

HEI ORANGA MĀORI I TE AO HURIHURI NEI

Living as Māori in the world today—An outcome of kura kaupapa Māori

*Kimai Tocker**

Abstract

Kura kaupapa Māori provide a unique primary school education in which children are immersed in a Māori language and cultural environment with the aim of enabling graduates to “live as Māori” within the wider world. The notion of “living as Māori” is a complex idea, but even more complex is the practice of living Māori cultural values because New Zealand society is governed by the English language and a set of values and social structures quite different from those in the traditional world of Māori. This paper interrogates the ideas about “living as Māori” that underpin the kura kaupapa Māori objectives. Interviews with graduates from the first Auckland kura kaupapa Māori give a critical sense of the possibilities of “living as Māori” in the modern world, and the effectiveness of these kura kaupapa Māori in providing these possibilities.

Keywords

Māori immersion education, kura kaupapa Māori graduates, Te Aho Matua

* Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand.
Email: k.tocker@auckland.ac.nz

Introduction

Kura kaupapa Māori are primary schools that provide a Māori-medium education in a Māori cultural environment. Their objectives include: the preservation of Māori language and culture; the provision of Māori education; and the validation of traditional Māori knowledge and pedagogy while producing bilingual and bicultural children. The kura were set up to ensure children retain their Māori identity as they venture into the Western world.

This paper examines some of the tensions inherent in these aims. Interviews with some of the graduates from the first kura kaupapa Māori established in Auckland provide insight into the cultural mechanisms they apply as they seek to live as Māori in a world that is often at odds with the objectives of kura kaupapa Māori.

Background

Māori educationalists recognise the critical nature of education in Māori advancement. While there is consensus that schooling should prepare students to live and participate in a wider society, being equipped to participate in Māori society is seen as crucial. Māori academic Mason Durie (2003, p. 199) proclaims the goal of “enabling Māori to live as Māori” to be of paramount importance in preparing young Māori for participation in society.

While Durie describes living as Māori in terms of having access to the Māori world which includes language, culture, marae (cultural site for gathering together), tikanga (customs and protocols), and resources such as land, whānau (family) and kaimoana (seafood), there is no standard definition of what constitutes “living as Māori”. This study provides provisional insights into what counts as “living as Māori” through the kura graduates’ narratives in which they describe how they practise and live traditional Māori knowledge, language and values in this modern world.

The ability to practise Māori ways of being has been severely hampered by decades of assimilation policies that have undermined Māori language and the basic structures of Māori culture, knowledge and values. A major factor in the reduction of Māori language use and Māori culture was the 1867 Native Schools Act which decreed that English was to be the language of instruction within Native Schools (Simon, 1998). The Act is viewed as a defining moment in the move away from Māori as the main language of the people to the imposition of English as the dominant language of the country (Spolsky, 2005).

The impact of the Native Schools Act was obvious in Benton’s 1979 survey of Māori language use that revealed that the Māori language was dying. By the late 1960s less than 8 per cent of the households surveyed could rate the youngest child in the family as a fluent Māori language speaker (Benton, 1997). The near demise of the Māori language created Māori protest groups determined to save the language. Among these groups were Māori elder Huirangi Waikerepuru and the Wellington Māori Language Board who worked together to successfully gain official recognition of the Māori language in 1987.

In order to ensure the survival of Māori language, traditions and values, kōhanga reo (language nests) were established. Kōhanga reo are pre-school initiatives where children and toddlers are immersed in Māori language and culture. The popularity and success of kōhanga reo amongst Māori communities were evident as the number of initiatives grew from 50 in the first year (1982) to 719 establishments in 1992 (Smith & Smith, 1995). However, parents were unable to find primary schools that could continue the Māori immersion learning once these children turned 5.

Determined to provide an education in the Māori language that would celebrate a Māori view of the world, the whānau (extended family) of the kōhanga reo graduates set up kura kaupapa Māori outside of the state education

system. The first kura was established at Hoani Waititi Marae in 1985, and others were set up soon after (Smith & Smith, 1995). But without funding and severely under-resourced, the Auckland kura kaupapa Māori struggled until official government recognition in 1989. In the same year the pioneers of the kura kaupapa Māori movement developed the Te Aho Matua policy document to clarify the principles of kura kaupapa Māori and to ensure the maintenance of the schools' distinct and unique qualities (Rata, 1991).

Te Aho Matua encourages the kura whānau and students to learn their genealogy, to make a commitment to the Māori language and culture, to learn about caring for the environment, to nurture a respect for all people and languages and to acquire literacy skills in both the Māori and English languages. In its reflection of the National Education Guidelines and goals for achievement, Te Aho Matua aims to produce graduates who are strong in their Māori identity equipped with the skills enabling participation not only in the Māori world but also in the wider world (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1.).

The history of the development of kura kaupapa Māori is well documented by Nepe (1991), Smith (1997) and Rata (1991) who were at the forefront of the kura kaupapa Māori movement. These writers have provided a sound base of knowledge about the beginnings, and the theoretical, philosophical and cultural underpinnings of kura kaupapa Māori. However, there is no systemic research that analyses dilemmas that face kura kaupapa Māori graduates who wish to live as Māori in a world where many view the Māori language and the ideals of being Māori as relics from the past.

Methodology

My study researches the notion of “living as Māori” through the words and reported experiences of eight adults who were pupils at some

of the first kura kaupapa Māori established in Auckland when those kura were in their infancy. (A larger study that will include about 20 graduates will be presented later.)

In their primary school years, two of the participants were foundation pupils at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi (established 1985), three at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Maungawhau (established 1987) and two at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Piripono (established 1989). The eighth participant attended a mainstream English language primary school and then became a student at Te Wharekura o Hoani. Established in 1990, Wharekura was the secondary school prototype of Māori immersion learning. Six of the others also attended Wharekura for their secondary schooling. One of the participants moved from a kura kaupapa Māori environment to mainstream schools for her intermediate and secondary levels of education.

In 1997, I began teaching at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Maungawhau when the graduates in this study were secondary students. As a past member of the kura kaupapa Māori whānau, I fit the “insider model” as described by academic Linda Smith, in her discussion about indigenous research methods (Smith, 1999). With knowledge of the Māori language and an implicit understanding about kura kaupapa Māori, it was easy to develop a comfortable rapport with the graduates who were keen to participate in the study, and to pass on contact details of other graduates.

The semi-structured interviews (1–1.5 hours in length) took place at venues chosen by the four female and four male graduates—most often at their homes although two opted for their workplaces. The graduates, now aged from 26–33 years of age, were happy for me to use their real names in this study. However, I did not feel comfortable doing so and chose to protect their identities as much as possible, through the use of pseudonyms. Some of the graduates spoke Māori throughout their entire interviews while others used both the English

and Māori languages. In order to maintain the integrity of the Māori vernacular, I have translated the Māori language words of the graduates into explanatory sentences rather than writing a direct translation.

The transcripts were sent to the graduates to ensure they have a meaningful say in the research. I received feedback from one graduate which contributed to a small change in my writing. In analysing the transcripts I looked for commonalities in how the graduates practised “living as Māori”. A common theme was the notion that the Māori language and tikanga are fundamental to the Māori well-being of the graduates. Other prominent themes related how the Māori language opened the way to opportunities in employment and, through practising Māori values and tikanga the graduates were able to survive tensions in the workplace when their “living as Māori” clashed with dominant Western values.

The narratives related to me by the graduates have enabled an analysis of how they have chosen to live as Māori and to fulfill the dreams and aspirations that Smith, Nepe, Rata and others envisaged for kura kaupapa Māori.

Living as Māori—What it means to the graduates

He kākano i ruia mai i Rangiatea. E kore ia e ngaro. (Mataira, n.d; sec. 1, p. 2)

Placed at the beginning of the Te Aho Matua document, this saying likens the child to the precious seed sown from Rangiatea, a sacred place to Māori. The special quality of the child stems from conception when the child is endowed with a spiritual energy linking to the child’s ancestral lineage and to “Io-matua, the supreme deity” (Mataira, n.d; sec. 2, p. 4).

A consequence of birth or being born into the Māori world is how two graduates view living as Māori.

Being Māori is just being normal, just being alive. It’s not something that happened recently, it’s something that was instilled in me from when I was born. I don’t feel like I live it in any particular way, I just feel that I am. (Māui)

Living as Māori is something that you don’t see as being separate to anything else. It’s invisible, a way of life that just comes naturally. It’s doing the things my tīpuna did but in a more modern context—Living in line with tikanga, speaking Māori, being active in the Māori world. (Pania)

Others describe family and whānau as crucial in upholding and teaching aspects of the Māori world.

He aha tēnei mea te ao Māori? He ao, tuatahi ka hangaia e te whānau ake. (Matiu)

Instilled in Matiu is the belief that knowledge about the Māori world is passed on through the wondrous nature of learning that takes place within a whānau.

Ko te tino akoranga i whakatōtō mai i roto i au, ko te noho whānau me te tino hōhonutanga, te tino mīharotanga o te noho a whānau nei, te āta tiaki i tērā i tō tātou ao Māori.

As the father of two children, Matiu sees parents as the most important people in a child’s life. It is their duty to nourish and teach the child about Māori life and especially the most fundamental aspect of the Māori world—the Māori language.

Ko te oro kōhanga mai ko ngā mātua. Mā rāua e poi poi i a rāua tamariki ki te ao Māori. He aha te tino pūtake o tēnei mea te ao Māori? Mōku ake he ao e whakanui ana i te ataahua o tō tātou reo.

Another component of the Māori world is tribal knowledge. As the first teachers in a child’s life,

Matiu argues, parents should ensure children learn about their tribes and sub-tribes.

Nā, atu i tēra he aha tēnei mea te ao Māori? Tēnei mea e mōhio pū ana ki tō ake iwi, me tō hapū, ko ngā mātua ēra, ngā kaiako tuatahi mō ā rātou tamariki.

Matiu's approach is the same as that emphasised in Fishman's (2001) research on reversing language shift which stresses the importance of family in intergenerational learning and the transmission of language. Five of the graduates are parents and as Anahera relates below, their children are growing up speaking Māori, adhering to the concepts of Te Aho Matua and living Māori traditions and concepts.

Ko te reo Māori te reo tuatahi o ōku tamariki. Mai i te whāngai i te reo ki a rātou kua whakatinanatia te tikanga o te ao Māori, ngā āhuatanga o te Aho Matua. (Anahera)

Matiu teaches his children that those, like himself, who are gifted with the knowledge and ability to speak the Māori language, are guardians, expected to take care of the language and everything that is associated with it.

He kaitiaki ahau mō te reo. Nā tēnā he kōrero Māori te reo kawea o te whare nei, he kaitiaki mō tō tātou reo. Koia rā tērā akoranga. Ka tukuna atu he akoranga ka kawea e āku tamariki. He kaitiaki rāua mō tō tātou reo, he kaitiaki rāua mō tō mātou whānau mō tō rāua kura, mō tō rāua ao Māori.

Identity

Kia mōhio ngā tamariki ki ngā rohe, ki ngā waka, ki ngā kōrero nehera. Ki ngā pūrākau, ki ngā pakiwaitara, ki ngā tikanga, ki ngā waiata, ki ngā āhuatanga katoa o tōna iwi. (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 5)

This statement from Te Aho Matua relates how important it is for children to learn the stories, the songs, and history about tribal areas, the tribal canoe and the land of their ancestors. In this way, they will acquire the knowledge and values associated with their own whānau, hapū (subtribes) and iwi (tribes). Consequently, children will feel comfortable as Māori and their identities will develop without hindrance.

The graduates in this study are advantaged in each having a strong identity and in being knowledgeable and proud of their Māori heritage. As the Māori leader and academic, John Rangihau stated, "Young folk can live with a greater amount of assurance if they know who they are. Then they can move into the Pākehā world full of self-confidence because they have no difficulty about the question of identity" (Rangihau, 1981, p. 168).

But Tāmāti points out it can be difficult to have pride in being Māori because the Western culture pervades all parts of New Zealand life and it is the ideal to which most people aspire. He believes there are negative societal attitudes about Māori that impact on Māori children. Schooled at a mainstream primary school, he knew children who were ashamed to admit they were Māori. When he began his secondary education at Te Whare Kura o Hoani Waititi he was surprised to see that the students there were all strong in their knowledge of being Māori and soon realised it was because of the positive nature of being in a kura environment celebrating the Māori world.

Iroto i ngā kura auraki he mātaku, he whakamā nō te Māori ki te ūmere, te pahupahu atu, āe he Māori ahau. I a au i tae atu ki te Wharekura o Hoani Waititi he tino rerekē tērā. Te katoa o ngā tauira mōhio pai ana ki tō rātou taha Māori. Mā reira i tupu ake te kaha me ēra tūāhuatanga katoa i runga anō i tā rātou mōhiotanga, nō hea rātou, ko wai rātou. Ko te mea miharo ki ahau ko te noho i tētahi ao Māori. Koia nā te tino pāinga o aua kura.

Pania gained her pride in being Māori from family and kura.

I got brought up feeling that I was unique and special as Māori. That's really important for children growing up because you get your sense of identity and confidence—that's come out of my going to kura. Having that strength of identity has been the thing that's been most valuable to me as a person.

The graduates acknowledge that it was their education in the Māori language that has opened a world of opportunities for them.

The opportunities I've been given in life from going to kura and being able to speak Māori has given me an edge in a way, something different from what other people can bring to the job. I've been fortunate in that respect. (Pania)

Tōku reo, ōku whakaakoranga, my teachings, my beliefs, my values, I always say the source, my puna is this place here, my teachers, everything I credit back to our marae to our kura. (Ihaia)

The kura kaupapa Māori practice of standing to deliver a mihi (greetings) or whaikōrero (speech), or to perform waiata (song) and haka (type of dance) helped the young people to gain confidence in their abilities to address large groups of people.

Kura gave me my confidence. I was able to stand in front of people and express my thoughts. It was a young age, five-six years old—I would go to wānanga around the country with my father. I'm confident in front of crowds now. I've been in front of thousands and I don't mind. (Māui)

At kōhanga I remember getting up and having to say my name in front of everyone and starting karakia off. Kura kaupapa, same thing. Karakia—all the kids have a turn to get up or you may be asked to do a mihi. Those are

the things that have helped me in my career. I was quite confident in being able to stand in front of people. (Aroha)

Through speaking the Māori language, knowing and practising Māori values and knowledge, Māui believes he can achieve anything he puts his mind to. He has confidence in his ability to succeed no matter what the task is ahead of him.

I'm content in this world that we live in today, the wide world. I'm very confident that I can go anywhere in the world and succeed.

According to Matiu, the kura is unparalleled in its ability to show off the beauty of the Māori world. Guided by a Māori philosophy, kura teaches respect for the Māori world. It is important to demonstrate the positive aspects of the kura, the whānau and Māori people to children and others. Living as Māori can be realised in Auckland city.

Ko te tino akoranga o te kura ko te whakaatu mai i te ataahua o tō tātou ao. Ahakoa kei te noho mātou i roto i te taone matua o Tāmaki ka tāea te ū tonu ki te ao Māori. Koia rā ngā whakaritenga katoa o te kura i raro i te marumaru o te ao Māori. He whakaritenga i kawea, i tiaki, i ū tonu ki tō tātou ao Māori. He tino mahi tēnā ki te whakaatu atu ki āu tamariki ki ā wai rānei, i te ataahua o tō kura, te ataahua o tō whānau, te ataahua o te iwi Māori.

Te reo Māori and employment

In the following quote from Te Aho Matua, the desire for kura kaupapa Māori children to develop their skills so that they can aspire to the highest level achievement is advanced.

Kia tupu ngā āhuetanga tuku iho o tōna pūmanawa ki ngā teitei o te taumata. (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 9)

The Māori immersion, whānau-oriented education the graduates received in kura kaupapa Māori has instilled in them an innate confidence. Armed with the Māori language and a sense of being able to achieve whatever they aspire to, the graduates have had no difficulty in finding employment. Most are employed in the world of media, with five working in the fields of television and radio where the Māori language is utilised. Two others are teachers and another is completing a doctoral degree in clinical psychology.

While at Wharekura, the graduates were closely monitored by Māori, especially those involved in the media where there was a shortage of fluent Māori language speakers.

There were a lot of eyes on us. It wasn't hard to get into auditions and the media. Different production companies loved the fact that they had a whole lot of young Māori children that were very confident and spoke Māori on a daily basis. (Māui)

Māui was one of the graduates sought out for media work while still at Wharekura. He was fortunate to secure a presenter's role at TVNZ in a Māori language programme for youth when he was aged 14. While at secondary school and in the years following, Māui and Tāmāti gained experience at radio stations. At the completion of his Wharekura education, Tāmāti became an announcer at his iwi (tribal) radio station where Māori was the language of communication.

I reira i whai waahi ahau ki tētahi o ngā reo irirangi Māori o te kainga. I tīmata ahau ki roto i ngā mahi papaoho i te reo Māori i runga i ngā reo irirangi Māori o Te Taitokerau.

Experiences in the music world, minor roles in movies and a comedy show have paved the way to the prominent position in television that Māui holds today.

I'm a director. I research Māori history. I interview our older people and our knowledgeable young people about the histories of their land and events, anything with an archival nature. That's my job and I love it. (Māui)

Two other graduates are also directors for television companies. While Anahera has just completed her first documentary, Matiu has his own company enabling him to focus his documentaries on subjects close to his heart such as the Kīngitanga (The Māori King movement).

Kua whakaritea e au tētahi kamupene. I raro i tēra kamupene kua whakaritea e au tētahi tono ki a Whakaata Māori. E ono katoa ngā hōtaka e whakanui ana, e aro ana ki te Kīngitanga. Koia rā tētahi o āku tino hiahia, ki te whakarite i tētahi pakipūmeka e aro ana ki te Kīngitanga. (Matiu)

After working behind the scenes on a number of television productions Aroha became a presenter on the television show, Pūkana—a Māori language programme for children. She views her education in Māori as the conduit to her achievements.

I owe my success to kōhanga, kura kaupapa and whare kura. Being able to speak Māori has gotten me to where I am today. I'm really lucky. Without te reo Māori I don't know what I would have done.

Pūkana has helped four of the graduates to gain the necessary experience and expertise for television work. It was through the programme that Matiu gained competence as an editor. He states emphatically it was because he was able to speak Māori that he secured the position:

Kōtahi anake te take i riro ai i a au tēra mahi, ko taku reo, koia rā noa iho.

Tāmāti began his media career working as a presenter on Pūkana. Today he works at a

prominent Auckland Māori radio station where he researches, writes and reads the news in Māori. Thus it is easy for Tāmāti to maintain his Māori ways of being in the workplace.

I roto i taku ao, te papaoho Māori, he ngāwari te ū ki ngā tikanga Māori, ki ngā whakaaro Māori ki ngā kōrero Māori i runga anō i te mōhioanga ko taku mahinga he whakapaoho i te reo Māori.

Education has been the career choice for three of the graduates. After successfully completing their degrees in teaching, two have returned to teach at kura kaupapa Māori in Auckland. One has continued with study and has gained a postgraduate diploma in interpreting and theology as well as a master's degree in arts. Pania, who is studying for a doctorate in clinical psychology has worked as a cultural advisor for Special Education; has spent time with an autism organisation, and has been a student mentor at The University of Auckland. Pania relates, "I've never really struggled to get mahi, I've always worked."

The complexities of living as Māori in the world today.

Ko te ngākau te mata me te kuaha o te wairua. Ko te whiu o te kupu, ko te wero, ko te riri, ko te aroha, ko te humārie, he mea kuhu ki te ngākau titi tonu ki te wairua. Koia nei te timatanga o te kōrero, kia ngākau māhaki" (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 3).

The statement above refers to the effects on the heart and spirit, not only of harsh words and anger but also of love and kindness. Through Te Aho Matua the graduates have been encouraged to treat each other with care and respect and to act positively in difficult situations. Some of the graduates are confronted by tensions that stem from a world that has little understanding of Māori knowledge and culture, where often the

values that are vital to the wellbeing of Māori are belittled or ignored.

In his first role as a Māori language teacher in a mainstream school, Ihaia endured a year of difficulty in an environment where Māori language and knowledge was not considered to be of educational importance. He reinvigorated himself by taking up studies at Waikato University where he could nourish his being Māori.

My first year of teaching was my worst year. I had no support. It was horrible. I was only looked upon as a guy who'd teach the school haka. It was just bottom of the priority list for them. It was more kapa haka on the spot, rather than ngā kaupapa Māori, kaupapa whakaako reo me te pai me te mana o te reo. To keep me sane I was going down to Waikato to do my postgraduate diploma in interpreting and theology. Once a week I was going down there to get my Māori dose.

Studying at the South Seas Television School and being amongst non-Māori students in her first year away from the kura kaupapa Māori environment was difficult for Aroha. She relates that the year "was probably one of the hardest." Not only was she the youngest Māori among older Māori who did not speak the language but she was also confronted with a totally different way of behaving to that experienced at kura.

I was amongst different iwi, different cultures. There were a lot of Pākehā there and they were just totally different to how I had been brought up so it was a big shock for me.

One of the differences was in the manner in which the students related to the teachers. Through kōhanga reo and kura, Aroha was taught to respect kaiako (teachers) and the elders as authority figures. Consequently, she found the behaviour of other students on the course quite bewildering and disrespectful.

A lot of the other students, I suppose they were more outspoken. I didn't know if that was just me feeling it was disrespectful or if it was just me not knowing that I could do that. That's where I saw the biggest clash, and the teachers being more like friends as opposed to being a teacher figure that you just respect.

During her studies, Pania faces conflict when Māori knowledge and what she terms "my Māori side" clashes with the mainstream thinking that pervades her field.

My mahi is in the old Pākehā Western theory. They've got a long way to go in terms of learning things Māori. That interface at times can be very difficult for me because their way of thinking, the way that they've learnt their skills, it's coming from a very Western model. At times I feel a tension between taku taha Māori, āku tikanga Māori and what they're telling us.

In order to survive her minority status in the clinical psychology programme and to withstand the negative thinking from students and lecturers about Māori knowledge, Pania needs the support and company of other Māori.

If you don't have other Māori around you tend to doubt yourself. In those upper levels of academia, they think that their knowledge is the only valid knowledge.

Although she finds it difficult to find Māori who work in the same field Pania tries to link with other Māori for support.

It's really about searching out Māori. A few Māori women have come through that programme. If I need to vent or kōrero to them for inspiration they're really awesome.

Te Aho Matua as guidance

Te piko o te māhuri, tērā te tipu o te rākau.
(Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 4)

In this saying, the reference to the sapling needing nourishment to grow into a strong tree can be likened to the development of the kura kaupapa Māori child who, with love and guidance will mature into a confident and knowledgeable adult. Te Aho Matua is the philosophy that guides whānau in the teaching and learning of Māori knowledge and Māori ways of behaving so that children will develop into adults who will stand tall as Māori in this modern world.

Like most of the graduates, Tāmāti acknowledges Te Aho Matua as the founding document for kura kaupapa Māori that also encapsulates tikanga Māori values. In the statement below, he outlines some of the principles of Te Aho Matua which can help in the understanding of others, strengthen identity and lead to a successful venture into the wider world.

Ko Te Aho Matua te tūapapa o te kura kaupapa Māori me ana akoranga katoa. Ki te mau pūmau koe ki ngā mātāpono o te Aho Matua kāore e kore ka pai tō haere i roto i te ao. I roto i tērā kaupapa ko te āhua o tō tū, tō āroha ki ngā tāngata katoa.

The graduates incorporate components of Te Aho Matua into their work and personal friendships. In her research work Pania utilises the values and aspects of Te Aho Matua she learnt at kura.

The values, all of the things in Te Aho Matua—I still look for as a way of guiding what I do now. Even in my research with Māori, I always look back to that as a guideline.

Māui finds Te Aho Matua beneficial in his television work. Tikanga knowledge ensures he implements appropriate protocols and

behaviour when researching, meeting or interviewing people. He once worked on a story about Māori weaponry where the interview could only take place on the marae ātea (courtyard outside the meeting house), the domain of Tūmatauenga, the Māori god of war. Tikanga would not allow the interview to be conducted inside the wharenuī (meeting house) because it is governed by the Māori god of peace, Rongomātane.

The ethics put into our research, I am able to accomplish because of the values of Te Aho Matua. Public relations is a big thing, also te reo me ōna tikanga, understanding of tikanga and the people you are talking to, tapu and noa and all those things come into play when I talk to various talent around the country. It gives me an advantage when I am trying to cover stories around the country.

In Aroha's primary school years, Christianity had been the guiding philosophy at the kura kaupapa Māori she attended. When she became a secondary school student at Te Wharekura o Hoani Waititi she encountered Te Aho Matua and found the different views caused some conflict in her thinking.

Piripono was all about Christianity, no Te Aho Matua. I'd been brought up to do karakia to God and then going to Waititi there was Te Aho Matua and all the Māori gods—a totally new learning experience for me. I loved it because it was something totally different. It was confusing because I was stuck in between.

The confusion Aroha experiences with the two philosophies is expressed in the following statement:

I do kapa haka and sing about the Atuas. For me it's about knowing right from wrong. I do karakia to someone, I'm just not sure who I'm doing it to.

The majority of the graduates from the first kura kaupapa Māori were brought up following Te Aho Matua and it is now an intrinsic part of their lives.

We were taught Te Aho Matua indirectly. We lived it, preached it, ate it. We heard all these things, in our songs, in our haka, they were our values. (Ihaia)

Te Aho Matua, it's big in our lives, especially the first students 'cause it was the main curriculum. It's strong within us, aroha tētahi ki tētahi, manaaki tētahi ki tētahi, all of these values have been instilled within us. (Māui)

As chairman of the Board of Trustees at a kura kaupapa Māori, Matiu strives to ensure the kura adheres to Te Aho Matua principles and objectives, and that the Māori language is being treasured and upheld. Mindful of the goals of kura and Te Aho Matua, he wants the whānau concept—the unit of teachers, parents, board members—to remain as a unified force so that the kura can move forward and be successful.

He titiro ki te āhua o tō mātou kura. Kei te ū tonu mātou ki ngā akoranga, ki ngā whāinga matua o Te Ahua Matua, kei te ū tonu ki tō mātou reo? Me matua mōhio te poari ki te mahi tahi me te whānau, te mahi tahi me ngā kaiako. Ki te noho wehewehe e kore taea te waka ki te maanu, e kore taea tō mātou kura ki te eke.

Whanaungatanga

Ko te mea nui kia mōhio ngā tamariki ki o rātou ake iwi, hapū, whānau hoki. (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 5)

These Te Aho Matua words relate the importance of familial and tribal relationships in the life of the kura kaupapa Māori child. Māori academic Hirini Mead (2003) terms the alliances of

kinship as whanaungatanga which he describes as a value that encompasses relationships and whakapapa (genealogy).

Vital in the lives of the graduates, the whakapapa that binds them arises from their shared experiences at kura kaupapa Māori and Hoani Waititi Wharekura (secondary school) rather than blood ties or a common ancestor. The strong connection unites the graduates and heightens the sense of whanaungatanga. The bond and identification to Hoani Waititi marae and the kura kaupapa Māori can be likened to the experiences of the young Māori South Auckland people in Borell's (2005) study of identity. She found the South Aucklanders held a strong affiliation to the area of South Auckland, and their identity and pride was based around living in that area rather than to their ancestral lands and family ties. Similarly, the graduates are proud to be a part of the Hoani Waititi whānau, readily identify as ex-students of kura kaupapa Māori and the wharekura but most importantly, see each other as family.

I classed them as my cousins 'cause I was brought up with them. Even when I went to Wharekura I was still with them and that's the same as my siblings. It was such a whānau-based kura that we're pretty much whānau for the rest of our lives. Even today we go to each other's houses, have weekly visits. Their young brothers and sisters come over to see my brothers and sisters, we still have tight connections. (Tui)

Tāmati's closest friends are those he made during his years at wharekura. They are very loyal, maintaining their friendships since their school days.

Ko āku tino hoa i roto i tēnei ao i ahu mai rātou katoa i te wharekura o Hoani Waititi i ērā tau i a mātou e kuraina ana. Nō reira kei te noho pūmau mātou katoa ki a mātou anō.

The closeness between graduates has been reinforced through the formation of a kapa haka

group called Ngā Tūmanako. While creating a platform for performance and competition, the main role of Ngā Tūmanako is to keep the graduates together.

He tino tata mātou, he tino whānau kōtahi mātou. Nā tērā i whakaritea te kapa o Ngā Tūmanako, he kapa pakeke. Te nuinga o mātou he ākonga o mua. Nā tēra hononga—ko te kapa haka tētahi o ngā tino aronga o te kura. (Matiu)

Relationships are further strengthened through sporting activities and mixing in the same social circles.

Mō te taha ki te whakangāhau i a mātou e tipihaere ana ki ngā pāpara kauta, ki ngā whare pikitia, ā kei reira tonu tērā hononga i tauheretia ai i a mātou i te kura. (Tāmati)

Socialising together has culminated in marriages between some of the graduates and the beginning of families.

We see each other all the time, all our babies, their babies are our babies. We just had a baby shower yesterday. We were all freaking out on how many kids we've got. But we love the fact that they all know each other, they're gonna be growing up together like we did.

In the statement by Māui, "E kore e motukia, e mea ana te kōrero", he relates the graduates of the kura will be friends forever, in an everlasting relationship indicating the enduring nature of whanaungatanga.

The English language

Mo ngā tamariki, kia rua ngā reo. Ko te reo o ngā mātua tupuna tuatahi, ko te reo o tauwiwī tuarau. Kia orite te pakari o ia reo, kia tū tangata ai ngā tamariki i roto i te ao Māori, i roto hoki i te ao o Tauwiwi. (Mataira, n.d., sec. 1, p. 4)

Te Aho Matua encourages the teaching of English within kura kaupapa Māori so that the graduates will emerge not only as strong Māori role models but also as bilingual citizens, equipped with the language skills necessary for participation in the world today.

As the main language in New Zealand society, English predominates on radio, television and in most social interactions so speaking in the English vernacular posed no great difficulty to the graduates. It was in the areas of reading and writing that they needed tutoring. Five of the graduates had formal English lessons at kura kaupapa Māori, while two others had no tuition in the subject until high school age. One was educated in a mainstream English language primary school before entering wharekura.

The learning of English has been problematic for some and has resulted in feelings of inadequacy about their English literacy skills. Some of the graduates found it difficult to settle to English language lessons at kura for they were more accustomed to the use of Māori when learning the school curriculum subjects.

Kāore au i tino ū ki te hōhonutanga, ki ngā whakahaerenga o ngā mahi i roto i te akomanga reo Pākehā. Mōku ake he uaua. Ko tō mātou kura he kura kaupapa Māori. Ko te pou hākinakina ētahi o ngā akomanga, pāngarau, pūtaiao, tikanga ā iwi, ērā momo katoa me whakahaere i roto i te reo Māori. (Matiu)

I didn't take to English as I did to our reo Māori kaupapa. (Ihaia)

While very articulate in the speaking and writing of the Māori language, Matiu today finds it difficult to explain his thoughts clearly in the English language.

Māma noa iho ki au te tuhi reta ki te reo Māori. Ētahi o ngā kupu Pākehā nei kāore he aha ki a au ki te whakatakoto rerenga kōrero. Ko te mate ko ngā kupu e tika ana

hei whakaatu i ngā tikanga a ō whakaaro i roto i te kopaki o tēnā rerenga kōrero, ki reira raru ai.

Ihaia went on to study at university where he found the new learning environment and its English language content daunting. Although not terribly competent in the English language, he studied and successfully completed a Master of Arts degree.

At Auckland Uni and at St John's listening to my peers—they're so eloquent and articulate in the reo Pākehā. I wouldn't say I felt dumb I just didn't feel as confident as my colleagues. And our readings—all that mahi was a whole new world. I was able to knock off my graduate diploma and theology all in English and I felt proud. Even though my reo English was tapepe as, I had a real firm belief in myself.

But not all graduates were taught the literacy skills of reading and writing in English while at the primary school level of kura kaupapa Māori. Consequently, while Aroha could speak the language, her inability to read and write in English until high school age caused her some difficulties.

I didn't start learning how to write English until I got to whare kura which was quite embarrassing. I could speak English but I couldn't really read it and I couldn't spell. I remember my sister sending me a paper, I must have been 11 or 12, of the alphabet, because she realised I didn't know it. I ended up being quite good at English while I was at whare kura. I don't think I really learnt how to spell. I don't think it has affected me although I was worried at the time, thinking I'm going to look dumb.

In the comments below the graduates express the positive outcomes of having the ability to read and write in English and Māori.

Learning Māori young made me appreciate language so I appreciated English as well. Writing, another love of mine whether it be waiata or screenplay, even your normal story. I think I became good at that because I had two worlds. You start to understand different grammar and different metaphors and you can inter-link Māori to English and English to Māori. (Māui)

Today I can walk in both worlds with ease. I can make the transition quite easily, from being in a Māori setting to a Pākehā setting. We have to be bilingual, bicultural. I feel like I got the best of both worlds. (Pania)

Conclusion

The graduates in this study were educated during the 1980s in the earliest, Auckland-based kura kaupapa Māori, in an environment that immersed them in the Māori language, traditions and values of the Māori world. Te Aho Matua, the guiding philosophy of kura kaupapa Māori has helped the graduates to maintain

their Māori knowledge and it continues to play an important role in the development of their own children.

The kura kaupapa schooling has produced adults who are now communicating with their own children in the Māori language and teaching them to view the world through Māori eyes. The whānau is seen as a crucial element in passing on Māori language and knowledge about tribal history and values which strengthen a child's identity. The graduates attribute their competence in the Māori language as the main reason they easily found employment. Although some of the graduates had difficulty in acquiring English literacy skills, the objectives set by the early pioneers of the kura kaupapa Māori have been largely met. The graduates are all making a positive contribution to New Zealand in their various occupations and employ Māori ways of behaving to cope with the conflicts that sometimes arise as a result of living as Māori within a world dominated by Western values. As knowledgeable and confident young Māori, these graduates epitomise the living of traditional Māori values and concepts within the modern world.

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