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TŪ MANAWA ORA, TŪ MANAWA TOA

*Aaron Hapuku**
Christina McKerchar†
Lee Thompson‡

Abstract

This article reports research that set out to investigate men's experiences at taiaha wānanga in Waitaha/Canterbury, Aotearoa New Zealand, and whether those experiences helped to shape tāne Māori identity. There is a gap in our existing understanding of men's experiences in this kaupapa, providing a unique opportunity to learn how mau taiaha has shaped participants' lives. The strongest themes identified within the data include cultural disconnection and the search for tāne Māori identity, along with the role of taiaha wānanga in male identity construction. An ongoing challenge of intergenerational loss of identity also represents the potential for a never-ending cycle of loss and reconnection. Taiaha wānanga are one avenue where tāne Māori identity is being restored. The connection between strengthening cultural identities and Māori health outcomes suggests that kaupapa Māori activities, such as mau taiaha, have the potential to improve men's lives through stronger connection to te ao Māori.

Keywords

mau taiaha, mau rākau, taiaha wānanga, tāne Māori, Māori identity, hauora Māori

Introduction

Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi guarantees Māori at least the same standard of hauora as that of all New Zealanders and the protection of taonga such as te reo Māori and tikanga Māori (Kingi, 2007). Inequities in hauora between Māori and non-Māori illustrate these obligations are not being met, particularly for Māori men (Johnson et al., 2008; Ministry of Health, 2015). Average life expectancy for Māori men is the lowest in Aotearoa New Zealand, with a gap of 7.3 years between Māori and non-Māori males (Ministry of Health, 2015). Men's health has gained greater attention in recent years, but the majority of interventions continue to focus on individual behaviour change and populations characterised as problematic, including Māori and Indigenous men (Rodriguez et al., 2017; Warbrick et al., 2016).

Cultural identity is recognised as a prerequisite for hauora within many Indigenous cultures. It has been theorised that improved access to te ao Māori, including knowledge of iwi and hapū connections, can strengthen identity and positive hauora outcomes (Durie, 1999). Activities

* Ngāi Te Rangikoianake, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga, Ngāti Rongomaiwahine, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Tahinga. Lecturer, College of Education, Health and Human Development | Te Rāngai Ako me te Hauora, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. Email: aaron.hapuku@canterbury.ac.nz

† Ngāti Kahungunu, Tūhoe, Ngāti Porou. Lecturer, Department of Population Health | Te Tari Hauora Taupori, University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand.

‡ Associate Professor, Department of Population Health | Te Tari Hauora Taupori, University of Otago, Christchurch, New Zealand.

such as kapa haka and traditional Māori games have enjoyed renewed popularity in Māori communities (Brown, 2008; Kāretu, 1993; Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2019; Rangatahi Tū Rangatira, 2016), and there is an emerging body of literature that links participation with strengthening Māori cultural identity (Harris, 2016; Mato, 2011; Paenga, 2008; Pihema et al., 2014; Warbrick et al., 2016; Wirihana, 2008).

Participation in kapa haka and traditional Māori games also contributes to whanaungatanga. While many activities involve both group and individual participation, often the sense of collectivism and companionship, enjoyment and "bro-ship" (Warbrick et al., 2016) is more important than strict fitness goals, with broader emphasis on values of manaakitanga and kōtahitanga. Research on engaging Māori men in physical activity reveals also that Māori activities need to consider people's strengths, and the strengths of culture and community.

Our aim in the research reported in this article was to specifically investigate men's experiences within the rohe of Ngāi Tahu, Christchurch. Wānanga take place under Tū Toka Tū Ariki, a local community-based organisation established through the leadership of Te Mairiki Williams (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāi Te Ruahikihiki), an acknowledged ahorei and tohunga mau taiaha in Te Waipounamu. Traditional weaponry arts such as mau taiaha are used throughout Aotearoa as vehicles to explore what it means to be a healthy Māori male and a positive role model within communities, whānau, hapū and iwi (Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, 2013).

Our investigation provided quality insights into contemporary Māori masculinities and masculine identity. There is currently no published academic literature investigating the relationship between mau taiaha and the impacts on tāne Māori wellbeing and identity. Building on previous research grounded in connection to te ao Māori, this research sought to show that taiaha wānanga for Māori men that draw on positive connections to te ao Māori and hauora Māori are an example of community-led initiatives that effect positive change.

Origins of the taiaha

One of many spiritual origins of the taiaha is based on the outcome of a famous battle known as Moenga Toto between Tūmatauenga and his tuakana Rongomaraeroa over a piece of land named Pōhutukawa (Colenso, 1881). While Colenso (1881) relates this battle to the earliest traditions of the kūmara plantation known as Pōhutukawa, Reedy (1996) states that Pōhutukawa symbolises the physical world and humanity's constant struggle to live in harmony with the forces of light, darkness and human nature. While locked in a stalemate during the heat of battle, Tūmatauenga searched for a weapon. He came across his relation Rūrūtangiākau, a lesser-known deity within the forest realms of Tāne Māhuta. Rūrūtangiākau gifted Tūmatauenga his son, Akerautangi, as a weapon. He had two faces, he rākau matarua, two sets of eyes and ears, two noses, two mouths and two protruding tongues—to see, hear, smell, taste and sense in all directions. Tūmatauenga returned to battle with Akerautangi in the form of the taiaha and was victorious (T. Williams, personal communication, 28 August 2018).

FIGURE 1 Karakia to finish training after a long day at a taiaha wānanga, Taumutu, Ōtautahi/Christchurch

Following the renaissance of tikanga Māori since the 1970s, wānanga mau taiaha have attracted thousands of men to Mokoia Island in the Rotorua district and throughout Aotearoa, connecting tāne Māori to their culture and identity under the guidance of respected tohunga Mita Mohi ("Mita Mohi" 2016; wakahuiatvnz, 2012). While the lead author and many of the research participants have attended wānanga at wāhi tapu such as Te Motu Tapu a Tinirau—Mokoia Island, those stories belong with the Mohi whānau and the people of Te Arawa, an iwi based in the Rotorua district of the North Island. We are indebted to them for sharing their knowledge with us.

Method

The research was grounded in a kaupapa Māori approach informed by constructivism (Eketone, 2008; Howe, 2006; Padgett, 2011; Tracy, 2013).

Because constructivism acknowledges that researchers are embedded in the research process rather than standing apart from it and observing objectively, research grounded in a constructivist approach demands reflexivity. As an insider within the local taiaha community in Ōtautahi/Christchurch, the lead author's personal involvement within Tū Toka Tū Ariki and the wider taiaha community spans 24 years, initially as a rangatahi and then as a kaiako.

Six kaiako aged from 18 to 60 years of Ngāi Tahu and non-Ngāi Tahu whakapapa were interviewed based on their background as students and teachers within Tū Toka Tū Ariki. The sample size in this study was limited due to the time constraints dictated by the lead author's degree programme. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in settings chosen by participants.

We completed an inductive thematic analysis, a common form of analysis used for identifying, extracting, recording and examining patterns within qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). As described by Clarke and Braun (2013), six phases help guide the thematic analysis process: familiarisation with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up. This process is not linear; there should be constant flow between the data, literature and explanatory theoretical concepts. After we had become familiarised with the data, the coding was driven by the research question, allowing for codes to be as numerous as necessary before being reviewed and grouped into broad themes.

Excerpts from the interview transcripts included in the sections that follow are identified by pseudonyms; adding ages would risk identifying participants as they come from a small community. Māori consultation was carried out with the Māori Research Advisor at the University of Otago, Christchurch. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee, reference number 18/069.

Findings

The strongest themes identified within the data related to cultural disconnection and the search for tāne Māori identity, along with the role of taiaha wānanga in male identity construction. We have described the first key theme as "Cultural Orphans". To provide appropriate context, we first discuss the ways that Māori identity and male identity have been described in existing literature. The second key theme, "Mana Tāne, Mana Whānau: Mau Rākau as a Vehicle" captures how men have explored their mana as individuals, and within their wider whānau and communities, through the art of mau rākau as a vehicle to culture and identity. To provide context, some aspects of taiaha wānanga and warrior training are briefly explained.

Key theme 1: Cultural orphans

Many of the participants reflected on their identity as Māori males. In the Waitaha region, indicators of Māori wellbeing suggest that knowledge of culture, identity and engagement in Māori culture may be amongst the lowest in the country (Canterbury Wellbeing Index, n.d.).

A common outcome in Māori communities of the suppression of Māori culture and identity is the internalisation of unworthiness in comparison to other Māori who appear knowledgeable and confident in te ao Māori. The notions of a "good Māori" who is worthy and a "bad Māori" who is unworthy wield a tremendous amount of power in perceptions of identity and belonging (Borell, 2005; Rua, 2015; Te Hiwi, 2008; Te Huia, 2015). Ārama expanded on the gap of Māori knowledge in his life by expressing how expectations of proficiency in te reo and tikanga can lead to feelings of inadequacy and self-blame (McIntosh, 2005, p. 44; Paringatai, 2014; Te Huia, 2015):

> That's a battle I remember in my early days . . . never feeling that I could live up to those expectations. . . . [Feeling] unworthy, because when you come from that sort of urban, colonised upbringing. . . . You don't think you're worthy, you think that the situation you're in must be my fault . . . because I see all these other people that do [live up to expectations], they must be good.

Feelings of unworthiness are intensified through negative colonial constructions of Māori men as naturally aggressive, violent, immature, lazy and inarticulate (Hokowhitu, 2007). Māori men have also been typecast as humble and submissive, or staunch and dysfunctional, including popular caricatures of the simple comedian, the natural athlete, the political activist and the romanticised traditionalist (Rua, 2015). The feeling of not being Māori enough to be part of an "in-group" that belongs to the culture (Paringatai, 2014) can lead to a search for identity elsewhere. In the absence of a strong cultural framework, "Māori men have also accepted some Pākehā forms of male identity that value physical, stoic, rugged and sports-orientated practices as a way of integrating into the dominant Pākehā culture" (Rua, 2015, p. 21).

Pākehā men have often been broadly defined within the stereotype of the "Kiwi bloke"—as stoic, self-made, independent, tough buggers and rugby-mad beer drinkers with a number-eight-wire can-do attitude (Law et al., 1999). Arguably, while this makes both Māori and non-Māori men the subject of stereotypes, the softer masculinities of the "new age man" allow middle-class Pākehā men the fluidity to transform themselves, while media and societal constructions of Māori men as deviant and untrustworthy have remained relatively unchanged (Hokowhitu, 2007). There are numerous places within contemporary society that influence and shape male Māori identities. Several participants reflected on their own journeys and the places where they sought identity and belonging, which included the sports field, the New Zealand Army/Ngāti Tūmatauenga and gang culture.

Elite sport is one avenue that has offered Māori men comparative status, especially through the mana attached to rugby (Rua, 2015). Ārama spoke about his enjoyment of the army, rugby, and also of martial arts, based on a sense of connection, whanaungatanga and comradery amongst his friends:

> I was never a really good footy player. . . . I just enjoyed the comradery and the training. . . . I got this from the army and martial arts as well. . . . When you train together there's a shared energy that you can't get by yourself. . . . When you go for a run with a whole lot of mates, there's a different benefit.

The question of Māori male identity within sport remains complex. Erueti (2015) found that Māori athletes enjoyed iwi and marae-based tournaments, but also experienced embarrassment if they lacked knowledge of te reo and tikanga. Hare also spoke of his extensive army background. When he was surrounded by many Māori soldiers and their extended whānau, his experiences as a Māori were also very different to his search for identity within te ao Māori:

> Although I've had an army background, that background is totally different. . . . Certainly, the army shared a good foundation for . . . physical attributes. . . . However, in relation to, you know, being out front and being a good role model for what needs to be done and sharing that [te ao Māori] . . . now that wasn't as prominent.

Hare and Ārama likely enjoyed the company of other Māori men; however, connections to te ao Māori were not necessarily a priority within military contexts. For some participants, including Hoani, their understanding of themselves from a young age was shaped by prison and gang connections. For Hoani, imprisonment led to the realisation that there had to be something more to the Māori identity he was searching for, and led to a new focus on learning as much as he could while serving time:

> What I told the prison was that anything Māori I would attempt and I would really want to do, and they said that's a bit political, and I went, "Look at me, I'm 19 and I've lived all my life in your world, and this is where I am." . . . So I want to learn about myself, I want to know my whakapapa and so anything Māori I will do.

Māori make up 15% of the national population, yet comprise 55.7% of the prison population, with Māori males averaging around 50.4% (McIntosh & Workman, 2017). This led Hoani to the belief that the programmes available in prisons were ineffective:

> Our whānau, who make up 56% of the jail population, need Māori solutions for this Māori issue. Because, so far, the jail population has increased from all your programmes you're trying to throw at them from a cognitive behavioural therapy model that doesn't seem to work.

Hoani also spoke of his confusion around his identity and the difficult association between Māoritanga and gang culture. Often coming from broken homes and surrounded by drugs, abuse, alcohol and crime, the culture of young Māori men was that of the gangs, with little knowledge of tikanga Māori (Nakhid & Shorter, 2014). In this context, gangs became their whānau and a sense of mana was restored (Nakhid & Shorter, 2014). Hoani's reflections on gang culture convinced him there had to be something more:

> I swore that there had to be more . . . than these smelly, fucking patch-wearing, violent, angry people who used to always hurt me. . . . Being Māori was "We're brown, we're black, and here we are sieg-heiling to a swastika"—[which] my granddad fucking hated.

Participants described difficulties in the search for the kind of Māori identities that they were looking for. Their stories speak of loss of knowledge and identity through colonisation and the

places where they sought to fill the gaps in their lives. Te Hokowhitu a Tū/the Māori Battalion, sports and gang culture have all been theorised as avenues where Māori men have transformed themselves, and have also been transformed by others (Gardiner, 1992; Gilbert, 2013; Nakhid & Shorter, 2014; Walker, 2012).

It was clear from the transcripts that identity is dynamic and shaped socially through relationships and a sense of collective belonging. The challenge for Māori is often finding spaces and people to adopt us into te ao Māori, where Māori ways of living, drawn from whakapapa and Māori histories, are embraced as pathways to wellbeing. This also includes the construction of positive Māori identities, how they are built, and how they are being maintained (Hokowhitu, 2004, 2007).

Key theme 2: "Mana tāne, mana whānau": Mau rākau as a vehicle

Taiaha wānanga in Ōtautahi are a place for Māori males to gather and to learn about tikanga Māori, mau taiaha, oral histories and food gathering, and to simply "be Māori". Tauira live, eat, sleep and train together over several days. Wānanga also provide a space and time to form relationships, and to rebuild strong identities with the guidance of positive male role models. This happens at wānanga in a number of different ways: through physical taiaha training, kōrero, learning what it was to be a warrior and provider in pre-colonial times, and redefining the warrior identity for a contemporary world. In traditional times, the taiaha was a weapon of war and status. However, the nature of being Māori in contemporary times has seen the objectives of warrior training change significantly. Freedom to discover who we are as modern-day warriors requires dismantling old images of ourselves and collectively building new ones through "reclaiming, reformulating and reconstituting" (Smith, 2012, p. 143) the beauty of our own knowledge. An important aspect of reconnecting to old traditions and finding new ways of exploring identity involves challenging the body's physical limits. Strenuous physical learning alongside other tāne involves stripping away the layers of modern life and home comforts. Ārama loved the physicality and exposure to the elements. He also believed mau taiaha could not be learnt through theory alone:

> I enjoyed the physicality, I loved the training. . . . I just loved smashing it, sweating and busting a gut. . . . Mau rākau is an experiential thing, you can read about the theory of stuff . . . but actually you have to pick it up, hold it, caress it, feel it, feel the weight, swing it, move it, run around in bare feet, be cold, be hot, be sweaty, be dirty . . . because that's all part of the experience. It's not a theory thing.

Wānanga acknowledge the potential for men to contribute to their own personal development. Hoani expanded on the impacts of colonisation by reflecting on the power of wānanga as a place where men can "organise and strategise" towards better lives, free of outside influences:

> For Māori men to be able to congregate as Māori men and feel safe . . . have that safe space to say silly things, get corrected, find some enlightenment, and bounce ideas off men. . . . I think that it's important that Māori are able to organise and strategise for positive social change . . . and not worry about subversion. . . . We can escape colonial politics.

Taiaha wānanga also provide opportunities for men to meet with others, away from the troubles and pressures of everyday life, and to repair their wairua. As Raniera commented, "It's good for the soul of the man. . . . If people are having trouble in their own lives, places such as wānanga where Māori men can just get together . . . repair[] people's souls."

Many of the methods for relearning men's traditional roles are believed to lie within Māori culture (Hokowhitu, 2007). Ārama reflects on how men were able to learn about being good fathers, sons and brothers as part of their role within whānau:

> Many of us that came there, came troubled. . . . I saw lots of lives changed for the better as a result. . . . What I realised years later was that he [Mita] was using this to help Māori men in all manner of ways, and whether that be in their mahi or in their life as a father, as a son, as a brother or whatever, he was growing good Māori men. . . . Some of the best examples of whānau ora that I've ever seen. . . . The common factor there is we're all doing wānanga, and each of those is unique, there's different experiences that come from it. . . . Mita . . . used mau rākau as . . . a vehicle to teach a whole lot of things.

Alongside the physical training, the learning that takes place amongst men around tāne ora is embedded within their roles within whānau. According to Hare, wānanga provide pathways that allow male identities to be understood collectively. His statement "Wānanga is once again

about we and us, not one, but the wellbeing of many" is affirmed through the well-known whakataukī "Ehara taku toa I te toa takitahi, he toa takitini [My strength is not of the one, but of the many]":

> It's a process there, where we can discuss the wellbeing of first and foremost mana tāne, where does it fit in to enhance mana whānau? . . . As long as there are those. . . pathways . . . for our men. . . . The wellbeing of our men and their whānau will always be at the forefront. . . . Wānanga is once again about we and us, not one, but the wellbeing of many. (Hare)

Learning about identity within the context of whānau is supported and shaped socially through relationships with others (Durie, 1999). The search for identity cannot be achieved alone; success comes from the enduring relationships that men have been able to strengthen within their own families and communities. Whanaungatanga places value on relationships, extending beyond direct whakapapa links to include those based on shared experiences, close friendships, and people who become family through time and meaningful association (Mead, 2003). Wānanga provide tāne with the opportunity to form strong personal bonds of friendship and cultural support networks that are valued outside of wānanga in their everyday lives. Values of aroha and whānau, which are continuously emphasised at wānanga, also directly impact on the quality of relationships at home for Tama:

> Aroha, whānau . . . these points are always getting raised at wānanga. . . . I think Mum used to be happy because I would definitely treat her better after wānanga. It's given me way more opportunities, not just in personal confidence but because of the networks I've got from wānanga. . . . I think it's different for me now, because I'm in more . . . Māori circles.

For some participants, developing a positive cultural identity remained strongly associated to iwi and hapū connection. Waitaha and the area around Taumutu fall within the takiwā of Ngāi Tahu; although the style of mau taiaha taught at wānanga belongs to Te Arawa, learning taiaha has also been important for Ngāi Tahu men such as Hoani. While living within the rohe of his own marae and hapū, attending wānanga contributed to a cultural awakening, his wairua, and strengthening of his Ngāi Tahutaka:

> Identity is so important in this land, of course, ngāi tātou, ngā iwi Māori, to just be Māori. . . . I guess if we can emancipate our spirits, not just our minds, and find that identity to be a foundation to launch from. . . . That's what happened to me, I freely call it an awakening. . . . My identity as he tangata Kāi Tahu, Kāti Wheke* has never been so strong. . . . This kaupapa has helped settle my wairua, in particular in regards to my own identity . . . in a colonised country that I thought didn't care . . . because I didn't care, and it rocked me.

For descendants of iwi outside of Ngāi Tahu, wānanga help men to reconnect with "home" and to a broader sense of pan-tribal Māori identity. Māori identity within contemporary society is also influenced by access to spaces such as marae and papakāinga where tikanga Māori is retained and normalised (Rua, 2015). As 84% of Māori now live outside of their own tribal boundaries (Meredith, 2009), mana whenua marae such as Taumutu and many others in Waitaha have become cultural sanctuaries. Having been welcomed to Taumutu to attend wānanga over the years, Ārama references the well-known whakataukī "He aha te mea nui o te ao, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata [What is the most important thing in the world? it is people it is people, it is people]" to express the aroha and manaakitanga he felt from the hau kāinga:

> I was always conscious of the fact that I'm not of this place, but I never came across anyone that made me feel that I wasn't. . . . The people out at Taumutu were always so gracious. . . . All they ever show you is aroha and manaakitanga. . . . What's more important is the people . . . he tangata, he tangata, he tangata.

Raniera highlighted reconnection with the traditions of mahinga kai and learning how to prepare a hangi alongside others. These kōrero reaffirm an awareness of the relationship between people and environment, sustainability, and our roles as kaitiaki alongside mana whenua (Hutchings, 2015). The preparation of kai is also a significant part of the wānanga experience, where a hākari is prepared on the last day to honour guests and

* In the southern dialect of te reo Māori, the "ng" sound can be replaced with the "k" sound. "Kāi Tahu, Kāti Wheke" would therefore be pronounced "Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Wheke" in the northern dialect. As a northern descendant, the lead author has used "ng" throughout the body text of the article and preserved participants' usage of "k" in their interview excerpts.

family members. This takes place under manaakitanga and marae protocols during the presentation ceremony at the conclusion of wānanga:

> It just connects with that nature side of things. . . . Sometimes we go out and hī ika, get some pātiki, some tuna. . . . You learn how to pick watercress. . . . It's not just getting some kai . . . you're learning about you, how our tūpuna used to get things. . . . You're not just going to McDonald's. . . . You get that sense of pride when you're eating the kai you actually go get yourself. . . . Taumutu gives you all these opportunities to just connect with yourself. . . . I've been around hangi before when I was younger, but I never actually gotten in there and y'know put the wood on there, light the wood and get all the kai. . . . First place I actually did it was . . . out at Taumutu . . . alongside all the bros, aye. . . . It's not just doing the mahi . . . you share memories [*laughs*]. (Raniera)

Finding the right spaces to grow and to thrive as Māori men also requires time. Time to train and learn the art of mau taiaha. Time to be with other men experiencing their own journeys into the nature of being both male and Māori on our own terms through the opportunity to divorce ourselves briefly from Pākehā time. While time in Western societies is measurable and "linked to notions of progress", traditional Māori perceptions of both time and space differed significantly (Smith, 2012, p. 57). The concepts "event time" and "clock time" as described by Lo and Houkamau (2012) clarify that Māori culture is less concerned with "being on time" in comparison to honouring a kaupapa and the people involved—that is, the amount of time needed to complete the kaupapa to the satisfaction of all participants.

Within a collective Māori worldview, getting things right is more important than getting things done. While understanding the diverse realities of present-day Māori living to the Western clock, it is not unusual within Māori settings for hui, tangihanga and wānanga to run to "event time" (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). The flexibility of time provides ample opportunity to restore and reaffirm culture through the power of kōrero. Historically, kōrero was a favourite recreation that often carried on into the late hours of night (Hokowhitu, 2007). The discussions that take place at night within the marquee and around the campfire invite men to speak openly about their own histories and experiences. The comment below from Ārama that "there's no psychologists in the room" acknowledges men as the experts of their own experiences, expressed at wānanga through collective storytelling, remembering, connecting, reframing and restoring their own knowledge (Smith, 2012):

> You get lots of people that are coming from all sorts of different walks of life and y'know learning about them and talking to them. . . . Everyone's got a story. . . . There were lots of experiences, mostly in those kōrero at night, where, once people feel safe, they talk about things that have had a profound impact on them. . . . There's no psychologists in the room. (Ārama)

The sharing of stories while staring into the fire allows men to contribute and become a part of the oral traditions linked to space and time passed down through previous generations of wānanga. These include memories of kaiako and whānau who have passed over into te ao wairua. Sharing memories of kaiako and whānau is a way to rekindle ahi-kā, a term that refers to the "home fires of occupation". It is likened at wānanga to the burning fires of tradition, where mana is derived from being a regular "face seen" (Mead, 2003, p. 43).

As kaiako at wānanga begin the process of reflecting on their own lives and what it means to be a warrior, they often draw inspiration from their own kaiako and mentors before them. For Hoani, having good role models at wānanga meant being able to replace the negative experiences of his early life and normalising the presence of positive Māori men:

> All of these beautiful men that have replaced all these ugly men in my life. . . . I didn't trust adults, I didn't trust men in particular, and here were these beautiful Māori men that are so open and normal . . . and so Māori.

Traditional warfare was linked to the mana of the people, where a just cause or disparaging remark against the mana of a person or tribe could lead to bloodshed (Buck, 1949). Rāwiri was able to draw on these older traditions and reinterpret their relevance:

> This is a weapon; it used to be used as a weapon in the old days, but now we use it as a vessel of wellbeing. It's a vessel we can use to create, to give us skills, to give us another place where we can grow. . . . It's being able to move through life with integrity and mana.

While being exposed to role models and becoming role models themselves, Māori men remain

on a lifelong learning journey. This involves the transition to fatherhood and the legacy that kaiako pass down to their children and grandchildren. For Ārama, passing down what he has learnt includes the open, healthy expression of aroha:

> It's okay to see your kids and give them a big hug and say, "Love you son", and it's okay to cry. . . . Another thing that I got from wānanga, was being a Māori man was much more, it had much more depth and breadth than the stuff that I had been told when I was a kid. . . . As you get older . . . so much about being a warrior is passing on stuff to your kids and your mokos.

While the loss of intergenerational knowledge, including mau taiaha, has previously impacted the lives of Māori men (Wirihana, 2008), Hoani sees himself as part of the solution:

> If we don't pass the rākau on it will be relegated to books and our babies will not be as fully Māori as they could be. . . . If I have any ability to be a part of a solution which encompasses aroha ki te tangata, there's no way that I will allow anything that I have been taught to perish.

Taiaha wānanga allow men to return to spaces where Māori knowledge is remembered and shared through oral histories, storytelling and the creation of new knowledge (Smith, 2012). Wānanga provide positive places to develop positive identity constructs, which are particularly important to those who may not have been exposed to positive male role models. Traditional and contemporary ideas on being warriors and kaitiaki are also being redefined and shaped by the participants themselves. Nobody owns or possesses this knowledge for themselves; it is only ours for the purpose of ensuring it survives and is passed on, lest we take it to the grave and implicate ourselves in its loss. As the whakataukī says, "Mate atu he toa, ara mai rā he toa [When a warrior falls, another arises]".

Conclusion

The findings of previous research, and the men's experiences discussed in this article, suggest there is power in reframing taiaha wānanga and kaupapa Māori activities as hauora Māori programmes, with the strengthening of cultural identity a key outcome. Despite the hauora benefits of kaupapa Māori activities and having a strong cultural identity, these activities have been devalued in a number of ways. Links between identity and hauora are often not promoted within the education system when students are still being discouraged from taking culturally affirming options. Further potential solutions will require stronger interdisciplinary collaboration between the education and health sectors, where the value of Māori knowledge attached to identity-enhancing activities is accessible throughout young men's lifetimes. The themes and analysis presented here provide a platform for continued research into Māori masculine identities through the art of mau taiaha. There are also opportunities for future researchers to examine these themes in more depth. Finding ways to reach Māori men who are disconnected remains a challenge, and considerable care must be taken to provide opportunities where the stigma of not knowing our place in te ao Māori does not exclude engagement in culturally relevant activities (Mato, 2011; Warbrick et al., 2016)

Taiaha wānanga, where Māori men are able to begin the journey of reclaiming their own identities, transcend the physical nature of warrior training. They also include elements of tikanga-based practices that teach and celebrate a collective Māori worldview. When consideration is given to the balance between traditional pre-colonial warriors and the place of Māori weaponry training for modern life, wānanga are also places where the question "What does it mean to be a warrior?" can be asked. Māori men have to play a leading role in the development of tāne Māori culture, driven by the search to understand not only who we are but also by who we are not (Hokowhitu, 2007). Wānanga provide opportunities for men to redefine their position as warriors within present-day Māori culture and within their own whānau. A contemporary warrior identity within Tū Toka Tū Ariki upholds the mana of pre-colonial warrior traditions while applying them to modern life and concepts of wellbeing. Philosophies of wellbeing are role modelled during the early years of taiaha wānanga, and further maintained and developed through the enduring relationships formed by participants within the mau taiaha community.

Glossary

ahi-kā	burning fires of occupation, within this context also the retention of tradition
ahorei	head instructor
Akerautangi	son of the forest deity Rūrūtangiākau
Aotearoa	New Zealand; traditionally relates to the North Island only

aroha	love, compassion
aroha ki te tangata	love, compassion for others
hākari	feast
hangi	earth oven
hapū	subtribe
hau kāinga	home people
hauora	health
hauora Māori	Māori health
hī ika	fishing
hui	meeting, gathering
iwi	tribe
kai	food, to eat
kaiako	teacher, tutor
kaitiaki	guardian, custodian
kapa haka	Māori performing group
karakia	ritual chant, incantation
Kāti Wheke (Ngāti Wheke)	subtribe of Ngāi Tahu
kaupapa	topic, subject, theme
kaupapa Māori	Māori approach, Māori ideology—a philosophical doctrine incorporating the knowledge, attitudes and values of Māori society
kōrero	to speak, talk, address
kōtahitanga	unity, togetherness
kūmara	sweet potato
mahi	work, task, employment, practice, occupation
mahinga kai	traditional practices, and places involved in resource gathering, i.e., kai
mana	authority, power, influence, prestige
manaakitanga	duty of care, hospitality
mana tāne	the unique mana of Māori men
mana whānau	the unique mana of family connections
mana whenua	authority over a particular area of land; also used as a reference to the tribe of that area
Māoritanga	Māori cultural practices and beliefs
marae	the open area in front of the wharenui (meeting house) where formal greetings and discussions take place; often includes the buildings around the marae
mau rākau	to hold, grasp a weapon; arms
mau taiaha	to hold, wield the taiaha
Moenga Toto	battle between Tūmatauenga and Rongomaraeroa over Pōhutukawa
mokos	short for "mokopuna" (grandchildren)
Ngāi Tahu (Kāi Tahu)	tribal group of most of the South Island
Ngāi Tahutaka	unique culture of Ngāi Tahu (Kāi Tahu)
ngāi tātou	among us
Ōtautahi	Christchurch
Pākehā	New Zealander of European descent
papakāinga	home, village, communal Māori land
pātiki	flounder
Pōhutukawa	the physical world; land fought over by Tūmatauenga and Rongomaraeroa
rākau	taiaha, weapon
rākau matarua	
rangatahi	youth, younger generation
rohe	district, geographical area
Rongomaraeroa	god of peace and cultivated foods
Rūrūtangiākau	forest deity, a relative of Tūmatauenga referenced within the traditional creation stories of the taiaha
taiaha	long wooden weapon of hard wood with one end carved and often decorated with dog's hair
taiaha wānanga	seminar, conference, specific to learning mau taiaha
takiwā	area
Tāne Māhuta	god of the forest
tāne Māori	Māori male
tāne ora	Māori men's health
tangata	person
tangihanga	funeral
taonga	property, treasured possession
tauira	student
Taumutu	location of taiaha wānanga in Waitaha, south of Christchurch
te ao Māori	the Māori world
te ao wairua	the spiritual world
Te Arawa	the ancestral canoe and descendants who form the tribes of the Rotorua–Maketū (Waiariki) district
te reo Māori	the Māori language

Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ Treaty of Waitangi	New Zealand's founding document signed in 1840 between the British Crown and Māori chiefs
Te Waipounamu	the South Island of New Zealand
tikanga Māori	custom, lore, protocol
tohunga mau taiaha	taiaha expert
tuakana	elder brother (of a male) or elder sister (of a female); elder sibling or relative
tū manawa ora, tū manawa toa	in this context, "the humble heart of the warrior"
Tūmatauenga	god of warfare and humankind
tuna	eel
tūpuna	ancestor(s)
Tū Toka Tū Ariki	Christchurch-based community organisation
wāhi tapu	sacred site
wairua	spirit, soul
Waitaha	Canterbury
wānanga	seminar, conference; to learn
whakapapa	genealogy, ancestral connections
whakataukī	proverbial saying
whānau	family
whanaungatanga	relationships, kinship, sense of family connection
whānau ora	family wellbeing

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