policies and practices over the last 150 years have had a detrimental effect on Māori who have enrolled their children in mainstream schools. The examination of participant data in this study clearly shows that generations of Māori whānau have been marginalised and kept in a subordinate position throughout their lives. This study has investigated educational policies over the last 150 years and discovered the underlying motives of past governments were to detach Māori whānau from their cultural identity. This examination begins with a brief outline of New Zealand’s colonial past beginning with the onslaught of colonisation, assimilation and educational policies.

### **Government Policies for Māori**

In the period between the first European landings and the First World War, New Zealand was transformed from an exclusively Māori world into one in which Pākehā (European) dominated numerically, politically, socially and economically (Te Ara, 2013). History tells us that the Māori have lived through some major transforming experiences over a number of centuries (Royal, 2013). Educational transformation is one aspect that has brought about considerable change for Māori whānau. With the influx of European colonials, the lives of Māori whānau, particularly children, underwent a decidedly major transformation. Early educational



policies brought about a dramatic change in relation to Māori language and culture.

The Table presented in Appendix One, issued by the Controller and Auditor General (2012), outlines the dates and events related to Māori education policy and developments during the period of 1816 - 2012. The events that took place over this time period show a progression of educational and social policies from 1816 to 1970 that have explicitly disengaged Māori from their cultural identity.

The revival of the Māori language and culture eventually took place in the 1970's and onwards with the establishment of Māori medium education including Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Māori, Whare Kura and Wānanga.

A brief review of these events in history will give a clearer picture of the effects that government policies have had on Māori whānau in education, beginning with the colonisation period.

## **Colonisation**

With the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand became a British colony. During the colonisation period, Europeans had brought with them various forms of tools and knowledge that Māori quickly learned to use and incorporated ancient traditional knowledge to improve the well-being and quality of life of whānau (Belich, 1996; Waitangi Tribunal, 2012). The influx of British settlers and their acquisition of land owned by Māori saw the beginning government policies initiating the process of 'civilising a nation'. Civilisation of the 'natives' was a priority for government at the time primarily directed towards the education of Māori children. Education policies were explained by a former Native School inspector supporting the Native

School Act in 1867 as a cheaper way to “civilise Māori through the medium of the English language than by military force” (Nairn, 2002, p.22). The introduction of native schools began the subtle process of eliminating the Māori language and culture and forcibly encouraging the teaching of the English language and the dominant culture of the Pākehā.

Early missionaries also offered Māori new ideas about religion and introduced literacy (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012). Māori were eager to learn to read and write and became highly literate in their own language. Missionaries themselves learned the Māori language in order to communicate effectively with Māori and to teach the principles of the bible.

### **Mission Schools**

The first mission school was established for Māori in the Bay of Islands by Thomas Kendall in 1816, however due to a lack of interest in the school by Māori it folded after two years (Simon, 1998). By the 1830’s Māori interest in the European style schooling and literacy began to increase and Māori became enthusiastic learners willing to acquire the new skills and knowledge perceiving them as relevant and of value to lives. Early mission schools taught in the Māori language and their chief function was to convert Māori to Christianity. The missionary movement had a huge impact on Māori whose existing spiritual beliefs were either replaced by, or combined with, Christian ideas (Te Ara, 2012). However there were pitfalls to learning literacy through the Bible context.

Historical evidence tells us that missionaries used the principles of the Bible to gain the trust of Māori as well as subtly infuse their European beliefs and value system. European teachings sought to marginalise Māori world knowledge and many Māori were becoming influenced by

the missionaries' beliefs about the inferiority of the Māori culture (Simon, 1998). Although there were some missionaries such as Henry Williams who sympathised with the Māori, eventually his loyalty fell with the British Empire and Williams later "agreed to the government's request to use all his influence among the chiefs to induce them to make the desired surrender of sovereignty to Her Majesty' by signing the Treaty of Waitangi" (Te Ara, 2013).

Government policies continued to disengage Māori from their language and culture. From 1845 to 1853 George Grey became governor of New Zealand and the architect of the government's racial amalgamation policy in the early colonial period. Missionary schools set up in 1860 had the objective of 'civilising' Māori through the process of Christianity (Binney, 1969). It became Governor Grey's extreme objective to remove Māori children from the 'demoralising influence of Māori villages' as part of the assimilation policy.

The state was also concerned with not only replacing traditional Māori knowledge and culture with European but also limiting the amount and type of knowledge Māori could acquire (Simon, 1998). Henry Taylor, a school inspector, affirmed that:

*"I do not advocate for the Natives under present circumstances a refined education or high mental culture: it would be inconsistent if we take account of the position they are likely to hold for many years to come in the social scale, and inappropriate if we remember that they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour"*

(Waitangi Tribunal, 2012).

The Māori School Service was a continuation of the early Mission schools. As early as 1858 the government displayed some interest in Māori education, but the government-controlled service as such resulted from the passing of the Native Schools Acts of 1867 and 1871. It was apparently realised that the educational needs of the Māori child was sufficiently different from those of the Pākehā children to necessitate the setting up of special schools. Until 1953 the aim of the service was 'Europeanisation' as quickly and as completely as possible. In other words it was to turn out imitations of Pākehās, only with brown skins instead of white (Powell, 1955).

Assimilation policies of colonising groups had an immense influence on social and educational policies including a detrimental effect on Māori children's sense of cultural identity. Generations of Māori children have become the 'products' or worse 'victims' of government policies that have sought to extinguish Māori people, language and culture. The Treaty of Waitangi suggested the beginning of a new nation of two cultures, Māori and Pākehā, by which both cultures shared a set of principles that acknowledged the rights to each other's cultural differences and equal opportunities to live side by side in peace and harmony. However, for Māori the reality is that the English translation of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi was contrary to what it promised. Tino Rangatiratanga or self-determination was one of the aspects of inequality that restricted the indigenous rights of Māori to perform cultural activities independent from Pākehā. Education policy in the early 1800's has been described by educational researchers as "knowledge framed within a content of prescription," and where "Māori were to become brown skinned Pakeha" (Glynn, 1998, p.4).

Historical evidence and research have since uncovered the hegemonic practices of colonial governments that had sought to destroy Māori traditional knowledge and teaching methods and replace them with European philosophies that have had a detrimental effect on the seed of Rangīātea and hindered the growth of generations of Māori in the process. The seed of Māori identity had been subtly replaced by dysfunctional seeds resulting in the underachievement of Māori in the mainstream education sown through past education policies which continue to blame the victims of an educational system that has long since disempowered Māori whānau.

Over the years since colonisation, loss of cultural identity including language has been the major cause of violence, poor educational performance, joblessness, criminality, poor health, and propensity towards diseases such as diabetes and obesity (Hook, 2007). Hook (2007) also exerts that “Loss of culture including language has left many Māori without firm foundations leading to loss of confidence and a sense of individual inferiority” (p.1).

The process of colonisation has undeniably stripped many Māori whānau of their connections to their cultural identity. As Hook has argued, loss of confidence and a sense of individual ‘inferiority’ has had a major influence on how Māori feel about ‘being Māori’. Feelings of inferiority about cultural identity have been identified as having a major influence in the way a person develops their self-identity. The impact of colonisation is a harsh reminder that generations of Māori have suffered the psychological trauma of losing their sense of belonging, self-worth and competence essential to our overall well-being and ultimately our Māori cultural identity. It is relevant to this study that readers understand

the complexities of identity development and how this has impacted on their educational success.

## CHAPTER TWO - IDENTITY

### Introduction

Identity is one of the most extensively studied concepts in the social sciences (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Research studies have explored the diverse and complex dimensions of identity in order to understand the implications of these dimensions in various situations in people's lives. Western theories form the basis of the New Zealand curriculum

Most of the research studies into identity development have been dominated by long standing theories formulated by Western 'white males' (Crandell, Crandell & Zandin, 2009). A closer analysis of these identity theories emphasises some contradictions in aspects of Western theories and non-Western theories notably how these have been placed as the foundation for many societal practices, including child rearing and education. However, over the past two decades, recent theories into identity development have focussed on women, non-whites and people from non-western cultures. These theories have discovered major differences in western identity development theories and non-western cultural practices including Māori. An example the one of these differences is that of child rearing practices examined by Crandell, Crandell & Zandin (2009) who stated that

*"If one examines the parenting practices of most parents in the United States, it becomes apparent that they are stressing individualism and independence as soon as the child is born. Common wisdom and practice is to place the infant, soon after birth, in a separate room in order to encourage independence. U.S. parents also reinforce a preference for objects rather than people to be used as means of comforting in times of distress.*

*Child-rearing practices in many other cultures stress interdependence, sometimes called collectivism, over independence or individualism, with the focus on ties to family” (p.53).*

Collectivism has been recognised as part of Māori cultural practices that encourage interdependence and a focus on strong family ties (whānaungatanga) (Houkamau & Sibley, 2010). Traditional Māori child rearing practices included communal sleeping in marae whereby children slept amongst all members of their whānau. This example of communal living amongst Māori separates it from Western theories of development.

### **Ethnic and Cultural Identity**

Ethnic and cultural identity have been observed and examined by Western psychologists and theorists in an immense number of research studies. Ethnic identity refers to one’s sense of belonging to an ethnic group. Phinney (1996) asserts ethnic identity “comprises of a number of different components including self-labelling, a sense of belonging, positive evaluation, preference for the group, ethnic interest and knowledge and involvement in activities associated with the group...ethnic identity can have qualitatively different meanings for ethnic group members” (p.6). Cultural identity often also termed as a person’s social identity is a process of developing aspects of a person’s culture described by Erikson as an adolescent task outlined in his stages of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1980). Cultural identity theories such as Erikson’s examine cultural identity from a western perspective; however research indicates that views of self-identity differ across cultures (Krause, Bochner, Duchesne & McMaugh, 2010). Furthermore Phinney (2001) described ethnic identity as an individual’s sense of self



in terms of membership in a particular ethnic group and defined cultural identity as being developed in three stages: unexamined cultural identity, cultural identity search, and cultural identity achievement. The process of developing cultural identity begins with individual's acknowledging and accepting that they belong to a particular culture, then, examining one's cultural identity by learning cultural practices, and achieving competence in all aspects of that culture. Admittedly cultural identity is an issue of complex and diverse dimensions and individuals taking up the challenge of cultural identity development can be a difficult task. For many of the whānau who have experienced the alienation discussed in the previous chapter, the question therefore remains as "What does it mean to be Māori?"

### **Māori Cultural Identity**

Māori cultural identity has been examined and defined by Māori historians, politicians, researchers, psychologists, theorists, health professionals, and organisations (Broughton, 1993; Durie, 2006a; Durie 2013; Houkamau, 2006; Sibley & Houkamau, 2010; Karetu, 1993; O'Regan, 2001; Peters, 2010; Rata, 2011, 2013; Royal, 2007; Waitangi Tribunal, 1986; Walker, 1989).

Pinpointing an exact definition of Māori identity is complex and none the less daunting for researchers intent on providing an explanation for the negative statistics for Māori health and education (Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; Simon, 2002; Social Report, 2010;). For the purpose of this study, defining cultural identity was necessary in relation to the participants' ethnic identity as Māori and their engagement in cultural practices that had influenced their decisions on school choice. All of the whānau interviewed acknowledged that part or whole of their ethnic identity was Māori; however participant data reveals that they all experienced their

identities differently. In terms of cultural identity, whānau conveyed different levels in their ability to speak the Māori language and participation in cultural practices. Most of the participants had little knowledge and understanding of Te Reo Māori and had limited experiences in cultural practices. Some participants expressed a desire to improve their knowledge and understanding of Te Reo Māori and considered enrolling their children in Māori medium schools in the future. Two participants had enrolled children or mokopuna in Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori schools. With this in mind these stages show a progression from one stage to the next. Grouping of Māori identity has been used as a way of defining Māori cultural identity.

The differentiation shows that whānau are at different stages in their identity development as pointed out earlier in the chapter. Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind and Vedder (2001) continued their examination by asserting that “An individual who retains a strong ethnic identity while also identifying with a new society is considered to have an integrated (or bicultural) identity. One who has a strong ethnic identity and does not identify with the new culture has a separated identity, whereas one who gives up an ethnic identity and identifies only with the new culture as an assimilated identity. The individual who identifies with neither has a marginalised identity” (p. 496).

The implications of this type of grouping can influence the way in which individuals define their Māoriness, and may also have a major influence on self- identity.

## **Implications of Māori Typologies**

Assumptions have been made by some researchers in regard to Māori who do not speak the Māori language or do not take part in cultural practices. Grouping and categorising Māori in terms of an individual's 'cultural identity' has been used as a way of defining a person's Māoriness or 'being Māori' (Durie, 1994; Williams, 2000). The term 'unconnected' has been used as a description placed upon Māori who portray a seeming lack of Māoriness or those that claim to be Māori with low 'cultural capital'. This places these Māori as 'less' Māori than those who speak Te Reo Māori fluently and are active members in Māori practices (Williams, 2000, cited in Houkamau, 2010). The term 'marginalised' has also been used to describe Māori who "are not able to relate to Māori or Pākehā effectively" (Durie, 2004 cited in Houkamau, 2010). A more dignified choice of words by these well-known researchers would have sufficed given their knowledge of New Zealand history and colonisation. The unfairness of this ideology of connectedness assumes that a person who is defined as 'unconnected' willingly disconnects themselves from their ethnic and cultural identity, or, even more damaging, from the person's cultural identity, by saying that they are 'not Māori'. Apirana Ngata has been recorded as stating that "If you do not speak Māori, then you are not Māori". In making this statement Ngata could not foresee the effect of colonisation and educational policies on generations of Māori whānau who followed government legislation during the early 1900's. Māori whānau had suffered the effects of educational policies that were intent on denying young Māori children of speaking their language at school, and furthermore limited the transfer of the language on to future generations. This study has reviewed these policies to show that many Māori including myself have been deprived of their language and culture.

Whānau have not willingly abandoned their Māori identity for the English language. The word 'unconnected' therefore is a derogatory word to many Māori in this position who are no less victims of early education and social policies. This 'sub group' therefore needs to be supported rather than judged and categorised by other Māori who have not experienced similar circumstances as they have.

Another issue that arises from the dialogue of researchers and Māori educationalists is the purpose of grouping and categorising of Māori people in terms of measuring a person's cultural capacity to be part of a certain group. The use of measurement in terms of cultural identity differentiates a person's Māoriness and assumes superiority of the 'culturally Māori' group over the 'less' Māori group of the 'unconnected'. It is my contention that defining Māori in such a way assumes a class or level in which the unconnected are 'lower' and the fully connected are 'higher'. Māori must be careful that they do not follow the principles of Westernised concepts of 'social class' that use social stratification in which people are grouped into a set of hierarchical social categories.

This issue is identified in Rata's analysis of the culturalistic approach in terms of education. Rata (2011) discusses some disparities in this approach for Māori whānau who have chosen to engage in Māori educational systems only to be discouraged by an essentialised Māori identity beyond their reach. She argues that research has identified issues for Māori who struggle with their ethnic and cultural identity by stating that:

*“Research into marae-based courses found that this approach ‘does not support all categories of Māori people who are struggling with their ethnic identity. Rather it creates an unexpected crisis of*

*identity for those Māori who are unable to identify in terms of cultural ideology as they believe they can never meet the orthodox criteria for recognition as ‘genuine Māori’ (Van Meijl 2006, p. 930). Van Meijl suggests that ‘the presentation of Māori cultural identity is fundamentally different from the self-representation of alienated young urban Māori people’, leaving the self of some Māori bewildered with their personal yet deviating notions of Māoriness (p. 931)”*

(Rata, 2011, p.14).

Rata has identified an unexpected barrier for Māori whānau initiating the journey to develop and revitalise their cultural identity. It is apparent that Māori whānau in the ‘disconnected’ group are faced with barriers existing within the Māori world itself.

As Rata (2011) suggests, cultural alienation from their own culture may exist for some Māori whānau who are faced with difficulty in deciding which world they belong to - the ‘Pākehā’ world or the ‘Māori’ world. The Pākehā world may seem to be a comfortable place for them; however, this may mean that they will inevitably be compared to Pakeha as is done within statistical data whereby Māori are compared to non-Māori in health, employment and education. In contrast, in the Māori world they may be measured by their ‘cultural capital’, again the dilemma is developing cultural capacity. And again, to be compared with other more ‘essentialised’ Māori, not knowing the “right” waiata, or being able to understand Te Reo Māori. Becoming of indeterminate origins therefore may typify this group, because they have in effect made the decision to be an outcast, resisting both worlds or, to become ‘marginalised’ (Durie, 1994). Ngata’s admonition for generations of Māori was for them to live

successfully in both worlds. However, how is this possible for Māori unconnected to their culture? A state of 'bewilderment' with self-identity as mentioned by Rata (2011) exposes an issue that may be resolved by whānau dismissing attempts to live up to a certain externally imposed ideology of culturalism, and instead distinguishing our identity through the process of self-identity development.

Use of the terms 'belonging to' or 'fitting in' to a societal group is examined in Houkamau and Sibley (2010), who state "We therefore define identity as constituting those aspects of the self-concept (including beliefs/values/ attitudes) that pertain to 'who' a person is as Māori, how they 'fit in' with others in the social world and what that means in terms of behaviour" (p.12).

In terms of education, 'fitting in' requires the student to have a sense of belonging within school culture. The question for many Māori whānau who are enrolled in mainstream schools is whether or not their children will 'fit in'.

## CHAPTER THREE – CULTURAL IDENTITY AND EDUCATION

### Introduction

A question often posed by educational researchers is the connection between cultural identity and education achievement. A lack of cultural identity has been linked to underachievement statistics for Māori in mainstream schools (Bevan-Brown, 2003). Māori researchers Mason Durie and Rose Pere have provided holistic models based upon Māori philosophies that identify principles that enhance the essential aspects of cultural identity development.

Durie's (1982) Te Whare Tapa Whā model of overall well-being emphasises cultural security as an essential component of Taha Wairua (spiritual well-being). Durie (2013) defined cultural security as a process of developing knowledge and understanding of one's whakapapa, language, cultural practices and tikanga. Taha Wairua is enhanced by a strong sense of cultural identity that acknowledges our connections and relationship with our natural environment (land, sky and living things) including Io (supreme God). Having knowledge of Te Reo Māori and cultural practices promotes our expressions of the world around us. Spiritual health is regarded as the most essential component of our well-being, and it is this aspect that enhances our ability to form positive relationships within whānau, hapū, iwi as well as those in our extended lives (Te Puni Kokiri, 2000).

Rose Pere (1988) outlined six elements of Māori identity, one of which was a sense of humanity and involves a sense of belonging to a wider community. The challenge for participants in this study is deciding where they position themselves in relation to their cultural identity. For many Māori whānau who have 'lived' in the world of the Pākehā, educated in the English language and western beliefs and values the dilemma is

where do they belong and can they succeed in mainstream education without a secure cultural identity.

### **Māori Cultural Identity in Mainstream Schools**

Research into the underachievement of Māori students in mainstream schools has prompted government to develop programmes focussed on developing the cultural identity of Māori students in order to improve their educational success. According to Peters (2010), “For Māori children and Pasifika children, positive, responsive relationships between children, teachers and families, and culturally responsive teaching and assessment are strong themes in ensuring success” (p.10). Knowledge of the learner is recognised as an essential dimension of effective literacy practice, especially in relation to teaching practice. Teachers are advised to respect and value each learner by acknowledging their culture, language, and identity (Ministry of Education (2006). Providing a culturally inclusive programme for Māori students can be challenging for many teachers especially those of non-Māori cultures. Bevan-Brown’s (2003) cultural self-review offers teachers an avenue in which they can maximise students’ learning experiences by “facilitating learning, raising self-esteem, and fostering emotional and psychological well-being” (p.3). The process of understanding the cultural differences of students requires the teacher to increase their knowledge of the cultural background of learners and use the information to provide an education that is relevant and meaningful for learners from minority groups. For Māori learners, developing aspects of cultural identity in educational programmes is dependent on the constant and coherent teaching of the Māori language and culture. The ability to speak Te Reo Māori has been regarded as central to achieving Māori identity (Karetu, 1993).



## **Te Reo Māori**

Language is an essential aspect of indigenous cultural identity throughout the world. South African anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela wisely expressed his view of indigenous language as “If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head, if you talk to him in his own language that goes to his heart” (TVNZ, 2013). Speaking one’s own language is a vital component of communication and interaction within society. Indigenous language has been acknowledged throughout history as the vital component of all cultures in an expression of transmitting knowledge and understanding that is unique to a certain culture. Knowing one’s indigenous language is connected to maintaining well-being and sense of identity. According to the United Nations (2012), “Language is an essential part of, and intrinsically linked to, indigenous peoples’ ways of life, culture and identities. Languages embody many indigenous values and concepts and contain indigenous peoples’ histories and development. They are fundamental markers of indigenous peoples’ distinctiveness and cohesiveness as peoples” (p.8).

Te Reo Māori has been described by a number of researchers, historians and educationalists as the essential ingredient of Māori culture, a key to cultural identity that enables the speaker to express all of their thoughts, opinions and emotions (Durie 2006a; Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2009a; Parliamentary Library, 2000; Ratima & May, 2011; Waitangi Tribunal 1986). Expressing oneself in Te Reo Māori distinguishes Māori from other cultures in that it “has been created and moulded to express our feelings and sentiments and no other medium of speech can take its place” (Te Rangihiroa in Sorrenson, 1986, p.182; cited in Pohatu, 2005). The ability for Māori to express

themselves in their indigenous language promotes effective communication within the structure of the whānau and wider community including the school environment. Effective communication between teachers and students improves successful learning and teaching relationships in Māori medium schools, further promoting success in education.

Although Te Reo Māori has been identified as an essential component of cultural identity there are many Māori today who have suffered the loss of their language, due mainly to colonisation and past government assimilative and educational policies following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The banning of the Māori language in schools after the 1900's was a catalyst in the almost destruction of our indigenous language resulting in a high percentage of Māori losing the vital component of their cultural identity. Ka'ai (2004) explains the impact of deprivation of Te Reo on generations of Māori whānau: "...language began to decline, leading to generations of Māori being deprived of one of their cultural taonga" (p.4).

Alongside Te Reo Māori, Tikanga Māori is also recognised as important to a person's cultural identity.

### **Tikanga Māori**

Tikanga Māori incorporates a set of values, customs and practices that take place in daily life based on experience and learning handed down through generations. It is based on logic and common sense associated with a Māori world view. Practices vary between iwi and hapū and are instilled at an early age in the life of Māori tamariki. Māori protocol practices are incorporated in all areas of life including karakia, greetings, powhiri, whai kōrero, mihimihi and others. Opportunities to transmit

knowledge and understanding of Māori culture depend greatly upon the availability of contexts in which tikanga is practiced.

Tikanga Māori has developed over centuries of practice, underpinned by core values and principles which governed Māori political, legal, social and spiritual behaviour. These are essential in the development of aspects of cultural identity (Durie, 2006b; Gallagher, 2012). In 2005 the Ministry of Education funded four pilot professional development programmes for teachers in mainstream schools aimed at improving and increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding Māori language and culture, including practices such as waiata and karakia. A majority of mainstream teachers are Non-Māori, therefore their knowledge and understanding of Māori language and culture suggests that progress will be minimal and less effective than their associates in Māori medium schools. The effectiveness of these programmes depends greatly upon the willingness and attitudes of Non-Māori teachers in delivering Māori language and culture within the mainstream environment.

Learning and teaching of Tikanga Māori are consistent with knowledge of one's cultural identity and origins of where we come from, accessed through our genealogy and whakapapa.

In Māori contexts, whakapapa is also an essential ingredient of cultural identity. Identification and acknowledgement of tipuna and ancestral lines connect Māori whānau to their 'roots', where we come from, who we are and how knowledge and understanding of the past, influences learning and development in the present and the future.

## **Whakapapa**

Identity in the Māori sense of the word encompasses all parts of a person's individual identity as part of a collective group that consists of whānau, hapū and iwi. A person's whakapapa is essential to their sense of belonging to this collective. Whakapapa therefore is crucial in promoting and developing a full and meaningful life.

Research studies have shown that cultural practice, tribal structures and whakapapa are all significant in the development of Māori cultural identity (Durie, 2002; Gallagher, 2012; Moeke-Pickering, 1996). Karetu (1990) further states that "whakapapa is not simply about having 'Māori blood', but also knowing about that descent and having a meaningful relationship to it. Knowledge of whakapapa and sense of identity are very important to Māori" (p.235).

Knowing and understanding whakapapa and placing an importance on it in one's life improves an individual's sense of belonging and constitutes their place within their culture. Mana is a taonga passed on from our tipuna (ancestors) that requires an individual to acknowledge the wisdom of their tipuna. Mana is the spiritual essence that allows the seed of cultural identity to be transferred from generation to generation and connecting Māori to their original homeland, Rangiātea.

Although there are many other facets to Māori cultural identity, Te Reo Māori, Tikanga Māori and whakapapa have been used in this study as a foundation for those who wish make the journey home to Rangiātea.

## **Cultural Security and Māori Whānau in Mainstream Schools.**

Durie (2013) identifies cultural security as an essential factor in the overall well-being of Māori whānau and relates directly to achieving success in education (Ministry of Education, 2013a). It has become

evident throughout this study that Māori whānau have been denied the human right to develop their cultural identity and enjoy the experiences of overall well-being. The Human Rights Commission (2012) inquiry into the historical and current health, education, and welfare profiles of Māori children stated that

*“The Crown has obligations to protect these rights. International human rights standards indicate that government investment should address inequalities experienced by Māori children, support and empower Māori families and communities to secure their children’s wellbeing, and maintain and strengthen Māori language and culture” (p.18).*

It is also apparent that historical evidence collected and examined in this study has uncovered some disturbing disparities in educational policies, intent on destroying the cultural identity of Māori children and disabling their human rights as citizens in our own country. The government therefore are obligated to securing children’s well-being by maintaining and strengthening their language and culture through educational policies existing in the education system today.

Māori whānau given a voice in this study have discussed their experiences in education. This has in a small way allowed them the opportunity to express their needs and concerns, in a hope that future generations do not suffer the injustices placed upon their tipuna that denied them of the right to experience their cultural identities freely. It is with this notion in mind that the methods of research used in this study are based upon essentially Māori values and principles that ensure complete autonomy in respect to the participants’ cultural identity.

## CHAPTER FOUR- METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

This thesis examines the perspectives of Māori whānau through a varied range of research methods. The reason for the use of alternate methods is the complexity of the research study and delicate information obtained from the participant dialogue. As an insider researcher, I have a direct connection to the research setting and participants. The research setting is one of which I am part in that I have similar educational experiences to the participants, and all the participants except for one(a close friend) are members of my immediate and extended whānau.

Insider research contrasts with traditional practices of scientific research whereby the researcher positions themselves as an 'objective outsider' who studies subjects external to themselves (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The purpose of this research, however, is close to my heart and the desire to restore aspects of my own and my whānau's cultural identity is the driving force behind my intentions for this study. Restoring cultural identity of my whānau must happen in a way that does not blame or criticise their loss of their indigenous language and culture, but provides them with a reasoning of how it was lost, in order to get it back again.

Clearly there is the issue of validity in regards to a researcher's personal involvement within the study in that the researcher does not hold an objective point of view; however, the benefits of insider research far outweigh the negatives. The benefits of this method of research are that participants are free to share their experiences openly and honestly because they trust the researcher to use the data for the benefits of the whānau. In contrast to traditional research methods, such as outsider research, interview data would be limited in that there is no connection

and relationship with the researcher, and participants may be unwilling to disclose personal information only restricted to close family members. Tierney (1994) argues that research study participants may feel more comfortable and freer to talk openly if familiar with the researcher. As expected interview data from my whānau was explicit and their detailed information and can be termed as 'priceless' from a researcher's viewpoint. The themes that have emerged from interview data can be seen as relevant to the Kaupapa of this research study. Admittedly, the area of cultural identity of Māori whānau in mainstream schools is a topic that many researchers have yet to study. The importance of Māori educational success has been a priority and concern for government over the last twenty years; therefore, researching whānau perspectives is relevant to improving achievement for Māori. The purpose of this study is to gain insight into Māori perspectives as a means of improving educational outcomes for our tamariki and mokopuna of the future. It is my view that past research only touches the surface of issues faced by Māori whānau in mainstream education and a more profound method of research is needed to define specific educational initiatives and to explain some of the problems faced by Māori whānau within mainstream education. Therefore it is my belief that Māori need to research their own (Māori). Research undertaken by outsiders and non-Māori cannot readily expect to understand the perspectives of another culture because they do not know the complexities of our history or our aspirations for the future. In my view, Māori research from a Māori point of view is valid and legitimate in every sense, and justifiable from the viewpoint of Tino Rangatiratanga, a key principle in Kaupapa Māori research.

## **Kaupapa Māori Research**

The principles of Kaupapa Māori are outlined by Linda Smith (1996) for the purpose of research from a Māori perspective.

The principles are Tino Rangatiratanga, Whakapapa, Te Reo Māori, Tikanga Māori and Whānau. Some of these principles have been used throughout this study.

Tino Rangatiratanga (self- determination) is a relevant component of the research process that allows Māori to shape their own research processes by initiating control of their own language, cultural practices, aspirations and destiny (Rangahau, 2013). Smith (1996) identified some critical questions relevant to Māori communities and researchers that allow self- sufficiency throughout the research process accessing knowledge for the benefit of Māori whānau. These questions include:

- *Who is that research for?*
- *What difference will it make?*
- *Who will benefit?*

(p. 217-218)

These three questions are relevant to this study.

*Who is the research for?*

This research is for:

- 1) Māori Whānau
- 2) Schools, principals and teachers
- 3) Educational researchers



#### 4) Government policy makers

The research project provides an opportunity for whānau to express their needs, concerns and aspirations towards for their children and mokopuna, based on their own school experiences. In return the researcher will examine data to develop a deeper understanding of the reasons as to why whānau have chosen mainstream education. At completion of the study the researcher will share her findings with participants and whānau and also make it available through the digital repository at the University of Waikato, to be read and used by research students. This transferral of knowledge will hopefully grow to enlighten educationalists of the perspectives of Māori whānau in mainstream schools and also for Māori whānau as a discussion point.

*What difference will it make and who will benefit?*

The connection between education and Māori cultural identity is a complex topic; however it is a necessary one to discuss, especially amongst educational researchers and politicians who control educational policies that impact of whānau.

It is hoped that this study will provide information that can be used for improving educational success for Māori whānau in mainstream schools.

#### **Whānau**

From a whānau perspective, the intentions of this research are to allow whānau to have a voice in regards to the education of their children. As an insider researcher my whānau have freely discussed with me their life experiences, opinions and desires to ensure educational success for their children. Interviews were undertaken in an environment chosen by each of the participants, either their own homes or in the home of the researcher. The obligations of the researcher were to provide an

environment whereby the participants felt comfortable, relaxed and willing to share their experiences. Participants were provided ahead of time with information pertaining to the interview and research process. They had the opportunity to decline answering questions and continuing with the interview. Under no circumstances were participants pressured into sharing their thoughts and feelings. The essential element of respect was situated throughout the interview. From a Kaupapa Māori perspective, Āta is constituted as essential to the research interview and the relationship between researcher and participants.

### **Āta**

The principle of Āta was developed by Taina Pohatu (2005) and uses an alternative approach (Takepū) in the area of social sciences. Pohatu's approach focuses on developing respectful relationships, negotiating boundaries and working to create and hold safe space (Ahurutanga), with corresponding behaviours (Rangahau, 2013). Central to the principle is the concept of how people behave when engaging in relationships with people, kaupapa and environment.

It is within this principle that I have conducted this research. My objective stance, despite the close relationship between myself and the participants, relied upon my listening carefully to their dialogue and not intruding upon them with my own thoughts, opinions and judgements.

Also evident in the Āta principle is the element of trust. My relationship with all the participants in the study is based on a trusting reciprocal relationship. As an older member of our whānau, I have developed trusting relationships with my nephews and nieces through involvement in their lives and as a researcher they know that I have pure motives and intentions for the improvement and benefit of our whānau infrastructure.

Our relationship is centred on trust, respect and most of all aroha (love). Āta is brought through prior relationship, which has built long term confidence, being a good genuine person, who will use the information in an appropriate way.

### **Aroha**

The concept of love is often frowned upon by Western research methodologies; however, as I am researching from a Kaupapa Māori perspective, it is essential that I include love as an essential requirement in term of research. Love gives research a deeper insight into the richness of Te Ao Māori and constitutes a realness and reality to the context of research. The experiences of the participants are real, true and honest because their dialogue comes from within their hearts, and their memories, although painful for some of the participants to share, were expressed in the hope that their stories will be transferred with love to future generations.

### **Qualitative Approach**

The qualitative approach was used to gather information in the form of interviews with the participants which was then analysed in relation to the research question.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) describe qualitative research as an approach which seeks to understand human behaviours and experience from within the same frame of reference from which it is demonstrated. A key feature of this research method is that "...people construct their social world as opposed to being passive recipients and respondents within a social world as posited by traditional positivist science based paradigms" (p.22).

The stories and experiences of the participants create an authenticity and truth within the research in that the narratives include the personal expressions of emotion and reality that contributes and promotes understanding of events that impacted their lives.

Narrative enquiry is based on the understanding that we lead storied lives; that narrative can be a powerful way to locate and understand our values, experiences and learning. Storytelling recognises that stories are central to how we experience and make meaning of the world around us. We tell stories about our experiences, and it is through those stories that we can understand such experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000).

Ethical consideration based on moral principles has been the underlying foundation of this research study. Developing respectful relationships between the researcher and participants in this study has already been established and will continue to develop at the completion of this study.

This study contains the life stories of my whānau (extended family and friends) that will include their school and home experiences, their concerns, aspirations and desires for their tamariki and mokopuna in relation to educational achievement and success. As an 'insider researcher' my relationship with the participants has already been established and at the onset of this research project it was already situated in my mind that it would be my whānau to whom I would interview. My whānau consists of the generations who have unwillingly been disconnected from their language and culture and so who are relevant to voice their experiences in a non-intrusive way; and have 'lived' within the mainstream education and who have not had a voice. My belief is that giving voice to Māori who have lived these experiences and gaining insight into their lives can provide the creators and providers

of this education system with valuable knowledge and understanding of what it is really like to be educated in a system that has not acknowledged their Māori identity. Rangahau (2012) explains this method as appropriate for Māori by stating that “For Māori, qualitative methods have enabled us to ‘give voice’ and provided an opportunity to explain phenomena from our own perspective. It allows for a Māori perspective to be heard, and allows for more equal empowerment of the participant”.

The use of qualitative research generates important themes which emerge from participants’ experiences and can be interpreted and discussed as new understandings of human behaviours through the processes of re-storying or “spiral discourse” (Bishop, 2005).

Although there may have been ethical issues to involving my whānau in this research, I believe that the research is justified as being important for future generations of Māori. The purpose of the study was to promote change in education policy to better fit the needs of our Māori tamariki and rangatahi.

It is for this purpose that I have chosen insider research as a way of providing a valid and authentic research study to encompass my research. It is also important that I take the stance of Linda Smith’s exertion to decolonise methods of research in relation to Māori research (Smith, 1999). As does Linda Smith, I too position myself as a Māori woman who has been colonised within the mainstream school system as a child, to a colonised researcher, who proposes to overstep the boundaries of the mainstream university where I am enrolled. The validity of this research is that it comes from Māori for Māori and has not been compiled for Pākehā interests but for the interests of my family and

other families similar to mine. This is something which any outsider or researcher who does not have a relationship with the participants would never be able to extract. I am therefore an indigenous researcher working under an indigenous paradigm of indigenous research agendas, methodologies and protocols.

### **Indigenous Research**

My mistrust of past colonised agendas has led me to the belief that the restrictions placed on Māori researchers, as well as losing research authenticity and validity of the research by Māori researchers, has also brought about a way to shut down Māori voices, as it too often reminds us of our colonised past and continues to disempower indigenous voice of oppression and destruction of our language, culture and essentially Māori position. Bishop (1999) aptly describes this internalistic assimilation as

*“Researchers in Aotearoa/New Zealand have developed a tradition of research that has perpetuated colonial values, thereby undervaluing and belittling Māori knowledge and learning practices and processes in order to enhance those of the colonisers and adherents of neo-colonial paradigms. There has developed a social pathology research approach in Aotearoa/New Zealand that has implied, in all phases of the research process, the “inability” of Māori culture to cope with human problems, and proposed that Māori culture was and is inferior to that of the colonisers in human terms”(p. 1).*

Bishop (1999) also states that “These processes have consequently misrepresented Māori experiences, thereby denying Māori authenticity and voice” (p.1). The voice of Māori whānau in this study has identified

some major issues in relation to cultural identity and education. Research findings examine and analyse participant data in order to locate a number of themes that have evolved throughout the study.

### **Participant Information**

Prior to the participant interviews I applied to the University of Waikato Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee for ethical approval. Approval was granted and I began the research process to find participants for the study.

As mentioned earlier, the participants in this study are members of my whānau and close friends. The age of the participants range from age nineteen to sixty seven and consist of one male and seven female. I contacted all the participants by phone explaining the purpose of the research and asked them if they would participate. All the participants were happy to take part and gave their verbal consent.

One of the participants lived in Thames and the rest lived in Hamilton. I set up a suitable time for each participant to be interviewed and we discussed the most appropriate venue for the interview. Two of the participants were interviewed in their own homes and the others were interviewed in my home. Two of the participants were husband and wife and interviewed together in their own home.

Prior to the interviews I met with each of the participants to discuss the consent forms to make sure that they were fully aware of the process terms and conditions of the research study. After they had signed the consent forms we arranged a suitable time for the interviews.

I began each interview with an explanation of the purpose of the study, how I would use the data and a discussion about the questions I would

ask them. I restated my intentions for the study and if they still agreed to participate. All the participants agreed, signed the consent form and we continued the interview process.

All the interviews were recorded on a voice recorder and transmitted to my computer for later analysis and took between approximately twenty minutes to one hour to complete.

Participants were given a draft transcript to look at and will be given an opportunity to read the final copy when it is completed. Names of the participants have been substituted to protect the participants' identities and in cases where aspects of participants' dialogue are identifiable, minor details have been changed and stories fragmented to protect the confidentiality of participants.



## **CHAPTER FIVE - RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of a range of Māori perspectives of education through examining the life experiences of whānau who have attended mainstream schools and have also enrolled their children in mainstream schools. This question is intimately connected with the issue of cultural identity as Māori. Probably as a result of the initial invitation letter, which introduced the idea of cultural identity as Māori, aspects of being Māori became a focus for all the interviews. The interview protocol asked about participants' own school experiences, concerns and priorities for education and future aspirations for their children's education. Analysis of these conversations suggests that there are significant differences of experience between people of different ages. Accordingly, I have allocated the respondents into their age groups and focused the presentation of the analysis into age groups.

All the participants identified themselves as Māori with little or no knowledge of the Māori language and culture. Participants' ages ranged from 19 to 67 years of age, consisting of 5 generations, two participants from each generation. This was not a deliberate selection of participants, but one which emerged as those whom I approached agreed to participate.

"Generations" have been established by the time period in which participants attended school:

Generation 1 – 1950-1960

Generation 2 – 1960-1970

Generation 3 – 1970-1980

Generation 4 – 1980-1990

Generation 5 – 1990 – 2000

### **Education and Social Policies**

Although none of the participants had spoken directly about policies, it was clear that state-initiated educational policies had affected the learning experiences of most of the participants. Generations 1 and 2 particularly mentioned what I would argue are effects of colonialist government policies. They spoke about the effects on them of either their parents' or grandparents' being physically punished at school for speaking Te Reo. The focus of education of Māori children on learning for eventual jobs in manual labouring was a message that came through strongly, and some noted a lack of encouragement to enter tertiary and seek academic qualifications. Added to this, whānau attitudes to Te Reo Māori also discouraged the use of Māori language and placed emphasis on the necessity of learning the English language.

The analysis of the interview data has been separated into themes that have emerged from early generations through to recent generations to show the connection to societal change, educational policy and whānau attitudes towards cultural identity.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Early educational policy required all Māori children to be instructed in English during school hours, and educational officials such as school inspectors banned the use of the Māori language within the school grounds.

One of the participants in this study recalled her father talking about being punished for speaking Māori at school. The participant's father attended school in Gisborne in the late 1920's. He attended a native school whereby all instruction was in the English language and use of Te Reo Māori was banned within the school grounds.

She recalled her father talking about being strapped at school for speaking Te Reo Māori...

*"My father used to tell us that he was strapped at school for speaking Māori. He used to say he hated school and would often wag" (Keita, Gen 2)*

Keita's father was one of many children who attended school during the period in which corporal punishment was meted out on children caught speaking Te Reo Māori within the bounds of school. Many parents agreed to this rule as the learning of the English language had been promoted by Māori politicians who recognised that the English language would prepare young Māori for life in the Pākehā world.

### **Gender Roles and Employment**

Early educational policies not only targeted instruction in English but also teaching instruction was based on ideologies of the English culture including strictly male and female roles in society. Horiana recalled her school experiences in the 1950's, stating that:

*"In standard six we went into town by bus to XXXX Primary School. The boys did woodwork and the girls cooking. Every school morning we were checked for clean nails and hands, brushed teeth, hair lice, if you were unclean you had to go and clean up before the next programme which was marching and standing at the flag post for the British Queen." (Horiana, Gen 1)*

Health and cleanliness routines were a focus of educational policy during the time Horiana attended school. This included daily inspections of Māori children's cleanliness and tidiness, and played a big part in the Native school era (Simon, 2001).

Horiana recalled sitting a test to enter high schools and learning typewriting, shorthand, book keeping.

*“To get in to specialist classes for high school you had to take a test and I made the grade into Commercial class. Mum had to buy my uniform, pay for book fees and school fees, sports fees and whatever I needed for four years at high school. Our subjects were typewriting, shorthand, book keeping, there were four of us from xxxx School and none of us knew a thing about those subjects but I will say that we all excelled in them either coming first, second or third.”*

Similar to Horiana's experiences, inequalities for males in education existed in the native schools era and continued on to future generations. Attitudes towards male education and employment are brought out in Joseph and Amber's statements about their education. Joseph talked about tertiary study as being less of a priority when he left school. Although being offered a football scholarship, Joseph's wife Amber remarked that he had little support to go and attend university in America.

*Joseph had a lot of opportunities thrown at him but he wasn't guided. He got a scholarship to go to university in America to play football but no one pushed him to go so he never went. Those doors were open for him at the time but there was no one to push him to take it. University wasn't a priority in the 80s and 90s*

*especially for Māori and Pacific Islanders; it was to get a job.  
(Amber, Gen. 4)*

*I had no intentions of going to university. It wasn't a priority to go to university back then. (Joseph, Gen. 3)*

Furthermore Keita recalled the attitude of her parents towards tertiary training and employment.

*Study at university or training wasn't encouraged in my day. We had to find work when we left school. My brothers all went out to work as labourers for builders or mechanics. My older brothers did well learning to be block layers and got lots of work. My sisters well they went to work in the old Woolworths supermarket, none of us ended up going to university it wasn't even thought of back then.  
(Keita, Gen.2)*

Keita also talked about her aspirations for her children and how she would like them to find professional work but left it to them to decide.

*"I try to encourage my kids to do well at school. I want them to have what I never had, lots of support, to be someone special and do what they are good at. I would like them to become professionals, like doctors or lawyers, but it's really up to them."  
(Keita, Gen.2)*

## **Urbanisation**

Prior to the Second World War, 80% of Māori families were living in rural areas. Today 85% of Māori whānau live in urban areas throughout New Zealand.

Urbanisation, the movement of whānau from rural to urban areas, featured significantly in the experiences of generations, and several

respondents mentioned their experiences of moving around the country, and the difficulties of changing schools. Up until the 1980's there was a lack of availability of Māori medium schools in urban areas.

Wikitoria moved from the Bluff to Dunedin and recalled little knowledge of Māori language and culture

*My education was terrible, I grew up in Bluff, I was hardly ever there(school) because something terrible happened and I decided I didn't want to go to school anymore so I used to go to this abandoned mine and wag. I can remember my mother enrolling me in Dunedin and I couldn't wag, I couldn't, there was nowhere to go, I was seven. There was no such thing as Māori down there. I didn't even know I was Māori, in the South Island in 1946; it was all Pākehā. (Wikitoria, Gen.1)*

At the age of eight Wikitoria moved to her mother's home town of Ngaruawahia, where she recollects her ignorance of her Māori language and culture and how she was surrounded by the Pākehā culture.

*By the time I was eight we moved to Ngaruawahia. I remember we got a taxi to the house and it was in all these different colours red and black with designs on it. Little did I know it was a marae. One time there were all these people visiting crying talking this language and I remember my mother was talking it. We were ignorant. There were lots of kids like us, you know brown. (Wikitoria, Gen.1).*

During the 1960's many Māori whānau moved from their hometowns to the cities. Some of the participants recall their parents' reason for moving to the city was to find employment. Te Ara notes that young Māori began to move from their papakainga to towns and cities,

attracted by the 'Big Three', work, money and pleasure. By the 1960's whānau began to migrate in significant numbers (Te Ara, 2013).

Keita recalled her family's move from their hometown of Gisborne to Hamilton in the early 1960's...

*When I was a young child my parents decided to move to Hamilton. There were a lot of families back then who moved to the cities to find employment. My father was a slaughter man and there was work up there for that. My mum also thought we could have a better life in the city. (Keita, Gen.2)*

Keita stated that the schools she attended were mainstream schools where all learning was in English and in the neighbourhood she lived in everyone spoke English. Being away from her home town, she recalls distance from her extended whānau, some of whom spoke Te Reo Māori. Māori language was not spoken or encouraged by her parents.

*Now that I think of it we left our extended family behind, like my uncles, aunties and cousins. We grew up in Hamilton without the support of our extended family and that was sad. I never got to have a relationship with my cousins who were the same age. I suppose that had a lot to do with our loss of our language and culture. Most of the Māori families who lived around us went to English schools, so everyone in our neighbourhood spoke English. I can't remember anyone speaking Māori around us, except for our uncles who came to visit us from Gisborne. (Keita, Gen.2)*

Keita's family like many other Māori whānau who moved to urban areas during the 1960's acknowledge that they had limited support from their extended whānau in the cities. Keita also mentioned that most of the

Māori families in her neighbourhood attended mainstream schools and very few spoke Te Reo Māori.

### **Mixed Ethnicity**

Mixed ethnicity is a prominent theme emerging from the participant interviews. All the participants acknowledged identity links to other cultures in their whakapapa. Having a mixture of Māori and Non-Māori ethnicity is common for many Māori whānau in New Zealand. Other cultural identities noted by participants include Scottish, English, and Pacific Islander descendants. When asked their main ethnic identity, some confirmed their Māori ancestry; however, some participants were confused as to which ethnic group was more relevant to their identity.

Kaikou was confused about her ethnicity and had problems deciding what her main ethnicity was.

*It's kind of hard to choose what group I belong to. I know I have Māori blood, Mum is Māori. I don't know a lot about my Māori side but I can't say that I 'choose' to disconnect myself from my language and culture. (Kaikou, Gen. 4)*

Kaikou acknowledged her Māori identity by having 'Māori blood', her mother being Māori. However, she concluded that she had little knowledge of her 'Māori side', meaning language and culture. She also determined that her disconnection from her Māori language and culture was not by choice.

Amber stated that she was could identify with two ethnic groups.

*My mum is Māori and my Dad was Pacific Islander, so I identify with both. (Gen.4)*



Amber also talked about her identity as Māori and her school experiences.

*When I was growing up I only identified as being Māori because at that time living here in Hamilton being young that was all I knew as being around me in my school it was either Māori or white people and the Indians just a sprinkle not as diverse as it is now. And because all the family things that we went to were mostly my mother's things that were all Māori and half Pākehā we identified with being Māori but also did things in a Pākehā way. (Gen.4)*

Amber acknowledged her mixed identity as Māori, Pacific Islander and Pākehā. She summarised that they 'did things in a Pākehā way', choosing a single language and culture to follow - the dominant culture of the Pākehā, living in the city and speaking the English language.

Participant data shows a slight change in attitudes towards Te Reo Māori and culture over time. After the 1980's Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa schools were beginning to emerge in rural and urban areas throughout New Zealand. Some participants had some knowledge of these centres but were hesitant about enrolling their children. Some of the reasons for this were restrictions and protocols to enrolment into Te Kōhanga Reo, lack of knowledge of the teaching and learning processes of Kura Kaupapa schools and lack of Whare Kura (High Schools) to cater for children transitioning to secondary schools.

Katarina reflected on her decision not to enrol her children in Kura Kaupapa stating that there were some barriers to enrolment:

*Yep I would have liked to send them to Kōhanga but there are a lot of protocols you gotta follow, but I was told that they have to go to Kōhanga before they can go to Kura Kaupapa. (Katarina, Gen. 3)*

Wikitoria also experienced restrictions when she sought to enrol her mokopuna in a Rumaki unit. She recalled the principal and teacher attitudes to enrolling her mokopuna and stated that:

*When I decided to enrol xxxx in the Rumaki unit the teachers said he didn't have enough Te Reo Māori. Xxxx didn't go to Kōhanga but because I thought it would be good for him, I wanted to enrol him there. They (teachers) didn't want him in there, but I insisted and today he is nearly ten and doing well learning Māori. (Wiki, Gen.1)*

Keita also talked about her lack of knowledge about enrolment, learning and teaching practice in Te Kōhanga Reo that had influenced her decision to enrol her some of her children in a mainstream school.

*Another thing was that I didn't know what else they taught at Kōhanga, except for Māori language. I didn't know anything about what it involved and why everyone was saying it was better for Māori children to go to a Māori school rather than mainstream. I know they learn their language but what else, why is it better than mainstream. At the time I knew some families who put their kids in there, so it was like I'll just put him in mainstream, I did okay so surely he would. (Keita, Gen.2)*

Katarina recalled some of her whānau attending Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa primary schools, but due to the lack of Māori high schools transitioning to mainstream was difficult.

*I've got cousins who were brought up total immersion they never knew how to write English at all but they knew how to speak it most of the swear words because that's what they heard at home they grew up listening to that. They went into mainstream and I*

*think they found that hard because now they're not going to school at all. (Katarina, Gen.3)*

The lack of Whare Kura in some towns and cities has deterred whānau from enrolment in Māori medium schools for their children. Participant data also shows some changes in attitude towards Māori education due to some areas increasing the number of Kura Kaupapa schools and some members of their whānau enrolling in Te Kōhanga Reo.

Keita recalled her reluctance to move to a town where there were no Kura Kaupapa primary schools or Te Whare Kura for her younger child.

*I was reluctant to go back home because when I left xxx there was no Kura Kaupapa or Māori high schools. xxx's older sister had to travel by bus out to xxx every day and I didn't want that for xxx. There was no high school for kids with the Reo either. I had to research the Kura down there to find out if there was a place for xxx. As it turns out there was a new Kura Kaupapa being built, that also had a high school, so that was great. If there had been no Kura Kaupapa at home, I was contemplating sending her to a Māori boarding school down in Hastings. (Keita, Gen.2)*

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of Kura Kaupapa schools since the 1990's from 13 Kura in 1992 to over 72 in 2011. The increase in schools has meant that whānau now have the opportunity to enrol their children in Kura Kaupapa Māori.

### **School Choice**

Some of the parents stated that they chose a Kura Kaupapa school for their children; however, most parents said they had no other option but to send their children to mainstream schools because the schools did not exist at the time or they didn't speak Māori themselves.

Wikitoria talked about enrolling her older children in mainstream and her younger children in Kura Kaupapa.

*My first lot of kids went to mainstream because there was no Kōhanga, so that all came out, so the first lot went to mainstream, xxxx did alright at mainstream, well, she's a teacher now, she might have done a lot better at Kura, because she was envious of xxxx and xxxxxx going to Kura and so in a way she's a little colonised I think, she had to fill a form one day and she wrote down she was a 'Kiwi'- I was stunned at that. She's been in London for the last 15 years; she had a lot of Pākehā friends. (Wikitoria, Gen. 1)*

She also reflected on what she thought were the benefits of mainstream education for her older children and Kura Kaupapa for her younger children at the time.

*The first three of my kids were in the mainstream. The benefits of mainstream well, my son he's a chippie now. The other boy xxx he was the head boy at his school, he had a disagreement with his father, now he's a chef in Australia. He ran a restaurant for a rich Pākehā woman.*

*The last two of my kids both went to Kura. They were brought up tuturu Māori. xxxxxx didn't go to Kōhanga, but she went to Kura Kaupapa right through to high school. She was really smart, naturally clever, but now she would rather go work on a farm, drive a tractor, but she's smart enough to go to university if she wanted to, but she won't. (Wikitoria, Gen. 1)*

Keita said that her attitude towards Māori learning had developed from the beliefs of her parents towards Māori language and culture:

*They (parents) never talked about anything to do with learning Māori at school. We had to learn to read and write in English to be successful in the world. The world was a white man's world, that's what they used to say. (Keita, Gen.2)*

Kaikou evaluated her mother's decision to enrol her three daughters in different high schools because of their different physical characteristics, academic abilities and social status. She explained that her mother chose different schools where she thought each daughter would best fit.

*Mum sent xxxxxxxx (sister) to all the rough schools with all the Māori kids because xxxxxxxx looks Māori, you know, the brown skin and she had a lot of Māori friends. I think too she enjoyed Kapa Haka and speaking Māori with her mates. I remember xxxxxxxx saying to me oh mum sent 'you' to the Catholic school and just chucked me into that rough school. I think mum knew she could handle it at the rougher schools.*

*My other sister xxxx, well, she was like the 'nerd,' she was good at everything at school, and hung out with all the Pākehā kids, well she looked Pākehā too, blonde hair, white skin, that had a lot to do with it and she acted like a Pākehā too.*

*I went to the Catholic school because Mum said it was a better school. There's a few years age difference between me and my sisters and we have different fathers, so Mum changed the type of school for me. She didn't choose a Catholic school because we weren't religious or anything, she just thought it was better, had a good reputation and it was where all the rich kids went. (Kaikou, Gen.4)*

The school choice for most of the participants in this study was enrolment into mainstream schools for a number of reasons.

Lack of availability of Te Kōhanga Reo, benefits of the mainstream curriculum in relation to employment, the inferior attitudes towards speaking Te Reo Māori, fitting in with peers, close proximity to a school, and school reputations all influenced whānau decisions of school choice.

### **Whānau Attitudes towards Māori Identity**

Attitudes towards Te Reo Māori were an issue that emerged during participant interviews. Particularly, attitudes of Māori whānau towards their children speaking Te Reo Māori was an issue brought up by earlier generation participants in the study.

Two of the older participants (Horiana and Wikitoria) attended Native or Māori schools during the 1950's. Both mentioned that their parents and whānau discouraged the use of Te Reo Māori meanwhile encouraging the learning of the English language at school.

Horiana is a great grandmother. She recalled some fond memories of her education between the years 1951 to 1962 at a rural Native School. At the time Horiana was living with her grandparents who spoke fluent Māori. She spoke fondly of her school experiences including school trips, craft activities music and lessons taught in English.

*All our lessons were taught in English. We sang some songs in Māori but that was all. My parents spoke Māori fluently. I am the youngest of 18 children. I wasn't taught Māori by my parents; we were encouraged to speak English instead. (Horiana, Gen.1)*

Wikitoria, born in the 1940's, recalled her mother's attitude to speaking Te Reo Māori and participating in cultural activities:

*My mother didn't even want us to learn Māori culture. There was kapa haka and all sorts she never let us learn anything. She said this is the Pākehā world forget about your world you'll never get anywhere. In the Pākehā world you'll get a job. In the Māori world there's no work. That's what they taught us. We were told we'll do really well in the Pākehā world if we go to school and we still came out with nothing. (Wikitoria, Gen 1)*

Keita also recollected whānau attitudes towards Māori language and culture as being deficient compared to European. She stated;

*Back then Māori was non-existent and I must be honest and say that being Māori was thought of as not being good enough to compete with the culture of other races. My dad was a Pākehā so we just lived like other Pākehā families. Mum being Māori, well she had no understanding of the Māori language or anything, so we just lived in the Pākehā world and went to a Pākehā school. (Keita, Gen 2)*

Keita said her attitude towards Māori learning had developed from the beliefs of her parents towards Māori language and culture...

*They (parents) never talked about anything to do with learning Māori at school. We had to learn to read and write in English to be successful in the world. The world was a white man's world, that's what they used to say. (Keita, Gen 2)*

Interview data shows a progression of attitudes towards speaking Te Reo Māori from one generation to the next.

Katarina commented that she would have preferred to enrol her children in Te Kōhanga Reo but decided on mainstream because back then you

followed and conformed to English and Pākehā schooling as it was seen to lead to a successful life.

*I'd prefer they had more Māori in mainstream because well I didn't put them in Kōhanga and that's where they should of went first but back then it was you know it was all English the Pākehā, go by the Pākehā book that'll get you somewhere in life, yeh just stick them into kindy instead of Kōhanga then mainstream instead of Kura Kaupapa. (Katarina, Gen.3).*

Heria recalled her grandparents' attitude towards speaking Te Reo Māori around their mokopuna:

*Nan and Pa used to speak in Māori all the time to each other. My sister and I just used to look at them and say aye! They never really tried to teach it to us though. They would always talk to us in English. I suppose they knew that was the only language we spoke and didn't encourage us to speak Māori instead. (Heria, Gen 5)*

Today, all these participants use the English language predominantly in their lives, however, the earlier two generation participants, although not fluent in Te Reo Māori, use a mixture of some Māori kupu (words) in conversations with whānau and acknowledge the use of Māori customary practices such as karakia.

### **Changing Attitudes towards Māori Identity**

Some of the whānau in this study who experienced loss of their language and culture are concerned with their education in mainstream schools as opposed to Te Kōhanga Reo and Te Kura Kaupapa Māori. A resurgence of interest in the Māori language and culture has led some whānau into changing their attitude and contemplating or choosing Māori medium education for their children and mokopuna.



Katarina regretted her decision to enrol her children in mainstream and admitted that they would have done better in Māori medium schools. She also stated that she hoped that her children learned more about their language and culture at their mainstream school.

*I'd prefer it if they had learned more Māori in mainstream because well I didn't put them in Kōhanga and that's where they should have went first. (Katarina, Gen.3)*

Wikitoria also talked about her cultural aspirations for her grandson.

*I want him to know Māori, be Māori and to practice Māori and be happy. Also to me for him to have Māori from a spiritual perspective. Not European perspective of spiritualness, but the way of our ancestors, not the aspects of worshipping stones or anything. I want him to have a spiritual connection with God, a Māori education with God because you get that in the Kura Kaupapa. Karakia is part of Māori education, it's important to us and our whānau. (Wikitoria, Gen.1)*

Amber discussed her decision to enrol her son at a school in the area where a majority of members of her church enrolled their children and included cultural activities. She examined the mixed ethnicity of her son and whether or not a mainstream school could cater to his learning and cultural needs.

*I'm thinking ethnically who - he's got so many ethnicities to identify with being in a mainstream Pākehā driven school would that bring out the best in who he is, would he be able to identify with that. He might be a completely different learner and would they cater to his way of learning. (Amber, Gen.4)*

*It's a country school where all the Mormons, majority are Mormons and I would say a majority of teachers there are Mormon. It's not your typical mainstream it has an element of religion it is very sensitive to the religion and also they're quite culturally aware out there as well. They have a kapa haka group and you see their newsletter and it's in Māori as well and they have adopted that aspect so it's not your typical mainstream, it's not like Kura Kaupapa. (Amber, Gen. 4)*

Katarina also spoke about her own learning at school and stated that if she had the opportunity again she would have sent her children to Kōhanga and Kura.

*That was the only thing I listened to at school was Māori I was in bilingual and it was compulsory for us to do kapa haka and take Māori classes. If I had the chance to do it again I'd do it again, send him into Kōhanga, Kura Kaupapa, I'd do that with all my kids actually. (Katarina, Gen.3)*

She also stated that her son had some knowledge of Te Reo Māori due to one of his previous teachers encouraging Te Reo Māori when he attended primary school and learning Māori at home on television.

*Xxx he knows it all and he can translate it into English but he can't speak back which is quite disturbing actually. In saying that he learnt all of that at xxx and that was with [teacher] finding time in her day to have Māori lessons which was pretty good. They watch Māori television; they watch Toku Reo they play the games on there trying to guess the word. (Katarina, Gen.3)*

Katarina also reflected on her children's attitude to learning if she had enrolled them in Kura Kaupapa.

*But with my kids they might have had different attitudes today if I had sent them to Kōhanga and Kura Kaupapa they would have gone further going to Kura Kaupapa than mainstream. If I had another chance I would take them to Kōhanga, I would. (Katarina, Gen.3)*

Keita talked about the difficulty she had in deciding on an early childhood school for her younger child. She struggled with enrolling her daughter in Te Kōhanga Reo because her older children had been to mainstream schools. However, as it turns out she does not regret her decision as her daughter is fluent in Te Reo Māori and English.

*It was a difficult time for me when I had to decide on a pre-school for my youngest daughter. I had to work at the time and was very reluctant to try something new, like Kōhanga. Anyway I'm glad I did now, she's doing well and can speak English and Māori fluently. (Keita, Gen.2)*

In the thinking of these participants we can see possibilities for what the Auditor General has called “revitalisation” of Te Reo Māori and culture. Establishment of Te Kōhanga Reo, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori and Te Whare Kura are having an impact on Māori whānau considering education in Māori medium schools.

Findings in this chapter have exposed some relevant issues relating to education for Māori whānau in this study. The next chapter will discuss the themes that have surfaced throughout the study.

## **CHAPTER SIX – DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

Findings in this study have exposed a number of issues relating to the educational experiences of generations of Māori whānau over the last sixty years. The major themes from the interviews have impacted on Māori in education: these include corporal punishment, gender based teaching and learning, urbanisation, mixed ethnicity and whānau attitudes towards their cultural identity. Analysis of participants' perceptions of state-run education in this study clearly shows that past educational policies have had a detrimental effect on cultural identity, and this issue still exists today. Educational policies have been a major catalyst in disabling Māori whānau, denying them the strong foundation necessary to develop their overall well-being necessary for achievement in education. Retrieving and reconstituting cultural identity is a difficult process for many Māori whānau who have suffered the effects of these policies; however, this study has also encountered an emergence of positivity and change in attitude towards their language and culture.

A closer look at the motives behind these policies suggests that government officials promoted ideals similar to genocide or as world history tells us of Hitler type regimes intent on destruction of an entire race. Education policy was one way in which the British could subtly belittle and extinguish all aspects of Māori cultural identity, beginning with the educational attack on young Māori children. The examination and analysis of historical evidence, notably statements made by school inspectors in charge of large numbers of Māori children, undeniably exposes the government motives to completely wipe out the Māori race, beginning by disengaging Māori from their indigenous language and culture. The result of these policies has continued to have a detrimental

effect on Māori whānau over generations up until today, and this study shows that these policies have led many of the whānau to disengage themselves from their cultural identity, essentially disrupting the overall well-being and success of Māori whānau in education. This study also gives Māori whānau hope - hope that the tables are turning and some Māori whānau are actually considering enrolment in Māori medium education and retrieving their culture and language in the process.

### **Theme One – Educational Policies**

The following sections will examine educational policies in relation to what Māori whānau raised in their interviews in this study. It is evident from the participant dialogue that educational policies have had a direct impact on the cultural identity development of the participants. Some of these issues will be analysed in greater depth in order to provide a deeper understanding of how educational policies have continued to disengage Māori from their language and culture.

#### **Punishment for Speaking Te Reo Māori**

One of the participants in this study recalled her father talking about being punished for speaking Māori at school. The participant's father attended school in Gisborne in the late 1920's. He attended a native school whereby all instruction was in the English language and use of Te Reo Māori was banned within the school grounds. This experience of her father was clearly still affecting the participant's own attitude to education – especially towards the education of her own children. This is clearly an experience which has deeply affected at least three generations.

As noted in chapter one, early educational policy required all Māori children to be instructed in English during school hours, and educational

officials such as school inspectors banned the use of the Māori within the school grounds (Te Ara, 2013). Children breaking this ban were punished physically. Like my respondent's father, older Māori including Sir James Henare remembered being "sent into the bush to cut a piece of pirita (supplejack vine) with which he was struck for speaking Te Reo in the school grounds. One teacher told him that 'English is the bread-and-butter language, and if you want to earn your bread and butter you must speak English'" (NZ History Online, 2013). In Rachel Selby's (1999) collection of stories told by Māori men and women who were physically disciplined at school for speaking their language Selby discusses the on-going effects of institutional violence meted out on young innocent Māori children in an era of education that many officials and politicians choose to forget. However, it is a part of our history that needs to be healed and restored for the sake of those who are not only left with the scars of educational racism back in the day but who have also continued the cycle of loss of language upon future generations. Selby (1999) acknowledges the grief, loss and the 'healing' process by recording stories of those children who suffered at the hands of school inspectors. She also talks of how teachers were exposed to fear for speaking their language, a natural and instinctive way of expressing themselves. Throughout the collection of true stories one can feel the fear these adults still felt when speaking their language. I argue that this same fear can be perceived in the stories of some of my participants. This fear portrays the signs of abuse that are apparent in their talk about the school experiences of their tipuna.

Healing the wounds of educational policies begins with explaining our history and loss of our language to rangatahi in order for them to understand and support their kaumātua and kuia who have lost their

language, and revive Te Reo Māori for future generations to come (Selby, 1999). The purpose of Selby's collection of stories is to explain to rangatahi and mokopuna why their kaumātua and kuia have lost their language, and how they live in shame and embarrassment and should not be judged for their inability to transfer the language on to future generations. In Selby's (1999) words "They have been punished all their lives. We must stop punishing them" (p.68). I am arguing that the effects of these policies are lived in the homes of many Māori today – often, perhaps, without a real sense of this history.

Corporal punishment was only one policy that disengaged Māori from their language and culture. Children were taught through instruction in the English language and also primed to the English culture by assimilation policies intent on transforming Māori children into 'Brown Britons'. Evidence of these policies inflicted upon children can be found in historical literature during the native school system that existed during 1867 to as late as 1969. Further discussion of this evidence will be examined in the next sections.

### **Gender Based Instruction**

Early generation participants in this study recalled instruction during their education focussed on manual labour. Educational policies at the time Horiana attended school were focussed on gender based roles.

Schooling for girls in the Native School system showed the same tendency. Māori girls were destined for motherhood and the 'rescue' of their race; to this end, domestic skills, health and hygiene were a prominent part of their curriculum (Te Ara, 2013). The same focus on domestic skills affected the technical schools that were set up from 1900. Girls could take courses in typing, shorthand and book-keeping – the trade-related courses boys took were closed to them. In some

technical schools they were also taught domestic skills for several hours a week (Te Ara, 2013). Historical evidence of statements made by government officials exposes the intentions and motives of policies. One such statement was made by school inspector Henry Taylor in 1862 when he stated that:

*I do not advocate for the Natives under present circumstances a refined education or high mental culture: it would be inconsistent if we take account of the position they are likely to hold for many years to come in the social scale, and inappropriate if we remember that they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour. (Waitangi Tribunal, 2013).*

The plan of the government was to phase out native schools once the English language had taken hold, enforce punishment for speaking Māori, and insist on use of English language in communities and prepare Māori for 'success' in the Pākehā world (Te Ara, 2013). This 'success' would be initiated by schools intent on teaching Māori children skills in manual labour in order to train them for tasks 'more suited' to tasks that would serve Pākehā society. In particular Māori boys were channelled into non-academic areas that prevented them from gaining intellectual qualifications and subsequently 'white collar' employment (Hokowhitu, 2004).

Post primary education became an option for Māori during the mid-1900's. Māori church boarding schools were introduced and attended by many well-known Māori such as Apirana Ngata, Peter Buck, Maui Pomare and James Carroll. Achievements in maths, science and literature for students at Te Aute College were equal to any other colleges in the country producing scholars such as Ngata and Buck



(Hokowhitu, 2004). However, their achievement was frowned upon by government officials such as Native Schools inspector James Pope who complained about this achievement and suggested that the schools should focus on other areas of education, mainly manual labour such as agriculture, stock farming and poultry keeping (Barrington, 1988). Pope was to get his way and convinced the General Inspector of Schools, George Hogben to 'drop' academic subjects from the Te Aute curriculum (Hokowhitu, 2004). Later in 1906, the inspector of Native Schools followed the onslaught of hegemonic practices of government by declaring that Māori were unsuited to academic subjects despite the academic achievement of Māori students in these areas (Simon, 1998). Similar events were happening within Māori Girls' Colleges such as Hukarere and Saint Joseph's. Thomas Strong the director of education in the 1920's also had the philosophy that the purpose of Māori education was "to lead the Māori lad to be a good farmer and the Māori girl to be a good farmer's wife" (Harker & McConnochie, 1985, p.95, cited in Hokowhitu, 2004, p.10). In his report on the management of the school, the assistant inspector to the Secretary of Education, J.Porteous, stated that the girls were being taught cooking, washing and ironing of clothes, sewing and hygiene as well as what he termed the "Three R's", reading, writing and arithmetic, in addition girls did the milking, buttermaking and gardening (Te Ara, 2013).

Historical evidence clearly shows the intention and motives of these educational policies, and I would argue that the discussions with my participants show that they have successfully demoralised Māori – an effect that has been working on Māori children since colonisation. The statements made by government educationalists during this time seem to have imposed hegemonic practice for the purpose of creating a

‘slave-like’ position on innocent Māori children training them up to become no less than ‘slaves’ for the supremacy of Pakeha ideology. It is no wonder that Māori generations have resisted this attempt to belittle and demoralise our Māori culture. It also becomes clear that Māori boarding school policies had a hidden agenda to encourage Māori parents to send their children away from their papakainga(home) in the hope that on their return they would ‘share’ their knowledge of refined ‘Pakeha’ ideology by infiltrating that ideology into whānau back home.

Even more distasteful is evidence that these hegemonic practices were supported by some upstanding Māori politicians at the time. Te Ara (2013) reported that

*Not only Pākehā government officials advocated manual instruction in the church boarding schools. In 1903, after a small matriculation class (which was preparing its students for university) had been started at Hukarere Māori Girls’ College, Māui Pomare, who had been a beneficiary of the academic focus of Te Aute, criticised the church schools for becoming too academic: ‘Educate the mothers to recognize the efficacy of the bathtub, cleanly warm clothes, plain and wholesome food, and you will regenerate the Māori quicker than by teaching the youths and maidens embroidery, Latin, and Euclid’.*

(cited in Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974, p.172-173)

This and other evidence of gendered discrimination, although shocking, unveils the motivations and intention of government officials who were effectively intent on destroying all aspects of Māori language and culture. History also tells us that they may have succeeded in their attempts if it were not for Māori advocates who fought back with a

vengeance to regain cultural identity for future generations. Some Māori however, were unaware of government plans to destroy our culture and had unwittingly encouraged their children to speak English in schools.

### **Mixed Ethnicity**

Māori came into much greater contact with non-Māori and intermarriage increased accordingly. In Harré's (1968) study of ethnic intermarriage he indicated that there was an overall strong increase in 'outmarriage' (marriage with another race) by Māori (cited in Callister, Didham & Potter, 2005). From the 1950s new migrant groups from Europe and Polynesia settled in New Zealand, followed by Asian migrants in the 1980s and 1990s. Their relationship patterns reflected New Zealand's increasingly multi-cultural character. The children of mixed marriages were themselves more likely to intermarry (Te Ara, 2013).

Kaikou and Amber stated that they were of mixed ethnic backgrounds however; in relation to their Māori cultural identity they said they had little or no knowledge of Māori language and culture. Kaikou stated that she could not decide her 'main' ethnic group because her father was European and mother was Māori. She could not clarify the aspect of 'main' and deciding between the two was difficult so she stated that she belonged to both ethnicities.

### **Whānau Attitudes towards Māori Identity**

It was not only government policies that encouraged the use of the English language in schools, but Māori whānau themselves. Māori whānau supported the idea of their children speaking English as they could see the benefits for their children in view of the life in a Pakeha world. Participant data shows that Western ideologies have been an influence in the lives of Horiana, Wikitoria, Keita and Katarina, who were

encouraged to speak English by their whānau. Not only were Māori children attending English speaking mainstream schools but they were also encouraged to learn and follow Western philosophies of successful living. Māori philosophies had been overtaken by Westernised thinking and ways of life. Priorities and aspirations of Māori whānau for a successful education included learning the English language and living a successful life in the world of the Pākehā. Hegemonic ideas of the European government had been filtered through to whānau, many of whom left their Māori way of life for that of the Pakeha. Urbanisation and enrolment in mainstream schools were the catalyst to distancing Māori from their Māori language and culture. Historical evidence has shown that government policies were intent on ‘civilising’ Māori by creating a new more refined race. Attitudes towards their own race were becoming negative as their quest to become ‘brown Britons’ was preferred. Intermarriage between Māori and Pakeha was increasing during the early 1900’s, at first being frowned upon by colonists but later deemed as positive in relation to assimilation and integration policies (Te Ara, 2013).

## **Theme Two: Social Policies**

### **Urbanisation**

Before the Second World War, over 80% of Māori were living in rural areas, primarily within their own tribal districts; however, by the 1920s people began moving to the city attracted by what has been described as “the Big Three’: work, money and pleasure” (Te Ara, 2013).

In 1965, nearly two-thirds of Māori lived in rural areas. In 2006, 84.4 percent of Māori lived in urban areas. Urban migration for Māori often meant better opportunity for good housing, full-time employment, and

education. Māori were significantly under-represented in the higher levels of education, and therefore became predominantly represented in low-skill occupations, such as factory work, forestry, and meat processing (Te Puni Kokiri, 2007).

The effects of urbanisation on Māori cultural identity have been seen as a possible cause of the decline in Māori language use (Ministry of Social Development, 2010) stating that the “proportion of Māori who were fluent Māori speakers declined markedly over the last century, particularly following the rapid urbanisation of the Māori population in the 1950s and 1960s” (p.88).

Māori migration to the cities began in the early 20th century and continued through the 1960s. Wikitoria, Horiana and Keita referred to moving from their home towns to urban areas during their childhood. Keita recalled her family moving to Hamilton for employment and Wikitoria moved from the Bluff to Ngaruawahia to be closer to her mother's whānau. The effects of relocation meant that Keita moved away from extended whānau and Wikitoria recognised her ignorance of the Māori language and culture while living in Bluff.

## **Employment**

One of the relevant issues brought out in this study is the implementation of early educational policies that deliberately controlled education for Māori towards manual labour. Horiana recalled boys learning woodwork and girls learning to cook. Joseph stated that it wasn't a priority to further his education after high school. Keita also mentioned that her whānau were not encouraged to attend university, but were encouraged to find work when they left school. Her brothers were encouraged to find labouring jobs and she and her sisters found

work in supermarkets. Henry Taylor's hegemonic statement referring to Māori as not being capable of any 'mental intelligence' and promotion of policies that focussed on manual labour for Māori has influenced some of the whānau interviewed in this study. As the findings make clear this mindset has also transferred on to future generations. Early policies directed towards civilisation of Māori have impacted on Māori whānau decisions to enter tertiary institutions and further their education into careers requiring further academic training. Māori still exist as a working class majority in New Zealand today. The effects of educational policies have been cited in relation to unemployment, another disturbing fact noticed in statistical information for Māori over recent years. The Treaty of Waitangi report on the Te Reo Māori claim issued a statement stating that

*“When such a system produces children who are not adequately educated they are put at a disadvantage when they try to find work. If they cannot get work that satisfies them they become unemployed and live on the dole. When they live on the dole they become disillusioned, discontented and angry. We saw such angry people giving evidence before us. They are no more than representatives of many others in our community. When one significant section of the community burns with a sense of injustice, the rest of the community cannot safely pretend that there is no reason for their discontent. This is a recipe for social unrest and all that goes with it” (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012).*

The effects can be seen in society today in which some uninformed commentators have blamed Māori themselves; however in reality we are the victims as historical data such as these statements show.

## **School Choice**

Participants in this study voiced their reasons for choosing schools for their children. Most of the participants had chosen mainstream schools for various reasons including close proximity to the school, whānau were English speaking, a religious element was desired, lack of information and availability of Māori medium schools, a sense of belonging and fitting in and the school's reputation. Two participants had chosen Māori medium schools because they wanted their children to learn Te Reo Māori and culture despite some barriers to enrolment.

It was apparent from the interview data that most of the parents followed trends from previous generations and remained with mainstream schools as there was little choice in any other type of school.

In terms of cultural identity, one parent recounted her mother's decision to enrol her sisters in different schools, where they would 'fit in'. Fitting in meant that the child would fit in due to their social identity such as physical distinctions, personality, interests and friends.

It is assumed that parents' aspirations were that their children are happy at school, had a sense of belonging and were able to make friends. Fitting in was more of a priority than actual academic progress.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN – IMPLICATIONS FOR MĀORI WHĀNAU AND MAINSTREAM EDUCATION**

### **Introduction**

The Ministry of Education has identified Māori cultural identity as a major factor in improving outcomes for Māori in education. However, the analysis of Māori whānau aspirations in this study shows that cultural identity is not a major priority for many of them. An examination of their perspectives also shows that most of the participants' educational experiences have been influenced by educational and social policies in the past. As cultural identity is seen as a major factor in achievement, this study will make some suggestions for policy makers to consider that will hopefully encourage Māori whānau to re-identify with aspects their cultural identity and improve achievement. It is therefore crucial that educational policy makers take into consideration the perspectives of Māori whānau enrolled in mainstream schools. The sections that follow will make some suggestions for policy makers to consider.

### **Comparisons of the New Zealand and Māori Medium Curriculum**

There have been a series of major changes in the New Zealand curriculum over the last two hundred years of colonial history. The impact of learning within the bounds of the New Zealand curriculum is a major issue in relation to Māori children and their cultural identity. A closer examination of the purpose of education for all New Zealanders can be seen in the definitions of successful teaching and learning described in the New Zealand Curriculum and Māori medium documents and how each document's vision statements focus on meeting the needs of Māori students.



Comparing the visions of both documents is relevant to Māori who are enrolled in mainstream and Kura Kaupapa settings. Examination of the frameworks and structure of these documents are relevant to the topic of Māori identity, given that 90 % of Māori whānau are enrolled in the mainstream system.

The two curriculum documents are described by the Ministry of Education (2009) as “The New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa form the national curriculum. These set the direction for teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand schools and provide guidance for schools to develop a curriculum that meets the learning needs of their students”.

The Ministry of Education (2009) also states that “The New Zealand Curriculum applies to all English-medium state schools (including integrated schools). Its vision is that young people will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners. It includes values, key competencies and learning areas”.

In comparison the vision of the Māori curriculum document, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, asserts that “The aspiration is to develop successful learners, who will grow as competent and confident learners, effective communicators in the Māori world, healthy of mind, body and soul and secure in their identity, and sense of belonging. They will have the skills and knowledge to participate in and contribute to Māori society and the wider world” (p.3).

The two vision statements are comparatively different in their statements of the purposes of education for their students. The major identifiable difference is that Te Marautanga stresses the aspiration that students develop a secure cultural identity encompassed by a purely Māori

environment. This aspect is not acknowledged or accepted as high priority in the mainstream document. Given that there is a high percentage of Māori children enrolled in mainstream schools, this factor is of vital importance and in reality has been ignored by educationalists in the mainstream. Tokenistic approaches to cultural identity may be implemented; however, it is inevitable that Māori culture has been placed in a subordinate position in mainstream education as stated earlier in this thesis (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009, p.741). Pākehā aspirations and goals dominate the visions and framework of the New Zealand curriculum ensuring success for the majority Pākehā students.

Historically the New Zealand curriculum has been designed by Pākehā for Pākehā, despite the high numbers of Māori enrolled in mainstream schools. New Zealand's curriculum is designed for a dominant Pākehā society and therefore Māori as the minority are clearly disadvantaged. Ka'ai (2004) states that "A middle class Pākehā child acquires a code with which to decipher the messages of the dominant society which are reproduced in mainstream education. It follows then, that any group other than that whose culture is embodied in the school is disadvantaged" (p.212).

In relation to the Treaty of Waitangi the New Zealand curriculum document states that "The curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. All students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge of Te Reo Māori me ona tikanga" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p.9).

In reality, however, the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi have not been fully acknowledged and accepted by a majority of mainstream schools

and placed below the status of English language and culture in mainstream classrooms (Naylor, 2006).

Although the New Zealand Curriculum document acknowledges the importance of Māori in areas such as the arts, physical education, social sciences, and music, Māori perspectives have not been acknowledged in other major areas such as literacy and numeracy. The dominance of Pakeha cultural values is clear across the curriculum. The results eventually surface in the negative statistics of underachievement of Māori in mainstream and the notion that the Western system does not and cannot satisfy the educational needs of Māori children. Research studies over the last twenty years have initiated numerous initiatives to resolve the dilemma; however, very little progress has been made. The next step for Māori whānau in their quest for autonomy is the aspect of cultural identity in mainstream schools.

### **Cultural Identity and Mainstream Schools**

Research into Māori achievement in mainstream schools has sought to enlighten government about the relationship between cultural identity and education in mainstream schools. As mentioned earlier in previous chapters, governments have introduced a number of initiatives to improve achievement of Māori in mainstream schools. These initiatives include Nga Tamatoa in the 1970's, Te Kotahitanga in 2001 and more recently in 2008 Ka Hikitia.

Nga Tamatoa and the Te Reo Māori society petitioned parliament in 1972 to introduce Te Reo Māori of the Te Reo Māori into schools.

Te Kotahitanga's aim was to improve the educational achievement of Māori students in mainstream secondary school classrooms through

developing quality classroom relationships and interactions (Education Counts, 2001).

Ka Hikitia's initial strategic intent was that succeeding in education reflects that identity and culture are essential ingredients for success (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Despite the endeavours of these well-intentioned efforts of researchers and government funding to provide an inclusive educational system for Māori in mainstream schools, statistics continue to show decisive underachievement.

### **Māori Achievement in Mainstream Schools**

In 2010 the Ministry of Education firmly stated that although there has been some improvement in the quality of teaching for Māori students, current research information and national and international achievement data continue to show sustained Māori underachievement in education. Underachievement of Māori has been a huge concern to government over the years and current research now shows that underachievement is a result of past government policies and practices in education since colonisation (Durie, 1997; Walker, 1999).

One reason for underachievement was raised in the Waitangi Tribunal report that stated that "Māori children were not being successfully taught and that the education system was being operated in breach of the Treaty" (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, p.9).

Waitangi Tribunal (1999) also explains that "Māori currently rank highly in the negative statistics of all social indicators from education to health. It would not be difficult to argue that the seeds of Māori underachievement in the modern education system were sown by some of the past education policies."

In 1998 Te Puni Kokiri published a report outlining the effects of past colonial governments, stating that:

*“Since the mid 1980s Māori participation in all sectors of education has increased markedly. Despite this, disparities persist between Māori and non-Māori for most indicators of educational status. Historically, the scale of disparities between Māori and non-Māori participation and achievement have been so wide that improvements by Māori have had a minimal impact on reducing the difference. Compared to non-Māori, Māori are less likely to attend early childhood education, are less likely to remain to senior levels of secondary school, and are less likely to attain a formal qualification upon leaving secondary school. Māori are also less likely to undertake formal tertiary training, particularly in universities. Māori who are in tertiary training are more likely to be enrolled in second chance programmes”.*

(Waitangi Tribunal, 1999).

In the 2010 report compiled by the Education Review Office, *Promoting Success for Māori Students: Schools’ Progress*, ERO stated that:

*“There is some evidence that the quality of teaching for Māori students has improved since 2006. About half of the secondary schools in this study could show improved NCEA results for Māori students since their previous review. In approximately a quarter of primary schools students had improved levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy since the previous ERO review. The quality of achievement data gathered for individual students, including Māori, has improved overall.”*

Nevertheless, according to ERO, current research information and national and international achievement data continue to show sustained Māori underachievement in education. Despite this well-promulgated evidence, many schools do not yet undertake sufficiently rigorous analysis of student achievement data, or set targets for improved Māori achievement.

Many do not implement strategies aimed specifically at making improvements in areas identified, and when strategies are initiated there is limited analysis of outcomes. As a result there are not enough schools where Māori student achievement is comparable to that of non-Māori, or where schools can demonstrate that they are making a difference for these students (ERO, 2010, p.34).

The ERO report clearly shows that some schools are not implementing strategies that focus on improving Māori achievement. A closer analysis of this statement also shows that ERO's use of statistical data to compare Māori achievement to non-Māori is questionable in that many Māori students may not want to be compared to their Pakeha counterparts to show they can achieve successfully. However, in reality Māori student achievement in mainstream schools has been compared to non-Māori for many years, after all it is a curriculum set up for European with European values, beliefs and principles. In the Māori curriculum Māori children are compared to no other race. Mason Durie (2003, p.202) argues that the comparison of Māori with non-Māori, "presupposes that Māori are aiming to be as good as Pakeha when they might well aspire to be better, or different, or even markedly superior."

The Māori curriculum document *Te Marautanga O Aotearoa* (2012) acknowledges Māori students are unique individuals. The teaching and

learning process is based on establishing effective relationships between teacher and student which focus on developing the unique characteristics of each learner (p.13).

Cultural identity is identified and directed within the teaching and learning processes administered by *whare wānanga*. The difference between these institutions lies not only in what they teach but also in how they teach it. In other words, the difference lies in the system or 'cultural mind-set' of delivery (Waitangi Tribunal, 2012). In comparison to mainstream universities that deliver in a Pakeha cultural paradigm, *wānanga* seek to deliver education with a completely Māori perspective based on a framework of Māori principles. *Tino Rangatiratanga* is one such principle within the framework that acknowledges the relative autonomy and self-determination, detaching ourselves from the interdependent relationship with the Crown and government policies and initiating control of our own pathways in education (Smith (2000) cited in Mahuika, (2008)). This admonition does not mean that Māori need to totally reject Māori studies departments in western universities, as the departments exist for Māori who choose to enrol within the mainstream context. However, Royal (2007) acknowledges the contribution Māori studies departments have made in educating Māori people at the tertiary level, but he stated that "Māori Studies represents the position that the western paradigm of knowledge has created for it...Māori Studies is located within a western university, it is subject to the western paradigm of knowledge which has severely hindered its growth... Put simply, Māori studies focuses on studying Māori society from a Pākehā perspective, while *Mātauranga Māori* is about studying the universe from a Māori perspective" (p.25).

Royal's differentiation can also be referred to as relevant for Māori whānau in mainstream schools. Teaching of Te Reo Māori and cultural practices although minimal in mainstream schools, are taught from a Pākehā perspective, lacking the essential elements of a Kaupapa Māori perspective. Māori whānau enrolled in mainstream schools require the full benefits of learning about Te Ao Māori (Māori world), within the dimensions of Mātauranga Māori. Aspects of Māori language and culture have been disregarded in mainstream education for 150 years and seen many whānau marginalised due to their exposure to the European culture. The next section shows how marginalisation has psychologically affected Māori whānau causing identity confusion.

### **'Marginalised' Māori in Mainstream Schools**

For Māori children with low cultural identity the enrolment in mainstream schools even further creates a disconnection to their Māori identity in that they are exposed to Europeanised teaching that encompasses a completely different world outside the reality of their own world at home. This in effect causes confusion for the child. Language use at home is a mixture of Māori and English, when they attend school; they are being constantly corrected by teachers for their lack of proper English, which creates feelings of shame and embarrassment.

The shame and embarrassment mentioned are often feelings that are not voiced within educational research studies in the past. The lived experiences of marginalised Māori are difficult to extract and interpret due to their unrecognised beliefs and views that have not been acknowledged and accepted by the wider community. Some Māori whānau have detached themselves and remain hidden away within society and their views have often been disregarded and unpopular to the majority view. Educational researchers only touch the surface in



regards to the minority views of the marginalised. To be able to penetrate through to the deep understandings of life as a marginalised Māori you need to know about their world and have actually lived in it. Many Pākehā as well as some Māori cannot comprehend the world through the eyes of marginalised Māori.

Being Māori and being detached from your language and culture creates disillusionment for many in the marginalised group. A good example of this is gangs based in urbanised areas of New Zealand. Metge (2004) pointed out that “Gang members stressed the need for identity and group belonging as the major reason for joining a gang” (p.176). Many Māori share this belief that the city is where they feel threatened and alienated by unfriendly members within the community. They band together for comradeship and protection against other gangs and mainly the assimilative pressures imposed by the Pākehā majority (Metge, 2004). Government departments have sought to help gangs to improve their lives to some degree with few positive results. Metge (2004) concludes that these efforts to enforce change are beyond the capabilities of those who do not understand the ‘gang world’ and it is left to those who know their world instinctively because they have lived their world.

Similar attitudes are taken by educationalists and policy makers in relation to education of Māori in mainstream settings. The assumption that they can remedy underachievement by forcing Pākehā ideologies of a ‘good education’ upon Māori who have little choice but to follow their demands, can be likened to colonisation and assimilative policies of the past. The past shows that many of these initiatives have failed and will continue to fail until they are directed to those who have understanding of the struggles that generations of Māori have faced in their endeavours

to retain and maintain their cultural identity. Within the mainstream setting, Māori is almost non-existent in comparison to the English language, beliefs and values. The priority of cultural identity has not been appropriately recognised in mainstream schools, and major changes need to take place before any noticeable improvement in Māori achievement can be observed. One such change is developing Māori cultural identity in mainstream schools.

### **Developing Cultural Identity in Mainstream Schools**

Houkamau and Sibley (2010) suggest that “Developing ways to support Māori and effectively engage with Māori communities to deliver appropriate social services has become a matter of some urgency to policy makers” (p.9). They also declare that research on cultural identity in the area of education can be “A useful assessment tool allowing researchers to improve outcomes for Māori who may score particularly low or high on different dimensions of subjectively experienced Māori identity” (p.9).

The decision to teach only English language in schools and to prohibit the use of Māori language during school hours was not merely an education policy. It had an enormous impact on cultural practices and knowledge systems and indeed on the very survival of Te Reo Māori as a spoken language (Williams, 2001, p.11). It is essential that educational leaders accept and acknowledge the detrimental effects that past educational policies have had on generations of Māori and reinstate aspects of cultural identity back into the New Zealand curriculum.

Revitalisation of Te Reo Māori since the 1970's has shown an influx of Māori medium education. The introduction of Te Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa, Whare Kura and Wānanga has given Māori new options in

education for Māori whānau who have aspirations for their children to learn in an environment centred on Te Reo Māori and culture. Māori medium schools have been developed over the last thirty years as an initiative to improve Māori achievement.

The following sections outline the principles and values of Māori medium education to show the distinctive differences from the mainstream curriculum.

### **Cultural Identity in Māori Medium Schools**

All aspects of the Māori curriculum were designed by Māori for Māori. The Māori medium education sector was set up to ensure the survival of Te Reo Māori and Māori culture. The Ministry of Education (2010) acknowledges that “There is a high expectation that Kura graduates will have strong connections to their culture, language and identity and be successful in Te ao Māori and internationally”. Developing and maintaining a strong Māori identity is essential to successful teaching and learning in education.

The Māori medium education sector grew from Māori communities throughout New Zealand determined to maintain and nurture their Māori identity through language and cultural knowledge being transferred throughout generations (Ministry of Education, 2010). The revitalisation of the Māori language in education began with the opening of the first Te Kōhanga Reo in Wainuiomata in 1981 and the opening of the first Kura Kaupapa Māori at Hoani Waititi in 1985.

For Māori whānau in Māori medium schools data and evidence show that Māori students who have come through Te Kōhanga reo and into Māori immersion schools have recorded significantly better achievement rates than their Māori peers in English-medium schools (Skerrett, 2010).

Research published by the Ministry in Wang and Harkness (2007) also found that students participating in Kura Kaupapa Māori (where the school culture and teaching practices reflect Māori values and concepts) achieved more highly than Māori students in English-medium schools (p.1-2).

Research and statistics have provided us with positive outcomes for Māori whānau enrolled in Māori medium schools; however, there are some researchers who argue that these results may be inaccurate and invalid. Rata(2011) argues that although cultural identity is one factor essential to success in education, yet, claims made by researchers that educational achievement of Māori in Māori medium schools have been overrated and unjustified in that achievement is only 'slight' rather than 'significantly higher'. Rata (2011) also claims that there are more decisive factors in Māori educational achievement that needs higher priority, that being socio-economic class location. Rata supports this statement by referring to research that explains that educational underachievement amongst Māori can be largely due to disparities in socio-economic status during childhood (Boden, Ferguson & Marie 2009). Although this statement may be valid, cultural identity should remain the focus for research at the present time. Low socio-economic status may indeed relate to underachievement of Māori in low decile mainstream schools due to the lack of resources in the home, unemployment and other social issues, however, developing cultural security has been identified by researchers as an essential component in improving socio-economic status through successful education, leading to improved opportunities in employment.

Evidence provides us with hope for rangatahi Māori in the future. Research and statistics show that Māori whānau in Māori medium

schools are achieving far better than those in the mainstream. Having a level of Māori cultural identity may seem to be the key to successful learning for Māori whānau in Māori medium schools.

### **Cultural Identity and Whānau**

This study also raises the possibility that inclusion of cultural identity in the lives of Māori whānau who have lost aspects of their language and culture will have it revitalised through systems within the whānau, rather than educational policies and initiatives that target teaching staff and school processes. Tino Rangatiratanga (self-determination) within the whānau comes to the fore in this instance. Cultural identity formation has and always has been initiated and influenced by whānau rather than 'outer influences' such as schools and other government departments. For any major change to take place the issue of developing aspects of cultural identity remains the responsibility of whānau.

The progression of these issues found in the data suggests that there has been a major shift in attitudes towards cultural identity. Māori whānau in this study have been influenced by other whānau who have acknowledged their cultural identity as a priority in their lives and working towards developing aspects such as language and culture. Some members of the whānau have transferred the positive aspects of Kura Kaupapa education and transmitted to others that their children are successfully achieving in Kura. These whānau members are also developing aspects of language and culture in their home environments.

Admittedly cultural security is only one factor that may contribute to Māori achievement in education, however, cultural identity is also relevant to overall well-being and is able to connect to success in other areas in a person's life. Durie's (1999) Te Pae Mahutonga model for Māori health promotion identified cultural security as a major factor in

good health for Māori whānau. In Durie's (1999) model Mauriora (Access to Te Ao Māori) he stated that:

*Good health depends on many factors, but among indigenous peoples the world over, cultural identity is considered to be a critical prerequisite. Deculturation has been associated with poor health whereas acculturation has been linked to good health. A goal of health promotion therefore is to promote security of identity. In turn that goal requires the facilitation of Māori entry into the Māori world. It is a sad commentary that perhaps more than one half of Māori people have very inadequate access to the Māori world...mauriora encompasses inner strength, vitality and a secure identity (Durie, 1999, p.2-3).*

Access to the Māori world can be daunting for Māori whānau who have lived their lives separated from their cultural roots. The inner strength described by Durie's model is developed not only by expressing oneself in Te Reo Māori but to also having access to cultural institutions and participating effectively within them. The journey to discover and develop cultural identity begins with acknowledging that it has a place in our lives. That decision rests upon the individual themselves. The epilogue therefore will discuss the enduring process of developing cultural identity that I have undertaken over the last ten years. Although the journey was difficult and complex at times it has been rewarding in a sense that I have faced my fears of the unknown (Māori world) and overcome my initial fears and continued the journey.

### **Increasing Numbers of Māori teachers**

In their report "What to do about New Zealand's underachieving children" the New Zealand Principals Federation acknowledge Ka

Hikitia's approach and principles had proved successful, particularly due to the efforts of Māori teachers. They stated that:

“Māori teachers in particular who have applied the principles of the strategy find that Māori children feel a greater sense of belonging in their school community when they make connections and build relationships with key school personnel and other children” (NZPF, 2013).

There seems to be no doubt that Māori teachers in mainstream schools have a commitment and strong sense of responsibility to ensure the success of students in their classrooms. Training and employment of more Māori teachers is a possible area in which government may improve achievement of Māori students in the mainstream.

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa has developed the Bachelor of Teaching Programmes, He Korowai Ākonga which has attracted a number of Māori and Non-Māori students into their programme. Although the programme only fully began 3 years ago, the Whirikoka Campus in Gisborne looks forward to the graduation of at least eight of their students this year. The programme focused purely on a holistic approach to learning and was designed to produce transformative educational leaders with specialist knowledge and skills in the field of primary education, underpinned by Māori philosophies, Māori principles and mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) (TWOA, 2013).

It is also suggested that mainstream universities also need to improve their initial teacher education programmes by initiating changes directed at improving Māori achievement. The possibility of including a Te Reo Māori paper for all teachers could provide student teachers with substantial knowledge and understanding of Te Ao Māori and improve their teaching of Māori students in their classrooms.

It is also relevant to suggest that government initiatives have only touched the surface of making progress.

### **Seeds Sown within the Whānau**

It is relevant from the participant data in this study that Māori whānau are contemplating enrolment in Kura Kaupapa as a way of improving the chances of a successful education for their children. Two of the participants have enrolled one of their children Māori medium schools. Wiki enrolled her grandson in Kura Kaupapa as did Keita who enrolled her daughter in Te Kōhanga Reo at the age of one. These two participants have a strong commitment to improving their own Māori knowledge as well as those in future generations to come.

It is my belief that accelerating progress for improving achievement begins within the whānau structure itself. Whānau members who have made the change from mainstream to Māori medium education are the 'sowers of the seed'. These whānau members have begun a new pathway in search of their Māori cultural identity and will become leaders who will redirect whānau from mainstream education to Māori medium, through their commitment to improving not only the success in education for their children but to revive cultural identity of others within their whānau and improve their quality of life. By doing this Māori whānau do not need to be 'ashamed' of their ethnic identity, but can assume control and self-determination (Tino Rangatiratanga) of their destiny and of those in future generations to come.

### **Taha Wairua**

Taha Wairua has been acknowledged to be the most essential requirement in terms of overall well-being for health from the Māori perspective of Mason Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā model. According to



Cherrington (2009) “Te taha wairua is probably the most difficult area to define, assess and understand, yet it is the most important area and is intertwined with every other component of wellbeing. Te taha wairua refers to spiritual wellbeing, and is not just inclusive of religion” (p.27). The western theories of spirituality (religion) are comparatively different from the Māori perspective of Taha wairua. As Cherrington pointed out, wairua is not inclusive of Non-Māori religious practices. Traditional Māori practices such as powhiri, karanga and karakia all denote the importance of spirituality. Durie (1999) describes the purpose of karakia as creating a sense of unity with ancestors, the environment and spiritual powers. Pere (1998) also identifies spirituality as an essential element that provides a sense of meaning, connection and purpose.

Two of the participants in this study acknowledged spirituality as an essential part of their lives and was one of the aspirations for their children’s education. This vital element of cultural identity however, does not exist in the secular mainstream system. Taha wairua is not mentioned within the national curriculum document; however it is included in Te Whariki, the bicultural early childhood curriculum, and Te Marautanga, the Kura Kaupapa curriculum documents.

Fraser (2004) discusses spirituality from the Māori world point of view and explores the factors that influence Māori achievement of Māori students in mainstream schools. She emphasises the importance of spiritual practices such as manaakitanga, tangihanga and karakia that support Māori students’ development of overall well-being and enable them to learn more about themselves, develop greater self-worth and self-esteem, that translate into successful educational experiences.

## CHAPTER EIGHT– WHAKATAUKI- A MĀORI PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION

### Introduction

E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea.

*I will never be lost, for I am a seed sown in Rangiātea.*

At the forefront of this research study I have used this well-known whakatauki to emphasise the importance of cultural identity in relation to education. At the conclusion of this study I will use a closing whakatauki to provide direction for Māori whānau towards their Māori cultural identity.

The use of metaphors and imagery promote learning in that they may create a visual image that will support a deeper understanding of the world we live in. There have been many interpretations of this whakatauki that have been used in the educational sector to depict the requirements of the Māori child to flourish in their learning (Durie, 2011; Joseph, 2007; Mahuika, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2010).

This whakatauki can be interpreted in many ways depending on how the reader relates it to their personal life or the purpose of the project to which it is used. For the purpose of this study my interpretation of the whakatauki signifies the vital role that cultural identity plays in relation to learning and teaching within the bounds of the New Zealand curriculum. Cultural identity is sustained by Māori language and cultural practices and establishes our right to ownership and “sense of belonging to a wider and functional whānau group” (Joseph, 2007, p. 31). The seed therefore denotes the existence of the aspects of cultural identity which are activated in a process of developing and applying them throughout

our lifetime. Throughout this process the seed may experience support or barriers from the wider environment that will either improve or hinder its natural growth. Participant data in this study suggests that the natural growth of the seed (cultural identity) has been hindered by educational and social policies that were intent on denying some Māori whānau the right to develop aspects of their cultural identity.

It is therefore essential that Māori whānau are given the support and encouragement to reidentify with their language and culture, improve their cultural capital, enhance their overall well-being and improve their chances of success in education.

The following interpretation of the seed may support Māori whānau to come to the realisation that cultural identity not only improves likelihood of success in education but also extends our potential to enjoy a fulfilling quality of life from the Māori world perspective.

### **The Story of the Seed**

The seed in this whakatauki refers to the aspects of a person's cultural identity that have been passed on from previous generations back to the distant land of Rangiātea. The seed begins its journey when it is planted within the child at the time of conception. The seed contains all the facets of the child's cultural identity that will eventually develop throughout its life journey. These facets include the aspects of whakapapa, language and culture that have been passed on by past ancestors.

From the moment the child is born they inherit their Māori identity through their whakapapa. Whakapapa gives the child a sense of belonging and links them to tupuna, past ancestors who originated over the centuries from the great fleet who travelled to Aotearoa from the

distant land of Rangiātea. Rangiātea or Raiatea is the old name that Māori refer to as their spiritual home and the original homeland before they came to Aotearoa. In using this saying a speaker claims his or her identity as Māori. In its examination of Māori customs and values in relation to current and future law reform the Law Commission (2001) drew extensively on the various writings of the Honourable Justice Durie who used the whakatauki to essentialise the connectedness that Māori have to our homeland, Rangiātea, and expressing pride in being Māori and confidence in the future (p.40).

Throughout the child's lifetime the seed will need to be nurtured and developed. This requires those who care for it to provide protection and growth which will enable it to flourish despite the outer influences of the world around it.

In order for the seed to grow to its potential, the soil needs to be fertile and prepared so that it nurtures growth into the outside world. The soil can be depicted as whānau, extended whānau, hapū and iwi who surround the seed, nurturing it with knowledge and protecting it from the harsh elements that can hinder its growth. The seed is left to grow its own roots (self-identity).

The child will develop their identity within their own whānau, the people around them who influence who they are. The principle of whakawhānaungatanga acknowledges the framework of whakapapa that binds people together throughout past and future generations. The concept of whānaungatanga denotes the aroha, manaaki and tautoko (support) that contribute to a child's identity and sense of belonging.

The shoot enters the outside world fully protected by its foundation (whānau) and becomes an individual with a distinct and unique personality of its own. As it learns to adapt to life in the outside world, it

relies on whānau for advice and guidance that will encourage growth in whatever direction it may choose to follow. Learning is guided and sustained by whānau through the use of language and culture (Joseph, 2007).

The shoot referred to in Apirana Ngata's whakatauki 'E tipu e rea' is advised to turn its hands to the tools of the Pakeha world, their heart to knowledge and wisdom of their ancestors and their spiritual being to God, the author and creator of all things. The advice and guidance in this whakatauki is a form of protection. In hindsight Ngata could also foresee the barriers that the seed would have to face in the new colonised world of the Pākehā.

E tipu, e rea, mō ngā rā o tō ao

Ko to ringaringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākehā hei oranga mō tō tinana

Ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga o ō tipuna hei tikitiki mō tō māhunga

Ko tō wairua ki tō Atua, nāna nei ngā mea katoa.

*Grow tender shoot for the days of your world*

*Turn your hand to the tools of the Pākehā for the wellbeing of your body*

*Turn your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as a crown for your head*

*Give your soul unto God the author and creator of all things.*

The shoot grows to maturity and becomes a tree. As a fully mature adult, the tree branch out over other young shoots growing beneath it and supports their growth. It has gained knowledge and understanding of the world around it and a reciprocal relationship with young shoots is formed. Sharing knowledge and wisdom is its purpose in life to ensure

the existence and continuance of whakapapa, language and culture of future generations.

Royal (2007) describes the growth of the person in a similar way:

*“One’s whole life journey is symbolised in traditional literature by the growth of the tree and then the flight of the bird. With the growth of the tree, a shoot (pū) comes forth from the seed lying within the soil of the ground. Slowly this little shoot grows and becomes a tuber within the ground. As the tuber grows in the ground, so the human child grows within the womb” (p.51).*

Furthermore Royal (2007) explains that “There are various stages in the growth of the tree and these include the growth of the tumu, the trunk and the manga or branches. A young sapling is called a māhuri. Each of these tree symbols is used to stand for each part of the journey in the maturation of the person” (p.52). As the tree matures its purpose is to share wisdom and knowledge with the young shoots (future generations). When it grows old and dies its spirit returns to Rangiātea or heaven. The flight of the bird may well constitute the spirit returning to heaven from which it had descended and put in place alongside previous ancestors back to the beginning of time (Mahuika, 2008).

The whakatauki “E kore au e ngaro, he kākano i ruia mai i Rangiātea” describes the essence of the seed which contains our whakapapa, our Māori identity, who we are and where are from.

Throughout the process of developing their cultural identity a person learns and acquires knowledge and understanding of their language and culture with the guidance of tipuna, whānau, hapū and iwi. Development of a cultural identity is essential to their ability and success in learning about the world around them and ultimately their overall well-being.

Learning about one's culture improves a person's sense of self, and a defence mechanism which defies negative stereotypes of Māori language culture. Our history of colonisation has deterred many Māori whānau away from their cultural awareness, some believing that 'being Māori' is derogatory to their well-being. Learning Māori language and culture provides a child with a 'positive sense of self', as opposed to feelings of deficiency through theories imposed by colonial governments in the past. Retrieving cultural identity provides the seed with 'cultural security' in a world that has described Māori as 'underachievers' in many, but not all, areas of the modern world.

### **Sowing the Seed**

Research studies and statistical evidence show that although governments have introduced a number of educational initiatives to target underachievement, only minimal progress in improving achievement of Māori in mainstream schools. A slow progress to improve achievement only intensifies the need for further intensive research and initiates programmes that focus on Māori communities that have not been used in such research to date. Within these isolated communities are Māori whānau who attend low decile schools and consist of generations of Māori who have lost their cultural identity, like the whānau in this study.

## CONCLUSION

### Whakatauki

Rurea taitea kia tū ko taikākā anake

*Strip away the bark and expose the heartwood*

The dilemma for Māori whānau today is the complexity of living in two worlds, the Pākehā world and the Māori world. This will inevitably mean that whānau will need to become bicultural, a formidable challenge for any individual. What makes things even more complex is that some Māori whānau such as participants in this study, have been enrolled in mainstream schools and learned the dominant language and culture of Pākehā. The challenge for these whānau is that they will need to learn their indigenous language and culture. The desired outcome would have been to learn their indigenous language first, then willingly learn the language of another culture. However, this has not taken place due to the hegemonic practices of past governments. The whakatauki “Rurea, taitea, kia tū ko taikākā anake” (“*Strip away the bark and expose the heartwood*”) can be used in this context as a way of expressing the challenge of stripping away the ‘unnatural’ cultural identity of the Pākehā to expose our true identity (heartwood) as Māori. In doing this Māori need to reactivate the seed of their true identity with a willingness and determination to learn their indigenous language and culture. The challenges of returning to the seed of Rangiātea is a formidable challenge but well worth the benefits, especially in terms of education and overall well-being. Whānau who wish to take up the challenge will undoubtedly be faced with some difficult decisions as they strip of the



values and beliefs of the Pākehā system that has taken away them and replace it with the original identity as Māori. The journey begins with acknowledgement and acceptance of indigenous language and culture.

## **EPILOGUE**

Māori today are still feeling the rippling effects of government policies from the past, infused mainly in educational policies. Since the signing of Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 government policies relating to Māori have seemed to almost allow the colonial government complete power over Māori people and their land. Not only educational policy but colonisation and assimilation policies sought to destroy and disengage Māori from their language and culture in the most crippling of ways, most of all by removing their language and culture from within mainstream society. Despite the onslaught of these policies upon the lives of Māori whānau, there exist some hopes for future generations. It is relevant to mention that the some of the participants in this study have begun the journey to revitalise aspects of their cultural identity, and to transfer their knowledge on to future generations of their whānau. By sharing their stories of education with other members of whānau, future generations become the catalyst in creating a new direction in development of cultural identity. It seems that unknowingly Māori whānau have lived their lives with aspects of cultural identity that they do not explicitly know exists, but is there anyway. Whānaungatanga is one concept that has existed in my whānau for many generations. I have come to realise that the stories my father shared with us all have a purpose. The stories I remember are ones of love and nurturing of family, respect for elders, parental responsibilities and support for all members despite our differences at certain times in our lives.

This thesis allows our whānau to share our stories, not just in education but in all areas of life. Sharing of stories allows present generations the opportunity to voice their life experiences and give future generations the wisdom to repair and heal the wounds of the past and empower those who have suffered loss. Cultural identity is a deep and incessant loss that can only be repaired through the transfer of wisdom and knowledge of our tupuna. It is my hope that this thesis will revive the existence of the seed to the rightful place of significance in the lives of future generations of Māori whānau.

## **REFLECTIONS**

It seems inevitable that pangs of bitterness and anger will arise within my inner being as I continue this journey of revitalisation of my cultural identity. The emotions of bitterness existent in my observations of young and old wānanga students at Whirikoka, that I envy their experiences of Te Ao Māori and their expressions in Te Reo Māori language and culture. However, the hope remains within my heart that I will one day experience those things myself, and it gives me great pleasure in knowing that my children will also see the importance of cultural identity in their lives. I am in the process of decolonisation and grateful that I am in this position, for this becomes a journey back to Rangiātea to retrieve what the lost seed and reconstitute my Māori identity.

## APPENDIX ONE

**Table 1**

### **Dates and events related to Māori education policy and developments, 1816-2012**

1816	First mission school opens in the Bay of Islands. Missionaries teach in te reo.
1840	Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.
1847	George Grey introduces the Education Ordinance Act (an assimilation policy).
1862	Government expectations of Māori are not high. School inspector reports to the House of Representatives that "a refined education or high mental culture" would be inappropriate for Māori because "they are better calculated by nature to get their living by manual than by mental labour".
1867	Native Schools Act is passed, setting up a system where Māori provide the land and the Government provides the buildings and teachers. (The Act prefers English as the only language used in the education of Māori children, but this was not enforced rigorously until 1900.) Schools for Māori focus more on manual instruction than academic subjects.
1880	Inspector of Schools releases a Native School Code. Te Aute College produces first Māori graduates in the

	1880s, but the College comes under pressure to abandon the academic curriculum and teach agriculture instead.
1903	Nationwide policy to impose a ban on (or discourage) te reo being spoken in the playground. A wide range of punishments used against children who speak te reo at school (including corporal punishment).
1915	Department of Education has an assimilation policy for Māori and low expectations of Māori students. Annual report includes statement from the Inspector of Native Schools that "So far as the Department is concerned, there is no encouragement given to [Māori] boys who wish to enter the learned professions. The aim is to turn, if possible, their attention to the branches of industry for which the Māori seems best suited."
1930/31	Attempt by the New Zealand Federation of Teachers to have te reo introduced into the curriculum is blocked by the Director of Education. In his view, "the natural abandonment of the native tongue involves no loss to the Māori". Director of Education states that education "should lead the Māori lad to be a good farmer and the Māori girl to be a good farmer's wife".
1950	Western influences begin to affect Māori families, who start to raise their children as predominantly English speakers.
1960	Hunn Report draws attention to the educational disparity between Māori and Pākehā, and rejects the assimilation policy in favour of "integration". (Between

	1900 and 1960, the proportion of Māori fluent in te reo decreases from 95% to 25%.)
1963	Currie Report emphasises the need to centralise the notion of Māori educational underachievement and initiates a range of compensatory education programmes.
1970	Ngā Tamatoa and the Te Reo Māori Society lobby for the introduction of te reo in schools.
1971	Report of the National Advisory Committee on Māori Education advances the concept of bicultural education.
1973	All seven Teachers Colleges have courses in Māori Studies. Presentation of Māori language petition to Parliament by Ngā Tamatoa and the Te Reo Māori Society.
1981	Hui Whakatauirā of Māori leaders proposes and establishes the first Kōhanga reo as a response to impending loss of te reo.
1985	First Kura kaupapa Māori established at Hoani Waititi Marae, West Auckland.
1986	Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Te Reo Māori Claim (WAI 11) asserts that te reo is a taonga guaranteed protection under Article II of the Treaty of Waitangi.
1987	Māori Language Act recognises te reo as an official language. Māori Language Commission (Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori) is established.
1989	Education Act formally recognises Kura kaupapa Māori as educational institutions.

1990	Education Act is amended to recognise wānanga as educational institutions and allow the Minister of Education to designate a state school as a kura kaupapa Māori.
1997	Strong push from Māori involved in initiatives to increase the numbers of speakers of te reo. There are 675 Kōhanga reo (catering for 13,505 children), 54 kura kaupapa Māori, three wānanga, more than 32,000 students receiving Māori-medium education, and 55,399 students learning te reo.
1998	Te Puni Kōkiri report identifies education system's underachievement for Māori. First Māori education strategy developed by Ministry of Education and Te Puni Kōkiri.
1999	Education Act is amended to make it mandatory for Kura kaupapa Māori to adhere to Te Aho Matua principles.
2001-05	Series of Hui Taumata initiated by Minister and Associate Minister of Education and Ngāti Tūwharetoa to debate issues, barriers, and future directions. Redevelopment of Māori education strategy, drawing on Te Puni Kōkiri's "Māori Potential Approach" policy.
2008	Launch of strategy for improving the performance of the education system for Māori, <i>Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success</i> .
2012	Range of initiatives, programmes, and activities to implement more self-determined approach to Māori

	education. (Includes iwi partnerships, ECE participation projects, and professional learning and development programmes.)
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*Sources include: Ka'ai, T (2004), "Te mana o te reo me ngā tikanga Power and politics of the language", in Ka'ai, T et al., Ki Te Whaiao – An Introduction to Māori Culture and Society, Pearson, Auckland, pages 202-204, and Waitangi Tribunal (1999), The Wānanga Capital Establishment Report, chapter 2, pages 6-7. Williams, D (2001), Crown Policy Affecting Māori Knowledge Systems and Cultural Practices, Report to the Waitangi Tribunal, chapter 3, pages 150-151.*

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