

**Tribal knowledge in early childhood education:**

**A Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū case study**

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## Abstract

The research has been designed to examine the overarching query: *How tribal knowing is implicated in teaching and learning in early childhood education.*

Accordingly, this study is an investigation into the links between tribal epistemology and early childhood education and care: Specifically Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges. Tribal curricula and pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning with young children are examined through kaiako (teachers) narrative. In early childhood education, there is contention regarding what comprises knowledge, skills and attitudes in the teaching and learning of young children. A machination of factors including global economics and industry has an impact on early childhood education curriculum. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges appear subjugated; thereby creating tensions for local tribal aspirations. This study argues that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology is powerful in providing a site of freedom, innovation and transformation through the care and education of young children. This examination calls into focus the intersection between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology), Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal early childhood education and care service) and teacher pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning of young children. As such it stimulates further thinking around the symbiotic nature of tribal development and early childhood education.

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## **Attestation of authorship**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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## Chapter One: Thesis introduction

The study of tribal education is gaining interest amongst education professionals who want to understand more deeply the complexities involved in young children's learning and tribal knowledges. Inquiry reveals that there is limited literature on tribal education in early childhood education and care settings in Aotearoa New Zealand: with no research available on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal early childhood education specifically. Consequently, this research project has been designed to examine the overarching question: *How is Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledge implicated in teaching and learning in early childhood education?*

### Researcher position

*Ko Uenuku te atua*

*Ko Huakaiwaka te rangatira*

*Ko Waitematā te moana*

*Ko Kaiwhare te taniwha*

*Ko Whau te maunga*

*Ko Huatau te tangata*

*Ko Matukutūreia te tumu whakarae*

*Ko Puketapu te karangaranga*

*Ko Manukau te waiora*

*Ko Ngāti Te Ata i Rehia te wahine*

*Ko Ngāti Te Ata te iwi*

*Ko ngā wairua kei waenganui*

A passion to learn more about Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledges was motivated by a desire to strengthen my whakapapa (tribal genealogy). My tribal knowledge is limited, having been raised away from the papa kāinga (original home, home base, village) and not speaking Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialect. Instead I was raised in Ruawai, a rural town famous for its kūmara (sweet potato). At the age twelve I left to attend boarding school in Te raki-pae-whenua (North Shore of Auckland) and have remained living and working in Tāmaki makaurau (Auckland) during my adult years. Life as an urban dweller highlights the significance of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal whakapapa, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū knowledges and stimulates a desire to affirm and contribute by exploring the importance of tribe as a way of being.

Active participation as a tribal member requires me to be better informed and compounds my interest in studying Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū)



tribal epistemology). I have been involved in education all my working years, consequently tribal teaching and learning in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo at Tāhuna Marae, the name of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal community home, held particular intrigue. A call to understand more about the application of tribal knowledge in early childhood education became an opportunity to consolidate my own education while simultaneously documenting Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal initiatives at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. While pondering the focus of this thesis, I am reminded of how traditional practices, values, beliefs of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua are handed down from generation to generation through spiritual reverences and sacred histories. Consequently, a wish to be a part of this aged intergenerational process has overwhelming appeal. Learning te reo Māori (the Māori language) as an adult is a source of enlightenment and pleasure. As a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua woman, not immersed in the language growing up, I understand the challenges of learning to speak te reo Māori as a second language.

Although I have completed a level three certificate in Māori immersion from Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, a Māori tertiary institution based in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, it is not mastery in te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. Much of the essence and spirit of a tribe comes from the language. Hence, being aligned with Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua full immersion early childhood education becomes a site of joy and delight as an emergent speaker of te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua and provides an entry point from which to observe and experience the integration of tribal knowledge and early childhood education closely.

### **Researcher as learner and teacher in the field**

The impetus to explore an integration of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga in curriculum arises from a teaching role in the primary, early childhood and tertiary sectors. A deeper understanding of tribal education will enhance this work. Currently teaching in an early years teacher training programme; it is important to engage in research that can inform practice. This helped to develop the thesis topic which asks the question: how is tribal knowledge implicated in early childhood education?

An examination of how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi tribal knowledges impact on early childhood education at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is inspiring at both local and global levels. As a teacher, I am interested in kaiako explanations about pedagogical approaches and their perspectives pertaining to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowing as a conduit for learning and teaching in early childhood education and care.

### **Hypothesis**

The phenomena of iwi (tribal) education is becoming increasingly significant as specific Māori tribes begin to take active roles in the teaching and learning of children. Grounded in tribal aspirations, the foci of tribes to participate in education more extensively are visible as opportunities come to fruition through Waitangi Tribunal settlements. This study is posited in a hypothesis that tribal knowing has potential as a trajectory in young children's learning and should be more visible in the educational landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand. Consequently this begs the question: How is tribal knowledge implicated in early childhood education?

### **Theoretical underpinnings of the research**

Kaupapa Māori (Māori ideology) provides a conceptual platform from which to explore the question. The notion of 'tribal knowing' which by nature is non definitive requires a paradigm that will allow a penetrating yet holistic approach (Durie, 2012; Edwards, 2013a, 2013b; Henry, 1999; Royal, 2012; Smith, 1997, 2012; Walker, 2013). Kaupapa Māori has the capacity to examine the links between early childhood education and tribal education. Multiple perspectives within tribal thought and kaiako narrative can be presented and understood through the application of Kaupapa Māori.

A study of the literature regarding how curriculum evolves in tribal early education settings ascertains contestations regarding curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand. Overarching socio-cultural theory seeks to explain the influence of tribal language and knowledge in education. Anaru (2011), Benton (1993), Edwards (2013a, 2013b), Irwin, (1990, 1992), Durie, M. D., (1994, 2003, 2008, 2012), Ka'ai (2004), Marsden (2003) Nepe (1991), O'Regan (2009) O'Sullivan (2001), Pere (1994), Walker (1990) and Wetere-Bryant (2000) establish the implications of socio-linguistic, socio-political,

socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-historical factors in the development of learning and Māori tribal knowledges.

The hypotheses that local knowledges are poignant in growing local communities through tribal connections to physical, historical, social and spiritual landscapes is foundational to this thesis on tribal knowledge and early childhood education (Findsen & Tamarua, 2007; Meyer, 2006; Penetito, 2010). Innovative pedagogical approaches that emerge out of tribal settings can advantage teaching and learning environments and contribute to more inclusive practices (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh & Teddy, 2008; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Bleasdale, 2012a, 2012b; Keelan, 2009; Royal, 2007; Stephens & Milligan, 2009).

Consequently, critical thinking around how subjugation of tribal knowledge can negatively impact on learning outcomes (Kēpa & Manu'atu, 2008; Macfarlane, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2009; Penetito, 2010; Pihama, 1990; Potāka, 2004; Pohatu 2002a, 2002b; Reedy, 1993, 1995; Royal-Tangaere, 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Smith, G., 1997; Smith, L., 1992b, 1999) underpins the information presented in this exposition. This study has looked at a broad range of Māori education theorists and writers in order to substantiate claims made in this case study research.

### **Significance of the study for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua**

Teaching and learning at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is inspiring. Success and achievement for tamariki (children) and rangatahi (young adults) for children's learning is at the heart of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi endeavour with “rangatahi and mokopuna foremost in aspirations” (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011, p.22). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal aspirations cite young people's education in pivotal tribal stratagem and celebrate educational achievement (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991) with children and families who attend Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo at Tāhuna marae in Waiuku as a social good.

This project gives kaiako opportunities to explain their pedagogical perspectives regarding how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledge is used as a learning conduit and how it can contribute towards building ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu, 1998) in the children attending Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. This study calls into focus the

leadership roles played by kaiako in early childhood education and care. The complexities existing in the interplay between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal responsiveness and tribal knowledges are dynamic sites of hope and transformation (Freire, 1984, 1998).

Tikanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal values, beliefs and customary practices) exhibit unique characteristics pertaining to specific tribal affiliations that are particular to region. Therefore, this thesis is not deemed to speak on behalf of all Māori but is steeped in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledges. This affirms tribal diversity in resisting universal metanarratives which advocate absolute truths for commodification and re/production of knowledge.

### **Significance of the study nationally**

Education curriculum issues continue to be hotly debated in Aotearoa New Zealand. Research highlights the contestation amongst local communities to sustain local cultural values and aspirations in early childhood education under the pressure from global influences in education (Kepa & Manu'atu, 2007; Macfarlane, 2000, 2002, 2004; Pearson, 2011; Penetito, 2010; Smith, 1992a, 1992b, 1999). Curriculum research regarding different tribal philosophies and approaches serves to illuminate tribal resolve in education.

Involvement in this study, highlights the significance of relationships between people, the geographical spaces and places they inhabit and the influence that this interplay has in developing early childhood education curriculum. The potential of tribal education to contribute to the well-being of communities in specific ways is empowering for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua People. By trying to understand the ways tribal knowledges served in the past, currently serve and how these will continue to be used in the future has prompted an examination of how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi knowledges are integrated into early childhood education and care; a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua case study.

Increasing expectations to understand tribal knowledge appears in Ministry of Education and New Zealand Teachers Council documents. Demands that educators use ngā tikanga-a-iwi me ngā reo-a-iwi (tribal customary practices and tribal dialects) appropriately in their practice (Ministry of Education, 1996, 1998, 2008, 2009a, 2009b,

2011; New Zealand Teacher's Council, 2007, 2010) is deemed desirable, alongside early childhood education focii to create curriculum based on child interests and care prompts. Therefore, information regarding how tribal-specific knowledge is implicated in education stands to benefit teachers working in all sectors of education and to demystify the theory of tribal knowledges in education.

A study exploring tribal knowledge through marae-based education as a model for children to be "healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging" (Ministry of Education 1996. p. 9) predicates an interest in delving into how tribal knowledge is a pedagogical souce for teaching and learning for children: An understanding of which would support teacher education teacher training providers to implement more inclusive teaching and learning approaches in curriculum models.

Tribal interest regarding the ways investment of time and energy is playing out in education is gaining momentum amongst all tribal groups throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Local knowledge of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology in early childhood education is relevant to various tribes who are planning to embrace comparative projects: Transferable ideas to be found in a case study are deemed as useful. The implementation of tribal knowledge in tribal early childhood setting will be of interest to indigenous groups who are currently involved in or planning similar work outside Aotearoa also.

### **Significance of the study internationally**

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe along with other indigenous groups has not fared well in their struggle to live in traditional ways (Durie, 1994, 2003; O'Sullivan, 2001; Smith, 1999). Indigenous peoples throughout the globe meet regularly in research forum to discuss their similar plights. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal initiatives serve to inform other groups of the possibilities found in early childhood education and care. Notions of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua philosophies cement tribal practices in caring for young children and families and have widespread appeal amongst indigenous people.

Indigenous research finds indigenous educational approaches successful in addressing educational challenges by identifying achievements in the teaching and learning of young children and families (Abu-saad & Champagne, 2006; Armstrong, 2000;

Cherrington, 2000 Duhn, 2007; Fenelon & Le Beau, 2006; Green, 2010; Hee, 2010; KaiakaBlair-Stahn, 2010; Laltaika, 2010; Louis, 2007; Wetere-Bryant, 2000).

### **An overview of the research**

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing cannot be restricted to a finite description; rather it can be examined as a body of knowledge embedded in tribal epistemology. Tribal knowledge evolves and is in a constant state of flux as changes impact and continue to progress the knowing over time (Marsden, 2003; Mead, 2003; Penetito, 2010; Royal, 2012; Smith, G., 2012). It is acknowledged therefore, that a written thesis work is unable to express fully the evolving connection between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua epistemology and early childhood education tribal teachings.

Secure conviction in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal lore allows authentic pedagogy and curriculum to specify successful educational outcomes for young children participating in early childhood at Tāhuna marae. Successful inclusion of tribal knowledges promotes a credit model in establishing Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua ‘cultural capital’ (Bourdieu, 1993) amongst children and whānau (Rameka, 2011). Early childhood education offered at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo assigns its quality and accountability to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua histories and social expertise; with practices being derived in tribal contexts. This project is an attempt to remove speculation and conjecture around teaching and learning in a tribal setting and to verify tribal teaching practices through an empirical based case study in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal commitment to nourish and empower children and grandchildren through education and care is indicative of a steadfast tribal vision that aspires to creating opportunities for their young to realise their future potential. The future of the iwi depends on tribal membership. The continuity of mana whenuatanga (recognition of specific tribal associations with particular land and resources within a designated tribal area) and kaitiakitanga (responsibilities and custodial guardianship over tribal land and resources) is dependent upon raising a generation educated in tribal knowledges.

Tribal involvement in early childhood education and care acts as a catalyst in sustaining Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal well-being and strength. Tribal visions, hopes and positive projections for the future are realised through nurturing a collective knowing of histories in the metaphoric puna (water spring) of continuity with tūpuna (ancestors), mokopuna (grandchildren) and mātāpuna (the river source). Information on how future generations will be equipped with Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledge is at the heart of matters for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi accomplishments. Further understandings will be useful in future-proofing tribal development. The privilege of being part of a collaborative research looking for deeper understanding into children's tribal educational environments is made possible by a team of committed professional kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. A collective approach allows information about how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal epistemology is implicated in early childhood education to be co-constructed and co-disseminated to benefit others at the marae and in other educational forum.

### **An outline of the study**

There are seven chapters in this thesis. Chapter one provides a brief overview of the topic by positioning the researcher, the researcher's interest in the topic and the purpose of the study. Chapter two contextualises the case study. It introduces the reader to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe and Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. A review of current literature examines perceptions of tribal education in relation to the study question and establishes research spaces. The fourth chapter describes and justifies the research methodology and design. Chapter five identifies how significant findings in the study enhance existing research and is followed by deeper discussion and recommendations for future research in chapter six. Lastly the thesis concludes with chapter seven which provides a synopsis of the thesis including its strengths and limitations.

### **Summary**

In summary this chapter elucidates researcher position in the project and introduces the hypothetical underpinnings of this work. Possible implications emanating from this study have been identified and discussed in the context of tribal development. Some transferable information from this research project may be applicable to national and international groups. The following chapter introduces Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe by providing a glimpse into Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Ko wai Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua; Who are Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua?**

This chapter introducing Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi couches the case study within Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing. The account given here is not intended to be a full rendition of tribal whakapapa or events; rather it hopes to highlight some aspects of tribal history and leadership that propose early childhood curriculum. Contemporary educational aspirations embedded in tribal Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi tribal documents are committed to the preservation of historical tribal knowledge via intergenerational knowledge transmission in early childhood care and education.

Insights into Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua will provide an entry point from which to gain an appreciation of some tribal wisdom that has brought a people thus far and afford tribal members their tribal identity. The interface of social and historical realities merges into the fibre of whānau and hapū (sub-tribe) creating iwi stories that attribute to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua distinctiveness. This chapter intends to probe into how tribal knowings can be perceived as unique educational potential in a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood childcare setting.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi comprises twenty hapū. These being; Ngāti Kahukoka, Ngāti Puaki, Ngāti Urupikia, Ngāti Rori, Ngāti Pare Tawhaki, Ngāti Paretaua, Te Iwi Ware, Ngāti Rua, Ngāti Hāna, Ngāti Huiau, Te Maungaunga, Te Uri o Te Oro, Te Uri Ngahu, Te Uri o Tawhaki, Ngāti Kaihe, Ngāti Kaitapu, Te Uri Raro, Te Whānau Pani, Te Rangatirakore, Te Kainga Ahi. Each hapū have their own distinct history yet remain connected through common ancestry to Te Ata i Rehia of Wai o Hua, the original chieftainess and tūpuna Tapaue o Waikato. Together we are known collectively as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has mana whenua over Tāmaki Makaurau, Franklin, Manukau and Waikato at the lower Waikato River catchment.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal historian, Roimata Minhinnick, defines the tribal boundaries so eloquently that it merits quotation in full:



Traditionally, the rohe Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū embraced Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland Region) beginning with Maungawhau, the foundation of Te Wai o Hūa, consolidating Ngā Wai and Ngā Oho under the waters of Huakaiwaka, overlooking Te Waitematā. The rising sun awakens Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū from the depths of Te Manuka forming a genealogical alignment from Maungawhau to Matukutereia, the foundations and mauri (life force) of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū. The stand of Te Rangihahautu ascends Te Manurewa o Tamapahore and accompanied by Te Horeta heading toward Whenua Kite, to the southeast. It then transcends westward and extends the breadth of the Wairoa ranges to Pukekowhai before reaching the banks of the Waikato River and being alerted to its mauri. From Pukekawa it turns to salute Te Paki o Matariki before embracing ngā motu that lead toward Te Puaha o Waikato. From Maioero the site of Ngā Wai Hohonu o Rehūa opens the path along the ancient lands of Paorae to Te Puaha o Manukau. The stand at Pukehorokatoa is followed by a tribute to Uenuku, Kaiwhare and Puketapu before crossing Te Whare o Te Atua to gather Te Rau o Te Huia. The stakes placed at Taupaki reaffirm the takiwā abounds the southern shores of Kaipara. From Hikurangi, Te Totara Tapu o Huatau places a moko over the land. The deep tattoo of Te Kahupokere sustains Te Kainga Ahi through Okahu. Orakei, and Remuera in full abode at the height of its prosperity. At Maunāina the bonds of Te Tawha endure and cross to Waiheke where the treasured kowhatu remain steadfast (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohū Iwi Authority, 2011).

**Figure 1: Rohe a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū: Map denoting the geographical region that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū inhabits**



(Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohū Iwi Authority, 2011)

This map identifies the boundaries of Ngāti Ata Waiohū tribe as it appears in a paper outlining discussions between Auckland Council and Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohū Iwi Authority to assist the Auckland Council. The area in which Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe lives is significant in contextualising the knowledges implicated in all teaching and learning regarding Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi.

Blair (2002) and Paore (2002) identified the presence of Waiohū living in and around Tāmaki-makau-rau in their expositions on Ngāti Whātua tribal history and occupation of the Auckland area. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū whakapapa (geneology) authenticates these records declaring the union of Huakaiwaka and Rauwhakiwhaki as original ancestors of Waiohū begat a granddaughter Te Ata i Rehia. She was joined with Tapaue, who as a prominent Waikato chief, had gained control of the land from Taupiri to Port Waikato and it is through this union that connection to Manukau district and in particular to the Manukau Harbour was solidified. Association secured the provision for the present day site of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū marae at Waiuku. In commitment and

adulation for Te Ata i Rehia, her name was chosen to designate her people. Hence this nomination carries with it an eponymous ancestry renowned as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, commonly known as Ngāti Te Ata, iwi today.

Te Wai-o-Hua lived on the Tāmaki isthmus before the arrival of the migratory canoes. Legendary stories of Kupe’s journey along the coastal dwellings of Aotearoa recall Kupe finding the sea too rough to navigate. So deciding to disembark on the west coast, he secured his vessel by using an islet which is named Te Tokatapu a Kupe accordingly. It was here that he struck the rock with his paddle and commenced an incantation to calm the sea. After his karakia (prayer) he let go his cormorants into the mouth of the Manukau Harbour to explore the safety and layout of the environment. While exploring the area, he found people living in the area now known as Tāmaki makaurau. As he commenced his journey further along the coast line, he saw people tending their gardens near the coast at Karioi (Flavell, G., personal communication, July 16, 2012).

Archival narrative confirms that there were ancient people dwelling in Aotearoa. Wirihana Aoterangi who was the chief of Ngātītahinga Recollections recalls “they [Waiohua] were not the Ngati-matakore of our race, they were of ancient times and belonged to this island” (Aoterangi, 1923, p. 3). These folk were reported to have had a distinguishing appearance and were understood to be the descendants of Maui. Remembering the past through recalling and re-telling empowers tribal knowing; “an ancient concept in a new time offers opportunities to re-member, re-position and re-think elements of Māori knowledge and wellbeing” (Edwards, 2013a, p. 43). Remembering is highly regarded in young children’s learning. Pedagogical preferences favour attributes such as recall and memory when working alongside children and families.

Learning and teaching of whakapapa therefore are important aspects of curriculum in early childhood education for all involved. The geographical location of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua at Awhitū Peninsular is embroiled in genealogical history. Importantly also, Awhitū is the place where Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal history has left multiple, impressive geographical imprints on the landscape by way of terraced indentations, all of which showcase the flourishing pa sites from a bygone era. Topography indicates

densely populated settlements on steep terrain and reveals the industrious nature of tūpuna who were notorious for their agility and adept skills in market gardening. As a valuable site of past habitation, it requires careful preservation through demarcation as significant culturally, historically and socially, especially preserved by photography as taonga (treasure). In the heart of Awhitū Peninsula nestled amongst the landscape, is Puketapu, the sacred mountain of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe used as an identifying landmark, which holds pride of place as a land mass of spiritual significance.

Furthermore, the historical significance of this location resides in the fact that the Declaration of Independence was signed at Ngararapapa, Awhitū on 22 July 1839. To mark this historical event it was decided to sign the Ngā tikanga o Ngāti Te Ata, tribal policy statement, at the same location on 22 July 1991. The current strategic iwi development plans are built on the premise that the original declaration agreement signed with the government in 1839 confirmed all sovereign power and authority resided entirely and exclusively with the hereditary chiefs and heads of tribes, a fact that has not altered since that time (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991). All of these events have relevance to what is considered tribal knowledge: Especially in terms of their impact on curriculum for early childhood education.

It is these ancient attachments to places and events that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has developed relationships alongside those who share the bounty of the same land ways and water ways (Taonui, 2012). Witness of these affiliations is evident in the parameters of the Collective Deed of Settlement of Tāmaki-makau-rau. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua was one of the thirteen tribes represented at settlement in Waitangi Tribunal claims in September 2012 (Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau, 2012).

The sociological, biological and physical inter-relativity existing between iwi and their environment means that “landscapes simultaneously shape, and are shaped by culture and social actions. As such they are integrally linked to culture and cannot be regarded in isolation from cultural practices” (Sims & Thompson-Fawcett, 2002, p. 253). The intrinsic connection between the tribe and tribal area is “the landscape is intimately linked to historical and spiritual values and is fundamental to their cultural ideology...the relationships between people and land provides a sense of cultural identity and belonging” (p.252). Research establishes persuasive arguments that

challenge local council governance in more collaborative systems of co-management (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2012; Walker, 1990).

### **Tribal mythology as tribal treasury**

Mythology as a construct of ‘my-theology’ shifts perception associated with traditionally Eurocentric meanings of theology to incorporate tribal theology as equally legitimate beliefs, authoritative philosophies and applicable to understand the world. This counter hegemonic interpretation stems from the recognition of and inclusion for te ao Māori (Māori world view) instead of universal ideas of truth emanating from prescribed religious belief systems aligning with conventions established unilaterally in Europe. Mythology and storytelling as a science of genealogy is upheld by Marsden (2003) who was both a well-respected and learned tohunga (priest) and a scholarly theologian, Anglican Priest.

Rich stories add to the precious pool of narratives that carry ancient teachings and messages. Story telling is highly valued in early childhood settings. Legends open up dialogue and analyses. Ka'ai (2012) urges for a collaborative commitment and investment in cultural preservation through documenting language, traditional knowledge and history. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledges and oral histories are able to escape reductionism and co-modification by others when stories are grounded in tribal history and treasured by tribal members. Stories from Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua kaumātua are potent sources of remembering and recording tribal historical events especially those that have been passed on. Early childhood education has a vital role in preserving this treasury of stories for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua children.

Social reputations of people groups can be found in the stories that they tell of themselves. Traditional fables often evolve from a need to emphasise particular traits in order to encourage the development of desirable aptitudes and to highlight characteristics in places they lived. Through tribal stories, children of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua descent are exposed not only to heroic role models who beckon pathways to gallantry but see depicted positive attitudes and life skills as exemplars. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua oral histories therefore represent an invaluable source for interpreting such things as creativity, safety around water, respect for resources, victory over adversity, perseverance and love of life.

Children understand legendary Kaiwhare as kaitiaki (guardian) of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua coastline and consequently the patron of all seafaring Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua members. The relationship between Kaiwhare and the tribe has profound cultural definitions heard in the tauparapara (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal mantra); *Ka whiti te rā ki tua o rehua, ka ara a kaiwhare i te rua*; As long as the sun shines over the west coast Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua will rise from the depths of the Manukau (Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, 2011). The promise, hope and commitment found in this tribal chant are expression of the deep resilience, strength and future which is projected in the continuity and longevity of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991). Kaiwhare is so influential in the rohe (area) that the iwi also came to be known as Te Ruakaiwhare (People of Kaiwhare) in days gone by (Flavell, G., personal communication, September 7, 2013; Taonui, 2012).

Tribal members are well versed in the appeasement of Kaiwhare by tapping three times on the top of the water. Kaiwhare is thereby alerted to recognising one of his own is entering his domain and consequently requires protection over any related sea endeavour. Whether the experience is swimming, fishing or boating; engaging the support of a deity induces a sensitivity and awareness of safety and the lore/law protocols of the sea or water. Children in particular are required to be mindful of their surroundings and the need to take precautions when moving from the domain of land into the element of water. Kaumātua George testifies happily that during his lifetime, there have been no incidents resulting in deaths of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi members in the water or at sea (Flavell, G., personal communication, September 16, 2012). In this way children are encouraged through tribal lore to develop a relationship with water.

Correspondingly the outcomes from traditional stories such as Kaiwhare can foster children's learning about water safety and ultimately benefit the whole tribal community. Lekoko (2007) explores the power of stories to build cultural capacity expressing:

it is true that where stories are used, they still maintain their social function of (i) transmitting and preserving culture (ii) giving a voice to elders to teach, lead, guide,

advise the young (iii) preserving out indigenous ways of knowing (iv) building strong intergenerational relationships and family lineages (v) conveying ethics, values and wisdom (p. 87).

Best (1934) recognised the power of mythology in social construction of people and expressed that “these brief statements may be allowed to stand in place of lengthy explanations, inasmuch as they cover the problems...hold a close kinship with nature [and] fellowship with every member” (p.58). Gratuitously traditional fables sustain connections of reciprocity between people and place and highlight whanaungatanga (relationship, kinship). People and resources are immortalised and protected through storytelling. Old tales inspire children by encouraging attitudes of victory over adversity and promoting pride in being Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. One such story is embroiled in the name Waiuku which is home for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. As a good story it conveys virtues of optimism, righteousness, healthy competition and the valour of love. In a conscious act not to reveal all Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua stories and to instil a degree of intrigue, this story about a beautiful maiden and two handsome suitors will remain untold in this chapter but waits to enchant you when you visit Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua rohe.

### **Sad stories**

Navigating pathways from stories entrenched in pride and celebration to stories of loss and pain require different sources of iwi fortitude and courage. Collective Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal stories of death and grief from forced separation of tribal members from their land have had far reaching implications on matters of the heart and soul for the Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe. Hence consequences from the pillages of war still remain familiar today though mostly too painful to recall. The connotation of which, however, are tangible still in iwi motivation to re-construct their once strong socio-economic foundation (Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau, 2012; Ngāti Te Ata, 1991; Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011).

Correspondence from Renata Tamakihikurangi (1860) at Pā Whakairo in Hawkes Bay which was written to the superintendent of the colonial army during the time of the Taranaki invasion, sought to negotiate a peaceful outcome between the confederation of Māori chiefs and the crown representatives. In a long and powerful epistle, he offered

to arrange a meeting between Potatau Te Wherowhero (first Māori King) and Governor Grey, in which it was hoped to offset the escalation in war mongering that was prevalent at the time. The plan implicated Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua because the meeting was to occur at Waiuku on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua whenua. Fox (2003) corroborates in an account of an interview with historian James Ritchie, “the messages coming out of Waikato to Auckland, from Grey in particular, were that they [Māori] didn’t want war, they wanted to work with tauiwi in Auckland: It was really the Pākehā rejection of this that led to war” (p. 59). Unfortunately peace offerings were denied by the colonial government of the day, leading to the eventual onset of the land wars in Waikato. The outcome of which was devastating for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua was naturally implicated in the conflict because of their shared whakapapa links in marriage and through their support of Kingitanga (Māori King Movement). They were bound also in close geographical connections so it followed that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua along with a consortium of iwi, jointly defended their lands during the invasion of Grey’s troops in the Waikato on 12 July 1863. As an aftermath of the land wars Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua were labelled ‘rebels’ by the government and ordered land to be confiscated from them as punishment (Flavell, 2011).

Consequently Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua was crippled economically after raupatu (land confiscation). Fox (2003) records the view of James Ritchie who believed the colonial government held an ambition to crush the strong trade wealth that was coming out of the Waikato region, as one of its strongest war motives. According to Fox (2003), “Pākehā trading could not tolerate the kind of trade building up in the Waikato ... the wealth coming out of Port Waikato, Manukau Harbour and Tauranga.” (p. 59).

Since the land wars, history has revealed the innocence of iwi in the Waikato war. Proclamations from Queens Council Judge Justice Paul Temm exonerated Māori iwi and found this to say more than one hundred years later:

There is absolutely no room for doubt today that the Waikato Wars began in a way that reflects nothing but shame upon those responsible for starting them, It is quite clear the Maori people gave no cause to the invaded as they were by British troops who behaved as conquering armies always behave. The pillage, plunder and rape in the Waikato quickly became known elsewhere (Temm, 1990, p. 42).



Apologies, however, do little to alter the realities that post war struggles place on people. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua suffered unimaginable losses to traditional communal ways of life. After their homelands, inheritance and livelihoods were decimated, the deprivation on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua members many of who had been productive market gardeners and farmers previously began to impact on the health and safety of iwi members. An education report produced by Māori on kura kaupapa curriculum strengths for the New Zealand government, *Te Piko o te Māhuri*, describes this fragmentation of life as a “malaise induced by loss of land, power and sovereignty which has been and still is for many, the experience of Māori people” (Te Kawanatanga o Aotearoa, 2010, p. 150).

After the Waikato war, a different feud of political interference began. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua suffered as a collective. Assimilation policies, and systematic political controls applied through legislation, The Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907 being one poignant example, foretold a myriad of damning outcomes for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua education and health (Durie, 1994). Not only did iwi numbers wane from disease, some dispersed to make a new start having lost the will to resist. The mōrehu (survivors) began the journey of redress to seek justice; regardless of suffering under policies that favoured European processes and subjugated traditional ways of knowing and living. Ultimately traditional beliefs and practices were reduced to being known and understood by only a few, most often amongst the ahikā (burning fires of occupation). Regrettably for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, the move away from ancestral lands diminished the collective. Te Kawanatanga o Aotearoa (2010) explains “this fundamental social structure in the urban drift of Māori away from their tribal centres is one of the variables which have contributed to the ‘lost generations’ of Māoridom.” (p. 152).

### **Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua resilience and determination to prioritise education**

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua maintains hope in advocating for cultural innovations to re-balance historical inventories. Historical outcomes deserve to be challenged if “the historical past is not problematized so as to be critically understood, tomorrow becomes simply the perpetuation of today” (Freire, 1998, p.102). Better outcomes for all concerned may eventuate when historical ways of knowing and being are studied and understood (Jones & Jenkins, 2011). So Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi continues to be

creative in finding new ways to re-build its social systems to their former glory; being driven by hope and “denouncing injustice and announcing a new utopia... and beginning the dream of a new society (Freire, 1998, p.74), in a collective stance against the destructive powers of poverty.

O’Malley, Owen, Parkinson, Herangi-Searancke, Tāmaki, & Te Hira (2008) agree that iwi ingenuity is longstanding through “mechanisms... reinvented in ways that made them more appropriate to the altered geopolitical landscape ...absorbed, adopted, adapted and realigned to suit Māori priorities...a response to colonisation in creative, flexible and dynamic ways” (p.70). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal policy statement (1991) seeks “recovery towards the form of self-sufficiency” (p.17) in the hope of benevolence for all members.

Currently Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua is negotiating with the government for settlement on a claim under the Waitangi Tribunal. Time consuming claim preparations impose negative impacts on human resources but are required when undertaking the lengthy processes that government demands. Mitigation for iwi rights under transgressions of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), however, is not a new experience for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. Tribal initiatives to protect water and to ensure that local ecosystems are safe enough to sustain life on the shores of the Manukau Harbour are an ongoing struggle that spans decades (Durie, 1994; Walker, 1990). The Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua quest for waiora (pure uncontaminated water) is steeped in tribal commitment to guarding and protecting the environment:

Waiora is the water of life, the purest form of freshwater that gives and sustains life and can rejuvenate damaged mauri...It is a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua right to be able to drink clean water at any of our mare throughout Tamaki Makaurau (Flavell, 2011, p.15).

Kaitiakitanga defines the role Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua hold under mana whenua (Flavell, 2011; Ngāti Te Ata, 1991). The deep resilience of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua is derived in commitment to maintain and increase mana whenuatanga within their area. Stamina comes from a belief that sustained pursuits in these areas will lead to greater munificence for tribal members (Flavell, 2011). All objectives align with nurturing the educational potential of citizenship in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua children. These goals

desire the enjoyment of a good life, with a high standard of living; including citizenship with rights to live as Māori (Durie, 2003).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua children raised within their community learn traditions for living well. Jenkins & Harte (2011) verify the robust nature of raising children in tūpuna traditions when in all communal lifestyle allowed children to be a collective responsibility. Traditional tribal caregiving encouraged a more fluid transition from early childhood through to full participation into adult membership than is currently observed in contemporary nuclear family style parenting. Joint responsibility in raising children is desirable and also corresponds with ancient wisdoms regarding the care and social education of young children (Pere, 1994). Returning to traditional child care raises challenges for whānau amidst contemporary urban living demands. Tribal child rearing ignites progressive approaches to parenting collectives; available to our predecessors living in close proximity but not so easily accessible today.

Beliefs in the value of sharing responsibility for children removed the burden placed on individual caregivers and openly embraced extended family and others as positive influences in the socialisation of young children. A place where Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua whānau and children can gather to meet, naturally translates to social health and welfare. “Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has its rangatahi and mokopuna [foremost in our aspirations...and have initiated and will continue to initiate numerous programmes...for example health and fitness facilities and the activities of Ngā Tohu Kaitiaki Charitable Trust [tribal trust for ecological protection]” (Te Iwi Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, 2011, p. 22).

### **Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua prioritises education**

Historically, language and tribal knowledge was integrated into a young child's learning during the processes of living. Whānau were responsible for procreation and the nurturing of children which happened in and around whānau life as a collective (Walker, 1990; Pere, 1994; Hemara, 2000; Jenkins & Harte, 2011). Accordingly, “protection, along with nurturing, the teaching and the training was the responsibility of the whole family not just the parents” (Reedy, 1995, p. 25). Looking for ways to support families to raise tamariki to know Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua customs and practices resulted in hosting an early education and care centre service on the marae.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū asserts that their puna reo (shortened name for Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū early childhood immersion language centre) filled a void in their rohe. Previously, whānau had not had a choice in their children being able to experience te reo me ngā tikanga tuku iho (language, traditional customs and ways of conduct handed down from previous generations) because none of the registered early childhood education facilities in the district were able to provide Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal content in their curricula. The principle of inter-generational transmission supports future sustainability of Māori language (Bird et al., 2011).

A notable challenge for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal leaders, along with other iwi, has been to arrest the decline in the number of fluent speakers of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialectal language. A myriad of research identifies language as key instrument in conveying iwi culture (Bird et al., 2011; Ka'ai, 2012; Ka'ai-Oldman, 1988; Mahuta, 2011; Penetito, 2010; O'Regan, 2012; Stephens & Milligan, 2009; Walker, 1990). Investigations into successful strategies which can increase Māori language testify to the connection between language survival and home usage. Reports affirm "the establishment of te reo Māori language in homes" (Bird et al., 2011, p. 5) as a necessity for future efforts to sustain language. Opportunity for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal dialect to flourish was ignited through the iwi establishment of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo on the marae.

### **History of Te Kāhui it nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo**

The established papa kāinga at Tāhuna Marae was a natural place to facilitate an iwi early childhood education and care community service. The historical significance in the site, including whakapapa inspired the possibility for its creation. Rangatira (leaders) were conscious of a portion of whenua (land) on the marae which had always been set aside for the purpose of gathering together young children and whānau. Denoted in the name of the service is the tribal history that links the location of the building to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū ancestral history and strengthens family involvement in children's learning. Mothers and children are defined as central.

Initially in two thousand and one, a play group was established where mothers and families could socialise at the marae. This playgroup became the foundation of Ngāti

Te Ata Waiohū early childhood care and education and operated from a hall on the marae. During the days of formation it was a time when the group came under the auspices of Te Kōhanga Reo (Māori immersion early childhood education) movement. Whilst there is a deep respect for what Te Kōhanga Reo has achieved nationwide and acknowledgement for the support Te Kōhanga Reo gave Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū, it was decided that iwi should lead their preschool education (Simperingham L., personal communication, March 9, 2012).

The play group was well patronised by whānau and the benefits and needs of whānau began to shape a desire for a more permanent home from which to operate. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū playgroup flourished from its humble beginnings of play provision for children and mothers to iwi plans for a permanent purpose-built building for an early childhood education and care centre. Tāhuna marae became the preferred location for gathering together families and the youngest iwi members (Simperingham L., personal communication, March 9, 2012). It took six years of careful planning, negotiating and fundraising to build the early childhood service at the marae. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū is committed to a quality service. May (2009) notes the success of small groups of whānau in rural areas who form playgroups in environments that find familiar fit for their needs.

Families with young children flagged an interest to have a permanent home on the marae. In the preliminary gatherings it was acknowledged that both parents and children would benefit from permanent investment in early childhood education and care. An important part of the design was for the adults to experience whanaungatanga. Opportunities for children to play in a safe environment were of interest to those planning the spaces inside and out also. As a result the establishment of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū eventuated; officially opening in 2008.

### **Cultural transmission**

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū holds kaumātua in high esteem with expectations that value opportunities to share lifelong experiences with other iwi members including the young (Tinirau, 2010). Intergenerational transfer of knowledge is appreciated and encouraged. Elder Aunty Pani Flavell at the age of one hundred is supported whenever possible to disseminate her wealth of experience of tribal history to others. In a recent documentary

she led out with descriptive accounts of life when she was young in the Waiuku district (Māori Television 2012). Ministry of Education (2012) agree that “intergenerational initiatives build on the positive resources that young and old have to offer while promoting understanding...” (p. 3).

The transmission of Māori tribal and cultural knowledge in the care of young children is an aged practice. The value posited in tribal knowledge in education by iwi is of high interest to educationalist researching education as an inclusive public good (Anaru, 2011; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Cooper, Arago-Kemp, Wylie, & Hodgen, 2004; Durie, 1994, 2005, 2008; Irwin, 1990; Ka'ai 2004; Nepe, 1991; O'Sullivan, 2001; Penetito, 2010; Pihama, 2001; Pōtaka, 2004; Rangihau, 2001; Smith, 1999; Tamahere & Husband, 2009; Walker 2001). Positive outcomes with particular emphasis on improved social consequences are noted in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal documents (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū prioritises the care and protection of whānau through rangatiratanga (actions of self-determination) particularly in the field of cultural development. Maintaining traditional knowledges in a contemporary world has been spearheaded as crucial to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal development and sustainability. Hence Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū recognises early childhood as playing a symbiotic role in transferring tribal language and knowledge to young children. Understanding “the development of a cultural identity depends on access to key cultural institutions and resources such as land, whānau, language and marae... motivated Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū to “assert a positive cultural identity in a contemporary world” (Durie, 2008, p. 58- 59).

Close links are apparent between positive health outcomes from adulthood to childhood and a strong sense of belonging and identity (McNeill, Paterson, Sundborn, De Souza, Weblemoe, McKinney & Smith, 2010). Similarly, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū proclaims early childhood education enacts positive educational and health outcomes for children. The links that exist between iwi goals for positive development and the delivery of education is demonstrated at the marae. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal stratagem is an organic step toward enriching social, spiritual, and economic objectives; firstly by envisioning and secondly through providing iwi social structures such as early

childhood education and care centre. The move to develop Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo embodies Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua long-term tribal vision to give whānau and tamariki the hope of better health and education.

### **Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua leadership in the world**

Lifelong learning is supported in word and deed. Nganeko Minhinnick, rangatira and visionary leader, passionate in seeking justice was visionary and cared enough to share iwi experiences on a world stage. The courage to address an international forum and to learn new protocols in presenting iwi transgressions to a United Nations forum as an iwi representative reflected integrity and once again was derived from a pursuit of righteousness for the collective as opposed to individual gain. Her contributions went toward the formation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; of interest to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua is investment in clauses stating the rights of tribes to retain their integrity as distinct peoples. However, “the situation faced by Nganeko Minhinnick in 1981 when appearing before regional water boards and the Planning Tribunal was very different indeed” (Williams, 2002, p. 294).

The acquisition of confidence and skills to take iwi issues to a global gathering is often found through necessity; learning on the job, so to speak is sometimes how a pathway is configured. (Minhinnick, N., personal communication, July 22, 2012). To this extent, she is self-effacing in her leadership that is characterised by humility and patience: Research identifies “modesty was seen as being more important for outstanding Maori leaders” (Pfeifer, 2006, p.36). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua values in leadership, similarly, reflect a collective spirit and resent judgements and sentiments of the whole community. While these may be in juxtaposition for promulgating tribal issues to a multinational audience, tribal cultural beliefs and traditions remain steadfast in demonstrating the calibre of headship that illustrates chiefly leadership.

Tributes from many tribes are paid to the ground-breaking work of Nganeko Minhinnick in asserting Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal rights with public recognition culminating in her investiture as Dame on the New Zealand Honours List in 2013. Walker (1990) titles her a “potent Māori leader on the national scene in negotiating social transformation” (p.250). Her work primarily driven by seeking justice for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua summoned the power holders in private enterprise; regional councils,

government bodies and law makers to reconsider the implications of their decision making in the care of the water tributaries of Manukau Harbour and Waikato River (Tanks, 2002; Williams, 2002).

Critical matters of mana whenua and kaitiakitanga were the projectiles that generated decisions to take legal redress or put plainly to ‘fight for rights’ to live as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. On behalf of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, she battled to have the spiritual value of clean water recognised by local and state government in law; heralding her as ‘ahead of her time’. The litigation appeal brought to Waitangi settlement in 1981 serves to emphasise the serious relationship with and responsibility to the protection and support of “ecosystems and the biodiversity” in the Manukau harbour. The Wai 8 claim still remains the oldest unsettled Treaty Claim (Flavell, 2011, Ngāti Te Ata, 1991; Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau, 2012).

Working as an activist in water management for over thirty years ago, verifies that Nganeko on behalf of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has acted as a frontrunner in the current geopolitical debate on water. Government decisions to renege on co-ownership and co-management with Māori tribes, have met with outcry amongst a consortium of iwi who find customary rights to water and energy violated via the sales of public assets (Levy, 2012). This coincides with the urban debate on water regarding the steep charges for water services to those living in the greater Auckland region. Auckland City Council’s increases in the water rates are expected to boost local government coffers for water reticulation maintenance rather than seeing water provision as a public good. A move refuted by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua who along with all iwi who view access to water as a free human right; elementary to life and living.

Leadership is also visible in the work of many kaumātua who work tirelessly in their roles as kaitiaki. George Flavell plays a crucial role as a leader within Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. His interest in the health of the natural environment, particularly the sea, fish, sea animals and the coastline have found him nominated by tribal authority to work alongside local government authorities. In his role as kaitiaki, he tested the quality of water in the area each week for ten years for Auckland District Health Board by collecting samples by boat which were then sent to the Hawthorne Institute in Nelson for scientific testing.



### **Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua role as kaitiakitanga**

As the nominated kaumātua in environmental issues, George Flavell is the point of contact for national organisations that wish to undertake scientific research in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal territory. Over the years associations have been built between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua and various groups including marine biologists, Department of Conservation (DOC) and archaeologists. This allowed for projects such as examining the population of shellfish and testing for toxic effluent in the Manukau Harbour. Although this work has come to an end now because helicopters are used to extract samples from the water now, his personal commitment and responsibility to the health and safety of the environment as kaitiaki continues.

A love of marine life is evident in his tribal knowledge and response to the plight of the Maui dolphin: Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua coastline constitutes the stretch of playground for the Maui dolphin which extends from Taranaki to Kaipara. Tribal interests coupled with his own knowledge of the sea have implicated him as rescue crew in protecting the safety of these endangered mammals. Less fortunate experiences have placed him in a consultative role as the nominated tribal expert in tikanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua (values beliefs and customary practices of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua) in the disposal of dolphin or whale that have been found dead on the shore.

The relationship between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi and the environmental world is conceived as an integrated genealogical whole through primeval traditions that connect Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father) to all things animate and inanimate (Mc Neill et al., 2010; Marsden, 2003; Sims & Thompson-Fawcett, 2002; Walker, 1990). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua holistic perspectives acknowledge the interdependency of physical world and human life. The practice of guardianship exemplifies the high regard Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has with land, flora, fauna and sea life in their rohe:

Māori have an enduring responsibility to maintain relationships between humans, their ancestors, the spirit world and the natural environment. This is term kaitiakitanga. Such responsibilities mirror those of rangatiratanga (sovereignty) over territory and people. Both are central to Māori identity at the local and most basic level. These concepts evolved at a time when Māori had physical control of land and resources (Allen, 2002, p. 343).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua kaitiaki works to identify and map historical Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal land marks and holdings in their role of environmental protectors. A task that requires walking for hundreds of kilometres over the whenua (land) in order to view first-hand particular sites of importance to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua living out tribal principles:

It is essential that we, the guardians, have spiritual and cultural command over our traditional lands, waters and resources reaffirm mana whenua (tribal control and ownership over tribal lands and possessions) as communal sources of responsibility, pride and focus engagement for iwi members (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011, p.iii).

Another responsibility is to build careful partnerships of care in order to preserve these sites as future reference for iwi. Often this involves approaching landowners whose private ownership titles gives them the right of refusal into these historic iwi sites but he also has to negotiate partnerships in preservation with local council corporate bodies (Flavell, G., personal communication, February 6, 2012). Not impeded by this onerous task, George Flavell systematically maps and measures areas of land that are significant sites of dense population historically for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi. His photographic evidence of these and other places now form the verification documents of original ownership and land tenancy; becoming a part of the evidence based register to substantiate claims awaiting hearing in Waitangi Tribunal.

One such sacred site, Puketapu, previously discussed in this chapter, is recited in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua mihi; Ko Puketapu tōku maunga (My mountain is Puketapu). Kaumātua George recalls the time when his hīkoi (walk) to the site found him standing on the hallowed ground of Puketapu. He experienced a sense of reverence recalling how Tohunga interceded for the well-being of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua through karakia. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua was dependent upon tohunga abilities to achieve tribal protection in the esoteric world as a prerequisite for optimal and peaceful outcomes in the physical realm (Marsden, 2003).

### **Iwi going forward through their youth**

Children's day celebration which traditionally happens at Tāhuna Marae, Waiuku each Waitangi Day indicates the powerful regard te iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has for their young. This devotion is observed in the presentation of awards and the organisation of games and activities. The existence of the annual children's day ritual shines in the reflection of the estuary above the site of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Interest in promoting learning around cultural mores and knowledge associated with positive tribal affiliations supports how socio-cultural influences can be harnessed favourably, through iwi curriculum in early childhood education. Increasingly early childhood education policy and ministerial documentation, highlights the influence of culture, customs and language as contextual factors in laying successful foundations which contribute to young children's success as life-long learners.

Royal (2005) draws attention to Māori creative potential as a national asset stating that "whilst Māori naturally wish to contribute to their own communities, the creative potential of Māori people to contribute to Māori development is but a subset of what is possible when creative Māori individuals and communities really get cracking" (p.67). In harnessing this creativity Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua has unleashed positive connotations found in offering an iwi early childhood education service. Relationships based on a conglomeration of traditions, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language and traditions are potential transmitters for enabling children to be socialised successfully within an iwi. Socialisation in this context requires "appropriate language the entire interaction is based on the customs, values and traditions... the philosophical body of knowledge which bonds us to our ancestors, the land, the universe..." (Royal-Tangaere, 1996, p. 115).

The challenge is to become a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood centre which delivers quality care and education for its young children at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. This demands courageous leadership, fortitude and a deep philosophical commitment to traditional knowledges and whakapapa (Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua Authority, 2011). A strong belief that tribal knowledge can act as agency in the education of young children is deliberate and emanates from iwi policy statements that document Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal vision within their rohe. Three tribal principles underline a premise to deliver quality of life for all members. These are based on

concepts of rangatiratanga (self-determination), mana whenuatanga and kaitiakitanga (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p. 9-10).

## **Conclusion**

Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo at Tāhuna Marae in Waiuku represents tribal aspirations. The customary practices and beliefs of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua are a source of knowledge. Early childhood education can become conduit learning and teaching Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges. Tribal knowing offers young children resilience as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi members in Aotearoa New Zealand and the world. Understanding Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua through a socio-historical lens is pivotal to appreciating the landscape of this case study. This chapter located Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua epistemology in the creation of a unique tribal response to early childhood education and outlined educational potential to be found in distinctive iwi knowings and how these can be perceived as possibilities distinguishing Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua creative curriculum leadership in early childhood education and care.

The following excerpt from Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal education statements contextualises this thesis study and forms an appropriate completion to the chapter on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi summarising the tribal aspirations of a people whose plans for education are:

To establish a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua Education Council which will monitor learning opportunities available in the rohe, initiate new activities and manage the development of the Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua Education Plan; To ensure the provision of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua and other Māori in the rohe of high quality Māori immersion/bilingual education for all age groups; To provide education for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua people based on kaitiakitanga and other values central to Ngā tikanga o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011, p. 30).

## **Chapter Three: Literature review**

### **Introduction**

This literature review aims to establish the significance of a study on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledge and early childhood education. Literature on the educational possibilities of tribal knowing is examined. The selection arranges research material citing the potential in tribal epistemology and pedagogy in early childhood education and care. Literary evidence is drawn from a cross-section of authorities in the field of Māori education. The review begins with an exploration of the transformative potential of tribal knowledge. Local and global education tensions are considered. The latter section of the review probes the links between this study and existing bodies of knowledge; highlighting tribal education initiatives as curriculum possibilities. Finally the review proposes how this project is able to make a useful contribution.

### **Why advocate for tribal knowledge in education?**

Debate and discussion surrounding the place of Māori knowledge in education today is depicted in the critique of Cooper (2012) who argues that “Māori are regarded as producers of culture rather than producers of knowledge” (p.64). His commentary contends that the cultural definitions of knowledge undermine the agency of Māori knowledge to decolonise and transform current educational contexts. Pressures to measure learning outcomes in the calculation of returns for public financial investment quantify knowledge and justify the dominant definitions about what counts as knowledge. Snook, O’Neill, Birks, Church & Rawlins (2013) defy Treasury’s policy advice for education being based on a “relatively simple economic model of the effects of investing in human capital” (p. 9).

Smith (2012) exposes the on-going unequal power relations that exist in education. He stresses a continuation of struggle in countering the challenges for te kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori and wānanga: reiterating these as sites for transformative education. O’Malley et al. (2008) voice support for teachers to be “encouraged to challenge external influences and to confirm the centralization of indigenous knowings” (p.226) as sound facets in the foundations of curriculum design and frameworks. Stewart (2012) also considers Māori knowledge and language in science to have a powerful role, acting

“as modifier or corrector of universalism” by providing a critical yet mediatory voice in education (p.56).

Tribal knowledge defies straightforward definition because tribal knowledge involves plurality existing in complex sets of relationships which reflect multiple groups of people. Bodies of tribal information are associated through whakapapa with a specific group of people; who form connections to specific places and who hold specific values, beliefs, practices and aspirations from ngā taonga tuku iho (valuable knowledges handed down through generations). In discussing meanings of Māori knowledge, Royal (2012) explains its fluid nature being both voluminous and composite, then culminates his description as “a body or continuum of knowledge” (p.33). Tribal knowledge, similarly, is evolving and changing over time as it is lived and continues to live on a contemporary context (Durie, 2012). While tribal knowledge may appear as common belief, practice and experiences, not all knowledge is generalisable across all tribal groups.

Edwards (2013a) construes the notion of ‘(k)new’ to link Maori knowledge already known with a potentiality to synthesise ‘new’ knowledge. The hope is to open up and release thinking around Māori knowledge and knowledges as capacity builders in the evolution of education over place, space and time:

(k)new space in which contemporary dialogue, interpretations and applications are being applied in varying forms, including but not limited to text, orality and visual, as Māori practitioners explore, comment and operate within it. The appeal is multifaceted and often differentially unique to individuals and groups in different contexts. For many it represents a space un-accommodated, un-commodified and uncontaminated by ‘others’ views and interpretations; a space where there is room, a freedom to offer (k)new interpretations of what tangata whenua realities were, are and could or should be (Edwards, 2013a, p.48).

The call by New Zealand Teachers Council (2007) highlights the necessity for teachers to understand specific iwi knowledges and languages. The graduating teacher standards direct teachers to use “ngā tikanga-ā-iwi (tribal specific language, values and practices) appropriately in their practice” (p.1) and expect teachers to be proficient in their ability to speak te reo Māori also. These decrees create incentive for research to focus on

specific tribal knowledge in order to grow a body of body of knowledge that can support teacher trainee expertise in the education community.

### **Justification for tribal knowledges in curriculum**

Interest in tribal knowledge creates a shift in emphasis from a generic worldview of Māori knowledge toward learning about different tribal specific language, values and practices. Understanding how tribal knowledges pertain to specific tribal groups in specific places in Aotearoa New Zealand enriches teaching and learning encounters because teachers can value the diversity and richness of the many tribal affiliations represented in their learners. The expectations for teachers to understand tribal theory and language requires professionals “to include the history of local hapū and iwi in their serviced programme” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p.48) and encompass these knowledges in curriculum knowledge taught in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Endorsement that tribal knowledges are certified as valid, complex and intricate systems of knowing and demand inclusion in education is illustrated by Penetito (2010). He distinguishes tribal knowledge; advising these be sought directly from tribal authorities who have expertise in tikanga-a-iwi (tribal specific practices and protocols). Tinirau (2010) differentiates by suggesting that “specific tribal knowledge is not considered to be freely accessible to those outside the hapū or iwi” (p. 296). Accordingly, teachers in early childhood education are advised to “establish dialogue ... recognise ... local whānau, hapū and iwi” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p.52) and approach iwi groups to seek mentorship in order to learn tribal knowledge and practice because “the family, the sub-tribe, the tribe and communities they live in must be woven into the early childhood curriculum to assist and support the learning and development of the child” (Ministry of Education, 2008, p.35).

Rangihau (2001) highlights the benefits of celebrating the diversity amongst tribes as opposed to iwi (tribes) “losing their own tribal histories and traditions that gives them their identity” (p.190). Findsen & Tamarua (2007) warn against presenting pan-tribal blanket statements about cultural knowledges saying some ideas “used to describe Māori teaching/learning practices are not homogenous to all Māori but are traditional concepts that are practical and can be applied in multiple and varied ways” (p. 82).

Grey (1853) noted how dialectal anomalies among differing tribal groups made meanings assigned to waiata challenging to understand.

Although Vercoe (1998) critiques iwi factional thinking in undermining one cohesive political Māori voice, he concludes that obligatory recognition for the importance of the multiple expressions within each tribe is not well understood outside te ao Māori. Henry (1999) analyses the nature of knowledge in being able “to reflect both intellectual and political struggles” (p.17). While knowledge shifts over time as it reacts to, interacts with and acts on external influences, Mead (2005) cautions that Māori must be “the first and primary beneficiaries of Māori knowledge and culture” (p.127).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal aspirations promote education for young children as a way to realise positive social, cultural and economic outcomes for their tribal members in their community (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991). Quality practices in early childhood education plan “liaison with local tangata whenua and respect for Papatūānuku” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p.54). The socio-cultural theory underpinning early childhood curriculum recognises “the use of te reo Māori” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 64) in the education of young children and encourages pedagogical practices to support the use of te reo Māori (Māori language).

Research originating from Te Kōhanga Reo (Māori immersion language nests) substantiates the transformative nature of Māori knowledge and te reo Māori learning for children and families. In particular the Te Kōhanga Reo Movement is commended for providing impetus in the preservation of Māori language (Anaru, 2011; Benton, 1993; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Hohepa, Smith & McNaughton, 1992; Irwin, 1990; Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994; Ka'ai, 2004; O'Sullivan, 2001; Pihama 1990; Reedy, 1993, 1995; Royal-Tangaere, 1997a, 1997b; Stephens & Milligan, 2009; Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, 2010; Walker, 1990; Wetere-Bryant, 2000; Winiata, 2010a). The national movement continues to demonstrate the potential agency Māori knowledge and language hold in the education of young children.

### **Tribal education as a trusted tradition**

In ancient times, the transmission of tribal knowledges was far from being an ad hoc event; education presented a highly selective set of knowledges, accompanied by



methodical measures as to how knowledge was imparted and importantly to whom it was to be taught. Responsibility for self and others were sanctions for learning where harmonious interplay between humankind and their surroundings were intrinsic to a good life (Marsden, 2003). Relationships between life and living informed knowledge and practices as espoused in Hemara's (2000) research of historical tribal education philosophies, where it is reported that specific tasks and activities were chosen deliberately for the value they added to the collective. Children were socialised into tribes by learning knowledge, skills and attitudes required to prepare them take part in tribal community life.

Pohatu (2002b) explained pedagogy applied to his mother learning moteatea (selection of tribal chants) as a child alongside her elders. He records his mother's voice; "everywhere and anytime was the right time to learn your cultural imprints, learning with the old people saw that if the time was right to feed the person, so it would be fed" (p.4). Dedicated places for educational engagement developed out of elemental knowledge required by life at the time (Best, 1934; Mead, 2003; Marsden, 2003). Subsequently educational institutions favoured by iwi have evolved from understanding traditional purposes of education; the creation Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (A Māori niversity) being evidence of this today.

Jenkins & Harte (2011) confirm high regard tribes had for their children. They report that traditional child rearing values and beliefs are embedded in sophisticated protocols which often involved high-ranking men caring for their young sons for prolonged periods. Marsden (2003) confirms that traditions in education from a past era operated highly cognizant systems where desirable expertise and skillfulness was reflective of intrinsic relationships existing between humankind and the environment. Emanating from this connectedness and harmonious interplay between people and the environment, came understanding, reverence, respect and a belief of care extended to children as taonga.

Although some environmental scientists encourage society's over reliance on science believing that science 'discoveries' are key to supporting life on planet earth: Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua along with all iwi and indigenous people understand life's holistic connections amongst all living things in tribal knowledges that link life in both animate

and inanimate. “The environment itself is inherently global, with life-sustaining ecosystems frequently crossing national boundaries” (Cragg, 2010, p.102). This is old news to indigenous cultures who have sought to live in harmony with the world since creation (Allen, 2002; Coombes, 2005; Gratini & Butler, 2010; Irwin & Ruru, 2002; Kaiaka Blair-Stahn, 2010; Marsden, 2003; Mihinui, 2002; Mutu, 2002; Obah, 2010; Ritchie, Duhn, Rau & Craw, 2010; Roberts, 2002; Sims & Thompson-Fawcett, 2002; Williams, 2002).

Tribal responses to environmental violations in Aotearoa New Zealand are visible in the recent environmental threat of oil spill in Tauranga Moana; potential danger to food sources for Te Whanau-a-Apanui by oil exploration; the alienation of water rights from iwi (tribes) and the pollution of water ways from the intensification of infill housing and fracking; all of which command local responses from iwi. Marsden (2003) implores local effort “to ensure that resource management meets the needs of people today without compromising the heritage of future generations as to their needs” (p. 25). A consortium of Māori tribes has objected to environmental denigration and lead negotiations with government and local bodies concerning ecological issues.

### **Tribal freedom in education**

Considering the notion of tribal education as a strategic intervention in a contemporary world is a reminder of the power enacted when tribal knowledges and languages are deliberately located in education; resulting in agency for tribal knowledge. It is argued that Māori determination across a range of fields including education not only commits to continuance of *tuku iho* (handed down) but also proves cultural knowing is a form of freedom. Tribal initiatives in domains such as communications, religion, politics, and economics maximise opportunities to live as Māori (Durie, 1994, 2008). The survival of Māori as tribal people with distinct worldviews is evidence of the viable nature of tribal enterprise (Winiata, 2010b).

Education philosopher, Freire (1998) advocated for a liberating education made possible when learning is conducted in one’s own language/s using words to name ideas familiar in one’s dialectal world. Freire espoused that when the language used is understood by the people it can become a “specifically human act of intervening in the world” (p.44). Likewise, tribal early childhood education acts as liberator; an agency as a source of

freedom and hope. The care of tamariki involves not only feeding and clothing them in a physical sense, but empowering them with tribal language, cultural, and spiritual knowledge so their inheritance and ultimate freedom to live as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua citizens in the world can be sanctioned and realised (Durie, 2012).

Freire (1984, 1998) explored how education for freedom challenged all teachers and learners to choose values, beliefs and rules of emancipatory conduct and urged learners and teachers to disrupt negative education outcomes. In view of that, Freire (1998) termed ‘conscientization’ as praxis in raising consciousness through education. Smith (2012) deduced this theory a decolonisation tool for addressing socially oppressive, hegemonic theories that can hold citizens in a state of paralysis. A theory to evoke the consciousness in learners, by making transparent historical, ethical, social and political influences in learner lives, empowers them to change their experiences and perceptions of oppression. Conscientization recognises the potential for this to happen when education pathways are made accessible in languages relevant to the learners.

In this sense, tribal education has potential to disrupt statistics that record under achievement at school and poor health targets (Durie, 2008). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal early childhood education mission statement aims to transform consciousness by providing “opportunities for parents and whānau to strengthen their parenting role, identity, undertake training, gain higher qualifications, employment and further development within Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata and the wider community” (Te Kāhui Iti Nei O Te Kōpū, 2008, p.2). Therefore tribes whose dream it is for their children to become citizens in a community where they can live well, enjoy the freedom of full participation in a good life, free from poverty, inadequate housing and health are proactive contributors to interrupting negative effects (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991; Flavell, 2011).

Early childhood education can support iwi capacity to achieve tribal aspirations. Tribal joy and passion encourages children to dream about new realities instead of reliving social injustice. In this way youth can become deliberators in freedom thinking [fighting]; themselves becoming the very source of freedom. Freedom to engage in education that brings dignity, is empowering and delivers a curriculum of hope. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi early childhood education initiates hope in a curriculum for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua whānau and young children. A vision of hope grounded in tribal

knowledge offers the propensity to propel tribal development (Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū Iwi Authority, 2011).

### **The national early childhood curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Increasingly education, particularly early childhood education, is aware of the influence of culture, customs and language in contributing to young children's success as life-long learners. Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood education curriculum (Te Whāriki) became the first bi-lingual education curriculum document in Aotearoa New Zealand; containing a section written in Te Reo Māori under the direction of Tamati and Tilly Reedy (Ministry of Education, 1996; Reedy, 1993, 1995). Although Te Whāriki is an open curriculum framework, it is nonetheless advantageous to understand te reo Māori because te reo Māori contributes sources of philosophical and conceptual meanings.

Bicultural ideas of education have emerged from Te Whāriki and invite research and critique (Heta-Lensen, 2005; Jenkin, 2010; Ritchie & Rau, 2006). In Duhn's (2007) critique of Te Whāriki the emergence of a bicultural child was problematised. It is argued that a child of "manageable sameness" in a smooth mix of two cultures with one national identity (p. 88) comes at the expense of and appreciation of difference and Māori diversity. Calls to interrupt this practice by spending more time in exploring the potential of "engagement with difference" (Duhn, 2007, p. 82) is also subscribed by Toumi (2004) who thinks that children can learn about humanity by being introduced ideas of world citizenship and the power found in diversity. Believing 'diversity ideology' can enhance human existence, she cites examples throughout history when fear of difference has created disasters because diversity has been mistaken for deviance. In spite of the risk of diversity-deficiencies; Te Whāriki, in principle, values Māori tribal knowledges because its genesis was named concepts emerging from Te Kōhanga Reo and Te Ao Māori (Taniwha, 2010).

Te Whāriki provides a philosophy that highlights the interconnectedness of family, culture language and place in children's learning. A socio-cultural theoretical framework alerts educationists to the dynamic between learners and their social and physical environs. Ministry of Education (1996, 1998, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2011) acknowledges the co-influences and interconnectivity between a child's learning and

lived realities. Social stimulus learned in a child's home, street, town and country of birth are regarded as meaningful learning influences, which link in selected ways to become powerful dynamics in development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Kēpa & Manu'atu (2008) confirm that curriculum is not neutral but is relationally influenced by multiple factors such as mono-culturalism.

Human development philosophy as espoused in Royal-Tangaere (1996) conveys sociocultural children's learning accelerates when supportive and cooperative dialogues with more knowledgeable members occur. Iwi awareness of this educational praxis highlighted the connectedness between learners and their social environs (Drewery & Bird, 2009). The Māori concept of tuakana-teina (an older more capable sibling teaching a younger and less able sibling) is demonstrated in the organisation of tribal education where learning concepts and skills is viewed as a collective endeavour which crosses ability and age groupings (Findsen & Tamarua, 2007; Hemara, 2000; Jenkins & Harte, 2011; Keelan, 2009; Macfarlane, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2011).

### **Iwi knowledges as curriculum**

Learning from others is prized by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū. Therefore, value is attributed to how other iwi embrace early childhood education is encouraged. Ngātiwai iwi in Northland is engaging creative, collective ways of working through early childhood education to procure positive outcome for their community. "A belief of Ngātiwai people is that education is not just for young, but for all whānau" (Bleasdale, 2012a, p. 8) provides the impetus to reach out to the broader community via the early childhood service. Ngātiwai provides leadership through networking; one example being an education booklet inviting members to education opportunities in the rohe (area) is distributed at the early childhood centre. Ultimately Ngātiwai early childhood education community benefits from whānau engaging in tribal education initiatives.

Penetito (2010) presents a complex spectrum of Māori tribal knowledge; which he terms 'particularistic' because it describes specificity in knowledge which is local and chosen to meet the needs of the community which it serves. 'Particular' knowledge is vested in a specific tribal region. Consultation and collaboration can occur in hui (meeting) or amongst rangatira, kaumātua or across a wider group before some information reaches a public forum. "Not all local knowledge is appropriate in

institutionalised settings; nor would these local sources want their knowledge to be made available publicly... Local whānau/hapū/iwi must decide what should be and how it should be made accessible” (Penetito 2010, p. 239).

However, factors of homogenisation have acted detrimentally against iwi (tribes) who value maintaining their unique character and instead purport to a public belief that Māori people are the all the same along with everybody else in Aotearoa New Zealand. Some responses from government, local bodies and associated institutions have worked to simplify and reduce iwi knowledges to ‘one in the same’ for convenience. For example, public planning proposals qualify universal approaches in both law and consultation so that systems may be more easily managed (Mutu, 2002; Rangihau, 1992; Roberts, 2002; Williams, 2002).

Aroha Durie (1997) critiques the way the term Māori is used “as a homogenising term for all tribal groups and thereby distinguishing characteristics of each” (p.142). In the past, European empirical approaches to research on Māori people were determined by a zest to classify Māori knowledge using scientific categories to uniform. Marsden (2003) warned against Māori knowledge being objectified in this way so as to simplify it and make it easily understood by an audience. Overviews that present a collective Māori view as tangata whenua (indigenous people) of Aotearoa diminish the significance and intrigue that contributes to iwi ideology (Adams & Hopa, 2005; Ahuriri-Driscoll, 2005; Durie, 1997; Durie, 1994, 2008; McNeill et al., 2010; Penetito, 2010; Pere, 1994; Rangihau, 2001; Walker, 1990, 2001).

Tribal ideals are distinguished and visible in Rotorua at Te Puna Akoranga i Ngāti Whakaue, an early childhood centre where tribal knowledge is implicated in curricula for children. Teaching and learning local geography has proven a valuable source of knowledge for the youngsters. Children and teachers have been involved in discovering and naming familiar landmarks while tribal stories have prompted children to research historical heroes and events in the early childhood education curriculum (Bleasdale, 2012b).

### **Forces at work in education: global and local**

Achievement driven education based on econometrics prefers certain knowledge which does not favour mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). The role of education to maximise the human potential of every individual as prospective earners for the state's economic wealth undoubtedly results in some knowledges having priority over another. New Zealand Government interest in comparative studies for educational achievement amongst OECD countries caused Snooks et al. (2013) to warn of risks in changing curriculum and education policy based on international information. Their critique sites obvious mismatches between local education contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand and foreign statistics. The hoax that international education alone offers superior systems to improve local educational outcomes is debatable and does not consider the applicability or validation of tribal knowledge as a potential learning agent in education of young children.

Some educationalists feel pressure to meet global markers in preparing children to become citizens of the world by compromising access to local knowledge. The notion that education must merge a worldview that emulates universal values, aspirations and beliefs is mirrored in the advances in communication technologies and easement in world travel. The following definition of globalisation highlights some indicators that underlie educational trends and subsequent influences on new perceptions of place and space:

Globalisation is an intensification of interconnections between societies, institutions, cultures, and individuals on a worldwide basis. Globalisation implies a shift in geography whereby borders have become increasingly porous. Amongst other things, the process of globalisation depicts a compression of time and space, shrinking distances through a dramatic reduction in the time taken to cross them (Patman 2005, p.5).

The effects of globalisation in education are often represented as an organic advancement with its own life-force, unable to be influenced because it is born out of natural evolutionary processes of rapid telecommunications. But Bourdieu (1998) argues against globalisation as inevitability and poses it as a powerful discourse held by a dominant minority to extend power in authorising international policies and law: substantiated by claims that losses in welfare occur when state governments respond to global trends set by the free market. Global influences are decreed as “unfettered

capitalism” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 35) requiring policy makers to balance the impact of profiteering with the social costs of human misery created through poverty in job losses. Perceptions of how outcomes of grandiose can translate to a deterioration of living standards for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua requires the tribe to assess their engagement with Economic global realities effects iwi development. Jesson (2010) outlines some negative outcomes for Waiohua when local government reneged on their support of operation costs for museums. Local council prioritised private enterprise over collective ownership of museums as a public good. Correspondingly iwi knowledge and freedoms were subjugated in a move to strategise economic outcomes over social benefits.

First world cultures (including Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi) have undergone massive transformation since the expansion of capitalism and domination in a globalised world (Hee, 2010; Raj, 2010; Tella, 2010) Indigenous cultures have been subordinated in a battle for voice on a local stage even though they have had their manifestos recognised by other minority world nation groups. First Nation groups have gained strength from identifying some common struggles that define unified purpose and principles. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal consciousness works to counteract globalising forces by creating tribal awareness of egalitarian, political and economic issues amongst tribal members.

Global monetary organisations support corporate capitalism in a bid to maximise profit. The push to align every social context with market forces increases state governments ventures of privatisation for goods and state services that they argue are best provided through so-called ‘free’, unregulated markets. These markets require aggressive commercialisation and competitive behaviour with profit-making thought to be morally superior and more efficient in allocating funds and public services (O’ Neill & O’ Neill, 2008). In Aotearoa New Zealand, the current government has viewed state assets such as water or electricity as items that offer opportunities for entrepreneurship and wealth creation, instead of considering equity and the progress of greater societal good.

The ease and availability of the world’s internet facility has been blamed for swamping iwi and other indigenous groups with dominating cultural messages. On the other hand, computer facility has given indigenous peoples opportunity to associate via internet (Smith, 1999; Winiata, 2010b). For example, management and educators at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū are aware of indigenous movements worldwide who share similar stories



of struggle. “Internet supports our intent to live locally but be global players” (Flavell, 2011, p.17). The movement to adopt The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is an example of the solidarity harnessed amongst disparate groups from around the world who strive to seek social justice in their place of origin (Bakhtiar, Ah Choy, Mohd, Salleh & Salleh, 2010; Green, 2010; Hee, 2010; Laltaika, 2010; Lenzerini, 2010; Wyld, Baylis & Sparrow, 2010).

Infiltration of hip-hop culture and international promotion of the Hollywood film, fashion and music industries are contemporary examples of global influences on iwi culture and language (Anaru, 2011). Effects from domination through western language and symbols, primarily English, have resulted in local iwi traditions and iwi languages struggle for survival. Tribal knowledges, however, have a role in challenging negative social ramifications that result from some global trends. The effect of this has caused globalisation to be termed the new colonisation.

‘Glocalisation’ on the contrary, insinuates a rupture to the globalisation meta-narrative while placing importance and immediacy on local society. ‘Glocalisation’ makes visible smaller microcosms of connectedness between people living in a particular place whose existence is tightly embedded to specific place at a particular time. It depicts the power in the voice for local people in local communities (Pearson, 2011). In early childhood education it includes the notion that people who live locally have power to commune with others living locally. ‘Glocalisation’ intimates that local does not equate to inferior or parochial; being seen as a form of empowerment, giving local people access to control their own lives in their local communities. As such tribal early childhood communities are constructed by and for local communities.

Tribal knowledge has always responded to both global and local realities. Socialisation becomes a pivotal goal for education if children are to live well in Aotearoa New Zealand. To become familiar with tangata whenua knowledge, children will need to learn local knowledge and local ways of living. Therefore Māori awareness of the world outside Aotearoa New Zealand asserts what knowledge is prioritised in tribal education. Drawing on the tension between what constitutes local knowledge highlights that “There is no fixed ideas of what Māori local knowledge is. There is really no such

thing, traditionally as Māori knowledge. There is only whānau/hapū/iwi knowledge” (Penetito, 2010, p.238).

Iwi share concern about what constitutes knowledge. Tribes understand the potential impact that both global and local foci can have on their development. Indigenous people face similar circumstances (Pearson, 2011) finding the rapid spread of global ideas through social networking impacts on education. However, it is assuring that “the very fact that indigenous peoples have thrived on this earth is evidence that excellence informs and directs the growth and expansion of indigenous peoples and cultures” (Aspin, Brewin, Kēpa, & Kidman, 2007, p. 4). International exchange of ideas amongst indigenous peoples means that theories and definitions emerge rapidly through communication technologies increased levels of public accessibility.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua doctrine interrupts globalised meta-narrative by rendering voice in local communities; becoming a powerful catalyst in bringing useful influences in not only educational but also in ways to transform the local environs. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga brings a spotlight on smaller microcosms of connectedness between people living in a particular place and their ability to create resolutions necessary to benefit people. In early childhood education the notion that people who live locally have influence over their own lives in the local communities finds traction amongst families and children in association with Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi.

### **International perspectives and tribal knowing**

An international study in early childhood education by Alvestad and Duncan (2006) exposes curriculum as multilayered in producing and reproducing society. Teacher views in New Zealand reflected teachers who held an image of a child being “a capable and competent child but [also a child who is] a predominantly individual learner” (Alvestad & Duncan 2006, p. 41). This perspective is an interesting contrast to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua kaiako who view children both individually and collectively as contributing members of a tribal group.

Awareness of international worldviews has always been of interest to iwi since the time of initial contact with migrant others. Many iwi pursued missionary education;

considering English language lessons desirable (Jenkins & Harte, 2011). Education in foreign knowledges was a valued means of accessing opportunities to extract optimum benefits for their communities and themselves (Henry, 2007; Hemara (2000) reports “the adoption of literacy was widespread. Either Māori or a blend of native and exotic teaching and learning styles enabled a pre-literate society to capture literacy within one generation and then reconfigure it to suit themselves” (p. 9). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū like many indigenous nations found “learning about the emerging world and gaining knowledge and skills would equip them with the necessary abilities needed to defend their communities against legal and political encroachments” (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006, p.6).

International indigenous exchanges of ideas in education mean that theories and definitions are shared across nations. Principles, practices and philosophies to seek social justice through education are expressed in world forum by First Nations community educator Jeannette Armstrong (2000) of Okanagan descent:

...somehow the uniqueness of our tribal identity is contained in our languages. Our language makes us who we are. Everything you need to know is in the language. Another principle is that we approach learning from within our tribal perspectives and approaches... within the community (p.52).

Indigenous education initiatives note language and culture as key imperatives for successful curriculum refuting economics as the sole driver in educational outcomes. O’Neill & O’Neill (2008) expose the effects that ‘neo-liberal’ ideologies have on outcome-driven education where “the curriculum milieu...reflects dominant world view or discourses of the time.” (p.5). Curriculum structures that largely teaching knowledge, attitudes and skills to support the nation’s employment and national economic growth do not value or include Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga.

The positioning and power that cultural reproduction plays in society is reflected in bell hooks (1990) critique on racial inequalities in America. bell hooks deliberately uses the lower case for her surname as a feminist statement linked to her philosophy of struggle. A central theme of struggle acts as a source of critical consciousness in forming a liberation front particularly when operating from the margins. hooks honours mothers

living in 'black' American society for finding ways to resist oppressive circumstances. She cites the care vested in young children by their mothers who worked 'in service' for longer than twelve hours; upon finishing at their workplace would walk miles to their homes so they could be with their children, even if it meant being close to them as they slept; signifies victory. In a struggle "against the social technology of control that is ever ready to co-opt any transformative vision and practice" (hooks, 1990, p. 132). She salutes the perseverance of these mothers whose refusal to lay down the struggle became a way to interrupt the meta-narrative of the day that could have left them feeling worthless but instead revealed hope to those around them.

Although mothers did not articulate the eradication of racism, hooks (1990) notes that "they understood intellectually and intuitively the meaning of 'homeplace' in the midst of an oppressive and dominating social reality when 'homeplace' was site of resistance and liberation struggle" (p. 45). Equally 'homeplace' in the context of Aotearoa, can be recognised in haukāinga (local people of a marae) where early childhood education and care is marae based and in a similar vein is a site of hope, refuge and freedom for future generations.

Calls to "strengthen, define and re-imagine traditional knowledge is a vital part of a general decolonising struggle" (Green, 2010, p. 119) for indigenes around the world. Australian Aborigine groups, Hawaiian, Canadian First Peoples, First Nations citizens Indian Dalits, Mongolians and Sami, express movements in their home locations to restore cultural languages, traditional skills and practices including re-introducing medicines, food sources and natural resources in an effort to de-colonise and purify current life-styles (Green, 2010; Louis, 2007; Obah, 2010; Raj, 2010; Tella, 2010). In pondering education in Finnish society, Toumi (2004) highlights the need for holistic considerations in education to feature interconnections of the universe and nature; urging that the natural world be reflected as a constant state of unfolding.

Peters and Burbules (2004) invite debate about education as a site of citizenship. They critique a hidden curriculum that is based on civic compliance, passive public behaviour and formation of character and morality at a personal level; emphasising that self-control practices such as 'staying in your seat until given permission to move' can

infuse individuality as opposed to encouraging a sense of collective socialisation through shared considerations and common group desires.

### **Iwi innovation in education**

The notion that education can revitalise society was never observed so zealously than in the emergence and development of Te Kōhanga Reo movement, Māori immersion education. Te Kōhanga Reo Movement acknowledged language and whānau as a strategic trajectory in the learning of young children (Benton, 1993; Durie, 2003; Hohepa, Smith & McNaughton, 1992; Irwin, 1990; Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994; Nepe, 1991; Pihama, 1990; Pōtaka, 2004; Reedy, 1993, 1995; Royal-Tangaere, 1996, 1997a, 1997b; Walker, 1990). Māori tribal language and traditional knowledge provided a platform for sites of linguistic and cultural preservation; capable of emancipating, transforming and liberating communities through the provision of te reo Māori medium education (Irwin, 1990; Winiata, 2010a). Jenkins & Ka'ai (1994) credit full immersion Māori language initiatives with disrupting Maori language crisis.

O'Regan (2009) exposes the trauma of language loss and sustainability for iwi tribal development, however, in places where language immersion services failed to thrive. Always a notable challenge for tribal leaders, including Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū, is arresting decline in the number of fluent speakers of te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialect). Iwi priorities continue to initiate their unique responses to bolster language learning accessibility and development. According to Penetito (2010) governments must act responsibly as facilitators in promoting Māori education in whatever form iwi deem fit because "Māori education, like Māori people, has survived as a distinct entity with a distinct culture...after more than a century of colonial domination" (p.15).

Acknowledging the struggles of iwi Māori to retain language in today's world, Pihama (2001) conveys that "that te reo Māori embodies not only linguistic potentialities but also spiritual and cultural potential. Te reo Māori encompasses a range of meanings that operate at many levels, social, cultural, political and some may say physical" (p. 24). Iwi educational innovations are not only highly valued by whānau in Aotearoa New Zealand, but have been hailed as avant-garde in many parts of the world (Abu-Saad &

Champagne, 2006; Alvestad & Duncan, 2006; Aspin, Brewin, Kēpa, & Kidman, 2007; Cherrington, 2000; Findsen, & Tamarua, 2007; Mita, 2007; Nagel, & Wells, 2009).

Meeting compliance in all aspects of education and care requires iwi early childhood centres to ‘jump through two lots of hoops’ so to speak. Firstly they must align and be approved by iwi standards in both mātauranga and tikanga. Furthermore early childhood education government regulations and those contained in the licensing criteria also need to be met (Ministry of Education, 1996, 1998, 2008). Government in the form of Ministry of Education has an interest, one would presume, in facilitating the success of iwi lead education initiatives. However in the light of the kōhanga claims of inequality and injustice, it appears doubtful (Tahana & Shuttleworth, 2012).

It is argued that future predictions in demographics of increased numbers in Māori learners, is prompting new interest in Māori knowledge (Ministry of Education, 2009a, 2009b, 2011; New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007, 2010). Regardless of recent interest, McCafferty (2010) blames government in failing to produce enough fluent Māori speaking teachers to respond to today’s need for youth to be educated in te reo Māori and Māori knowledge; warning that before the health and viability of te reo in today’s world can be assured, there still remain challenges for school curricula.

The work of Moorfield & Ka’ai (2011) in te reo Māori language protection and expansion through Te Ipukarea - TheNational Māori Language Institute has established digital literacy stations that are freely accessible. Computerised science has provided a medium in which to substantiate and advance the development and usage of dialectal te reo Māori language. This vision is to help support diversity and richness of tribal language through facilitating a springboard from which iwi can tailor their own unique responses to their particular situations.

The detrimental effects of generalisation can be felt in the erosion of specialised knowledges and especially in language dialectal idiosyncrasies. Tribal knowledges and oral histories like language, do not escape reductionism and co-modification by others. Mihipeka (2002) understood that when she critiqued language and protocols being incorrectly used, causing them to lose potency and meaning. All this discussion

highlights the need for localisation of language, beliefs and customs as mana whenua so that cultural transmission is able to maximise benefits for iwi.

Cherrington (2000) amplifies the benefits born out of providing early childhood care and education. Tino Rangatiratanga as a right to plot an educational pathway based on cultural, language and iwi values placed children, extended family and community at the centre of practice. Intergenerational teaching emphasised the value in lifelong learning. Age and maturity complimented a belief that the knowledges held by the older were valuable. Pursuit of holistic learning that considers hinengaro (mind), tinana (body) and wairua (spirit, soul) and learning experiences which connect people to land, sky and sea encourage aspirations of care and respect.

Pākōwhai Te Kōhanga Reo share pedagogy on children's learning as inspiration for the roles that each generation has to play in the success of early childhood education centre: seeing the centre as an expression of community goals "we have always understood our kōhanga reo to be a vehicle, an opportunity for a community, a hapū to realise our dreams and aspirations" (Ministry of Education 2009b, p. 23). The documentation of their children's learning embraces a commitment to holistic assessment, acknowledging contributions made by families and children in the life of the centre. Likewise, Ngā Kākano o te Kaihanga, early childhood centre profess a philosophy that sees the child as "pikopiko ... not in isolation but surrounded by the outer branches of whānau, community, whakapapa and whakawhanaungatanga" (Ministry of Education, 2009b. p. 17).

However a lack of appreciation by government concerning linguistic and cultural learning outcomes in Kōhanga Reo became public after Matua Rautia found the Kōhanga Reo National Trust claim to be in breach of the Treaty principles of partnership and equity. The Trust reported the Crown had effectively assimilated the kōhanga reo movement into its early childhood education regime and had failed to sustain kōhanga reo as an environment for language transmission and whānau development. In a New Zealand Herald interview with board trustee Dame Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, Tahana & Shuttleworth (2012) report her comments siting government failure to give adequate assistance either financially or regulatory to enable success in language revitalization; declaring that after decades of being side-lined by the Crown,

the report finally proved what was known by the organisation all along; Kōhanga reo is inexplicably linked to the revitalisation of te reo Māori.

### **Cultural transmission as ideology in tribal identity and learning**

Transmitting culture is essential as a regenerative process according to Pohatu (2002a) who expresses it as “about ensuring survival” (p.6) especially concerning whakapapa, whenua and identity. He points out that each generation is challenged to locate appropriate cultural messages that hold cultural significance and passion during their time. The influence that time and context have on traditional beliefs and practices evolve as natural processes impact on what, how and why cultural knowledges are preserved. Certain iwi knowledges are non-negotiable and holdfast over time such as marae protocol, while other traditions such as dress are more fluid and transitory in essence. Decisions about retention and display of tikanga (practices) and beliefs are discussed at length within the collective iwi (tribal) in hui (meetings) overseen by the rangatira (iwi leadership) or equivalent knowledge holders.

Cultural transmission is brought into focus as an ideology in early childhood education by Spodek and Saracho (2003) who accord cultural transmission as an approach primarily concerned with passing down what is known by the older generation to the newer generation, through using direct instruction or by applying methods that encourage behavioural practices. They caution those caring for young children to maintain a passion “about what we believe to be right and what we believe to be true for young children” (p. 9). Instead of resorting to mechanical ways of working, which deny the human element in working with children and their families, “we should create a continuous dialogue about what we believe our children should be and become. And...to express our beliefs in the traditions we maintain...for after all, education by its very nature is a moral activity” (p. 9).

When children’s learning is viewed as valuable lived experience, iwi learning can be understood through the relationships that are established with those around and directly tuned into tribal culture:

The integration of an individual into full membership of society takes place over a long period of time. Not in formal schooling, but in his living



situation. The process of learning, by which the raw material of the young is transformed into full citizenship, is inherent in the workings of each institution so that the instilling of values, norms, and attitudes is effected by the apprenticeship to tribal life, that is, by existence in the cultural milieu (Marsden, 1992, p.137).

Refreshingly, Māori epistemology privileges Māori thinkers and learners, not only considering what is worth knowing but what counts as important to pass onto the next generation (Kingi, 2010). Access to iwi idea/ls are absorbed consciously and unconsciously in the process of socialisation in and around tribal life. In an organic way, children absorb iwi politics. A sense of communal belonging is also important in developing feelings of kinship, recognition of events and pride in group, iwi identity – “an ideology with a distinct trait of self-reference and celebrating culture as the reservoir of politics” (Greenland, 1984, p. 99).

### **Capitalising on culture as curriculum in early childhood education**

The encapsulation of cultural capital in education as espoused by Bourdieu (1993) denotes learner success if a benevolent relationship between curricula and the learner’s preferred knowledge, language and disposition exists. Accordingly, Bourdieu recognised certain cultural capital [knowledge] symbolised power by reproducing oppressive control over others in society. In exchanging cultural capital, learners become capable of producing higher or lesser results in education, thereby returning greater or lesser yields or benefits to themselves. Using this model, the connection between education and economics is highlighted and economic wealth becomes distributed between those whose cultural capital [knowledge] is favoured and supported in education.

The obligation to foster such a learning environment is a priority if educational outcomes are to be favourable. Terminology such as ‘capital’ accentuates the profitability in investing in education and acknowledges future potential of young children as funds to draw upon in terms of financial dividends. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi along with other iwi are investing time and resources in their young children and families, recognising the economic benefits of this investment to increase the benevolence of iwi economic and cultural capital in the future. Interest in how tribal affiliation as socio-cultural influences can be harnessed favourably to promote successful children’s learning needs further research.

Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo features as a site where cultural capital and social norms are studied. The ways of being and knowing at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo recognises the values and beliefs of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua as desirable learning assets in the form of human capital. The maintenance and merit of fostering theoretical tribal knowledge is pedagogically sound (Royal-Tangaere, 1996) as it returns healthy growth for individual children and worthwhile dividends in potential for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal and tribal sustainability. Potential becomes tangible when children and whānau identify and become productive prospectively through their connections with language, traditions, histories and values of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua.

### **Iwi initiative building Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua cultural development**

Like many other iwi, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi have their own unique responses to their contemporary situation. Aroha Hicks who is the manager at Te Puna Akoranga i Ngāti Whakaue, early childhood centre speaks with excitement about the opportunities that have been opened up by iwi projects in response to local need. She reports that not only children but also whānau benefit from programmes such as *Te Reo Hikoi* (journeying through language) which provides language lessons on a personal level for adults and children in their homes. The iwi commitment to local investment sees members benefitting from iwi hui where it “became evident...there was a push towards education, from early childhood through to university” (Bleasdale, 2012b, p. 10).

Not only do they draw on the distinctive relationships made to the life-long learning journey in the education system but they also derive deeper understanding about the dynamic interplays between their status as tangata whenua in their rohe and mana whenua. Pōtaka (2004) explains how traditional iwi philosophy can support the re-affirmation of tribal identity among members stating “we are striving for some basic things so we can build a positive future for our people, including tribal unity, cultural identity, a strong social fabric, an economic base and the establishment of Waitaha as a political force” (p. 297).

Life principles such as these defy categorisation as ideas in which to engage ‘living’, ‘lived’ and ‘to be lived’ realities for people. Tribal ideology acts as amalgam in realising diverse human potential unfolded in its children when an iwi community creates caring

practice in an early childhood education and care facility. The sense of a collective responsibility to education for success is well outlined by Macfarlane (2004) which embraces the inclusion of ideas abilities and skills that have “accumulated through many years of experience, learning, development and transmission” (p.63).

The significance of culture as an expression of community identity has been recorded as a common good (Bishop et al., 2008; Fenelon & LeBeau; 2006; McNeill et al., 2010; Penetito, 2010). Culture allows community a common framework of meaning, including how people communicate with each other, decision making and how family responses are prioritised. Culture expresses values towards land, time and attitudes towards work, play, good and evil, reward and punishment. Culture is preserved in language, symbols and customs; celebrated in art, music, drama, literature, religion and social gatherings. All of which constitute a collective memory of the people and collective heritage which is handed down to future generations.

Bishop et al, (2008) see the influences of culture in ways that are both explicit and invisible. The visible elements are the signs, images and iconography that are immediately recognisable that represent that culture. The invisible elements are the values, morals, modes of communication, decision making and problem-solving processes: Hence, the notion that learning contexts need to allow for the existence of both visible and invisible elements to inform a holistic approach (Bishop et al, 2008, p.171).

Educational environments that draw on Māori cultural aspirations are geared to attain learner success. Infinite possibilities emerge when ancient tribal manifesto of both the seen and unseen are integrated into the curriculum in a learning institution such as Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Early childhood education and curriculum have the potential to evoke new possibilities through Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū epistemology.

### **Concluding comments**

There appears to be a gap in research literature regarding tribal specific early childhood education curriculum and pedagogy approaches: Although Ministry of Education (1996, 1998, 2009a, 2009b, 2011) and New Zealand Teachers Council (2007) express interest in teachers to include tribal specific languages and knowledges in education. It is still not clear in the current literature and government’s neo-liberal framing of education

how this might happen. It appears that kaiako who understand tribal knowledge and language can embed tribal knowledges in early childhood education curriculum but more research is necessary to establish how this might occur in differing tribal education settings.

Tribal knowing in early childhood education curriculum is transformative in liberating learners and communities. Tribal knowing can enhance curriculum and learning for young children in early childhood education by producing trajectories that disrupt dominant paradigms of thought that subjugate some knowledges over others. Tribal education is synonymous with tribal community development. Tribal histories, whakapapa and lived experience of marae and papakāinga are significant in expressing and retaining unique identity of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū traditions, beliefs and values; ensuring iwi affiliation remains continuous and strong.

There are conflicting perspectives and contestation on early childhood education curriculum from local and global influences. Indigenous groups internationally express similar experiences involving challenges that threaten their languages and cultural heritages from both local and global environments. Tribal education providers stake positions of power when delivering tribal knowledges in learning at early childhood education and care services. Tribal involvement in early childhood education is capable of re(k)newing tribal ‘cultural capital’ and (re)membering the collective both as individuals and collective (Edwards, 2013a). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal education policies and long term tribal development plans complement Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal early childhood education.

Literary findings conclude that iwi philosophy, language and values act as storehouses from which to draw wisdom into educational curriculum. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū competes with local and global influences in providing quality education and care of their young children. Tribal initiatives seek educational outcomes for the greater good and social justice for the entire iwi. The wealth of general information in literature on Māori education suggests limitations on specific tribal education. This project therefore, offers a small contribution toward understanding how tribal epistemology is implicated in the education and care of young children and their families in a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū setting.

## **Chapter Four: Research Design**

### **Introduction**

This chapter explains the methodology implemented in the research project. The considerations and constraints that influenced researcher choices are revealed. Discussion focuses on the selection of research tools; including perceived strengths and limitation of each. Although this chapter is documented in separate sections, the methods were considered holistically and merge as a whole approach to the study. The latter part of the chapter describes the highlights of the fieldwork and concludes with discussion on the tools used to analyse the dataset. All methods investigate how tribal knowledges impacted the learning and development of young children. Therefore, research selections became factors that shaped the research and were in turn shaped by the research.

### **Design decisions**

An appropriate research design required a methodology that could explore the multiple realities of tribal knowledges in young children's learning. The aim was to produce knowledge that could benefit others: The notion of research as a benevolent endeavour was a reminder to care for the well-being for all stakeholders. Researching the phenomena of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledge required a methodology that specialised in its capacity to critique “cultural orientation, a set of values, a different conceptualisation of such things as time, space and subjectivity, different theories of knowledge, highly specialised forms of language and structures of power” (Smith, 1999, p. 42). Kaupapa Māori research is effective in embracing the customary practices of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū.

The two tribal tikanga embedded in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū Tribal documents are kaitiakitanga and mana whenua Ngāti Te Ata, 1991). Both can be applied to the ethical research practices in this study because they require “values systems [that] are inextricably linked... in organised and coherent ways” (Edwards, 2013b, p. 46). These principles position the study project in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga. The application of both precepts assured quality outcomes for the project. The practice of kaitiakitanga translates to researcher responsibility to exercise an ethic of care, honesty and

reliability; while recognising the need to protect the anonymity of participants and ensure engagement is realised through respectful relationships with all stakeholders.

Mana whenuatanga distinguishes cultural definitions and what is considered important to it; including what constitutes as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledge. Mana Whenua as a tribal principle was interpreted in the research to mean Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal rights to intellectual property, particularly in the dissemination of knowledge from this thesis and consultation in all things relating to Ngāti Ata Waiohua. Humility was practised throughout the process. Operating under mana whenuatanga, ensured clear lines of communication were addressed with kaumātua and kuia (elder woman/women). Mana whenuatanga values transparency through open exchanges and acknowledges partnership in research documentation (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011).

Kaupapa Māori was the most appropriate approach to use as an overarching research methodology because it validates Māori knowledge in both traditional and contemporary settings. The critical theory in kaupapa Māori provided a fit for expressing the historical struggles and power relationships that exist in contemporary realities for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal education. The praxis of kaupapa Māori discerns Māori knowledge as a viable dynamic living in Māori language, values and beliefs which apply in an education context (Durie, 2012; Edwards, 2013b; Royal, 2012; Smith, 1997; Walker, 2013).

The critical application of kaupapa Māori challenges hegemonic worldviews and permits Māori knowledge to be interpreted and constructed through shared meaning making (Smith, 1999; Royal, 2005). This principle supported framing a qualitative research study to determine how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledge featured in the teaching and learning of children at Kaupapa Māori research afforded space and flexibility to produce a research project “from its own starting points” (Cooper, 2012, p.71); beginning with the teaching team at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood education and care centre).

Kaupapa Māori research draws upon knowledge that will recognise positive outcomes accomplished by Māori, for Māori; including ethical practices “you don’t do any

research that doesn't benefit people" (Durie, 2012, p. 24). Tribal knowledge in an early childhood education paradigm centers on tamariki, whānau, hapū and Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua and required processes that were collaborative for all involved in the research process. Teaching and learning was viewed as reciprocal in nature. As the project progressed, researcher as learner and kaiako as teacher became interchangeable roles amongst the participants in the study.

A pursuit to find out how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledge impacts early childhood education potentially interests iwi; benefitting Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua whānau. Opportunities to share meaning in the work already being done and to disseminate understandings will help consolidate, celebrate, share, and advance existing practices. Amongst early childhood communities, the aim to create new ways of knowing in the early childhood field is posited in transforming and improving service to one another and the world (Ritchie, Duhn, Rau, & Craw, 2010). This prompted thinking about how to distribute thesis information as a social good, associated with tribal benefits.

In a debating how research aligns with practices that are good, Pohatu (2002b; 2010) contends that social research bestows obligations upon Māori researchers to honour tikanga Māori. Whenever uncertainty did arise about the correct way to proceed, I asked. In respecting tikanga-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, this research proposal began with securing permission from iwi leaders including kaumātua and kuia. Once their approval had been granted, permission was sought from the teaching team and whānau at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna. The initial meeting outlined a desire to examine how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges influenced curriculum in the education of young children. Dialogue reflected a desire to celebrate tribal aspirations. Throughout the study it was paramount to ensure that the research allowed for collective ownership by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua members.

Bishop (1996) asserts that empowerment and self-determination of individuals and groups of people involved in the research process is derived through checking approaches to research:

One fundamental understanding to a Māori approach to research is that it is the discursive practice in Kaupapa Māori that positions researchers in such a way as to operationalise self-determination for research participants. This is because the cultural aspirations, understanding, and practices of Māori people govern the way they organise the research process (p. 144).

Relationship building through care and trust became primary considerations. Although familiar with some whānau, I was not a frequent visitor to Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna and behaved accordingly. The research process acknowledged with humility, that research opportunities came as a gift not as a right (Milroy & Temara, 2013). The goal was to work in collaboration with the kaiako; to establish common a purpose in the project and to contribute to the project as a team. Reciprocal relationships meant information was gleaned through every receptor possible; heart, hands, emotion and spirit: allowing knowledge to be given and to be received.

A Ngāi Tahu research project instrumental in documenting a tribal repository; cites communication and participation for “tino rangatiratanga as process through which iwi can possess self-knowledge. As such it is important for research to be community driven, reflective of iwi aspirations and organisationally responsive in order to generate quality research data” (Ahuriri-Driscoll, 2005, p. 17). Similarly connections between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges and young children’s learning is viewed as a repository of knowledge and deserves documentation that includes research participants as research partners through information-gathering based on mutual relationships.

### **Research obligations to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua**

While the focus to produce quality research in an academy may highlight the thesis as a product, it must be remembered that the process through which this happens is equally important. Approaches were in accord with tribal etiquette and attributed to the cohesive and inclusive aim of the work (Durie, 2005; Hudson, 2005; Ormond & Cram, 2005; Smith, 1999). Conscious of the need for tribal ethics to be maintained, research was conducted through iwi appropriate research procedures and measures. This meant that the project became of collective interest and was welcomed as a positive venture (Edwards, 2013b; Meade, 2005; Walker, 2013). Many expressions of welcome and support were visible particularly in the caring and respectful conversations with kaumātua (Flavell, G., personal communication, February 6, 2012; Minhinick, N., personal communication, February 6, 2013).



During the formation of this project the iwi were undergoing preparations for the Waitangi Tribunal claims. Consequently key tribal members were involved in documenting and researching tribal histories themselves which restricted their availability in additional research studies. Ultimately the momentum of this project slowed and was paced accordingly; a reminder of how Waitangi Tribunal expectations exert pressure and continue to impact negatively on tribes and the lives of whānau whānui (extensive family groupings). As such research methodology and methods embodied tribal thought and tribal language, it has to be acknowledged that researcher limitations to speak fluently in te reo-o-Ngāti te Ata Waiohū positioned researcher as learner throughout the study.

“Research strategies that enable cultural constraints to be understood” (Hohepa, Smith & McNaughton, 1992, p.340) advocate ways for iwi to retain self-determination in research. This works to maintain tribal reserve and customary rights to all cultural, social, physical and intellectual property rights arising out of any research project. In this case study the over-riding assumption is that any knowledge emanating from the work belongs to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū. “Knowledge and research is relevant, and belongs to, Māori communities” (Māori Tertiary Education, 2003, p.34). This accentuated importance of collaboration and co-construction throughout the research process.

Fears of how research knowledge is used or conversely abused are of primary concern for iwi. It was understood that the research carried the burden of many members who were associated to the study through whakapapa. Clearly the intent to protect, preserve and commemorate Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowledges and traditions not only dominates the rationale for this research project but also recognises Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū holds tino rangatiratanga of the research as mana whenua. Along with this came an agreement to adhere to and uphold the implementation of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga.

Research rationale was based on the assertion that iwi identity and culture has the power to transform the potential of children to make a valuable contribution to their community and broader New Zealand society. Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo (2001) assert that indigenous groups around the world explore the constructs of their own cultural

epistemologies through researching themselves, as opposed to feeling exploited as being subjects of outside research. “Cultural group ways of thinking create realities via traditional discourse ...anchoring the truth of the discourse in [side] culture” (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo 2001, p. 58).

Data assemblage posited the need to recognise the tapu (sanctity) of knowledge. Marsden (2003) referred to the spiritual dimension of Māori research, a dimension that was absent in most western research activities. Whereas European-derived attitude may be that knowledge should be available to all who wish to seek and learn, the Māori concepts make distinction between ‘private’ knowledge, ‘community’ knowledge and ‘public’ knowledge. These differences exemplify the connections between knowing and understanding in te ao Māori with particular reference to what Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledges may be appropriated for public scrutiny in a university thesis qualification.

### **Selecting case study**

Choosing methods that would allow for deep interrogation embraced research methods that pushed boundaries in the search of Māori epistemology; Case study permitted research to:

drill down the various layers and at each level you can go sideways. You get knowledge wherever you go. You might just have a name, but then there a whole lot of stories attached to it. Spreading out sideways, you can go out and branch out. So there is a notion of evolution, there is a notion of sequence and logic in whakapapa (Walker, 2013, p.37-38).

Having realised the need for a social-cultural fit in the research, it was decided case study was an appropriate approach because it gave opportunity for in-depth, qualitative study. A case study was capable of capturing the social richness and relationships in community life, such as an early childhood education service. Marshall and Rossman (2011) recommend case study for discovering a “culture in a group” (p. 93) through collecting rich, vivid descriptions from a specific context. A case study was apt in accentuating a collective voice from a teaching team, in order to demystify the place of tribal knowledge early childhood education. A case study framework offered a way to explore the phenomena of tribal early childhood learning; acknowledging combinations of theory and practice that underpin decisions (Bell, 1999).

Advancing the project was dependent upon working in ways to suit people who were entrenched in tikanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua working on Tāhuna Marae and living in Waiuku which is a semi-rural town of Tāmaki-makau-rau. The connection between people, education and land [place] in which they live is paramount in understanding the existence of the participants; therefore a case study facilitated this exploration in a meaningful way. Helu Thaman's (2010) relational theory of personhood entwines collective values, language and beliefs about place as systemic knowledge that is reflected in the socio-cultural constructs of education.

### **Case study: strengths and limitations**

One obvious advantage for a case study was an ecological strength in recognising that participants and subjects were best observed in their natural settings to allow for more sensitive and holistic relationships to emerge during research. Case studies traditionally lend themselves studies where the author is seeking to gain "a real insight into ideas and attitudes that influence preschool practice" (Mukherji & Albron, 2010, p. 88). Case studies were found to robust in making specific phenomenon visible in socially and culturally constructed worlds (Chadderton & Torrance, 2011).

Although case studies have been diminished due to the fact that findings are too specific and lose transferable relevance to a wider population, the deliberate selection of a case study in the circumstance of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga will have interest to other tribes in Aotearoa New Zealand and other indigenous populations in the world. An intention to find generalisable understanding in transferable dogma would be presumptuous. Criticism points to a lack of scientific rigour in single entity case studies because of their discriminate essence and researcher bias according to Lichtman (2010). However, in spite of this critique it is argued that a single entity case study offers strength in ability to penetrate deeply into socio-cultural realities for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua traditional knowledges and early childhood education.

Case study allowed for multiple facets implicated in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing and education to be integrated as specificity (Newby, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Ignorance around the Māori knowledge and specific tribal knowledge has blurred explanations and understandings in mainstream education in Aotearoa New Zealand today (Penetito, 2010). A case study could speak to unique historical realities

rudimentary in understanding Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū epistemology. Case study fitted the underlying rationale which was to provide insights into tribal education of young children rather than search for general truths that were easily transferrable.

### **The notion of cultural sensitivity (insider/outsider)**

Researcher assumptions that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū epistemology) are significant influences in children's learning removes neutrality and introduces a passion for the study topic. Neuman (2006) predicates a lack of impartiality as pointed perspectives enabling researcher to "see beyond them better, instead of trying to bury or deny assumptions, viewpoints and values, we find through acknowledging them and being open about them" (p. 168). Tinirau (2010) confers by citing the strength of researcher familiarity in iwi study to access deeper and more authentic information through whakapapa and whakawhānau (process of establishing relationships).

It was an honour to be involved in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū research study. However, the reality was an invitation born out of whakapapa. The researcher is whānau and tied both spiritually and emotionally to iwi, being one with the whenua more particularly to the tamariki who are regarded as extended family. This situated the researcher as an insider; one who was familiar, through blood line and was part of the tribal history. All of which pointed to tribal researcher having a high level of vested interest while carrying an onerous responsibility to complete an excellent job.

Tribal trust and allegiance is found through building bonds in relationships. Participants were comfortable and affirmed as power holders inside the study which removed any tendency to feel objectified in the research. A critical consciousness pertaining to the possible conflict of interest for researcher as insider-outsider interactions in the study developed acute awareness of the possibilities of bias in study findings. Insider-outsider stance in the research can be seen as a limitation, the fact that researcher affiliation as tribal member could compromise neutrality in the analyses; this was balanced against researcher capacity to access intimate tribal knowledge of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū as accorded to tribal members. Reflections on the relationships between researcher as tribal member and researcher as impartial agent called for mindfulness in the investigation.

The juxtaposition as insider (tribal member) and as an outsider (researcher) challenges researcher to remove clinical interpretations in order to free “the people to speak for themselves” (Smith, 1992a, p. 2). A collective nature of thinking and knowing became important in guiding the research design, particularly in methods of data collection because early childhood education operates through team endeavour, requiring colleagues to be acutely aware of shared philosophy and collaborative participation in order to co-construct meaning in all levels of teaching and learning (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007). Consistent efforts to assure participants of their power in the study lessened the likelihood of power imbalances in relations between researcher and participants.

### **Giving and finding voice**

A case study could become a channel through which kaiako experiences, and thoughts could be documented. Irwin (1992) reminds researchers that “none of us is alone in our work. Our strength is a collective strength; our job is to find our place in the net amongst others who are also building for the new day, ka awatea, in Māori education” (p.108). One of the goals was a desire to “give voice” to tribal members whose work was dedicated to caring for children in a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal setting (Grace, 1999; Health Research Council of New Zealand, 2010; Lichtman, 2010).

Methods that value the examination of narrative are important when researching oral contributions. Teachers, children and families appreciate the opportunity to see new perspectives revealed in their world. Pickering noticed methods that value examination of ‘taken for granted voice’ as pertinent when researching oral contributions:

responses to what happens to us which somehow stand out...giving new meaning to what we have experienced or will experience in a more habitual manner... making us realise that this is what such-and-such...meant in a particular passage which we had not fully grasped at all (Pickering, 2008, p. 29).

Offering a critical voice centred on researcher commitment to expose [self] conscious states of being:

An individual’s consciousness is always evolving, changing and refining itself. In this sense there is not one state of consciousness, but multiple interlaced consciousnesses that form a matrix of understanding influenced by

the contexts of our internal and external worlds. What makes a person critically conscious is challenging the underlying assumptions that work in the internal and external worlds to privilege some while disprivileging others (Willis, Montavon, Hall, Hunter, Burke, & Herrera, 2008, p. 4-5).

To seek the blessings for a scholarly work from kaumātua and kuia who provide ahikā and carry the history of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi at Tāhuna Marae in Waiuku was pivotal. Kaumātua and kuia were consulted on the viability of such projects due to their leadership. Therefore their voice and participation is active in envisioning a way to proceed (Adams & Hopa, 2005; Tinirau, 2010).

It became important to uphold methods that would harness collectivity and be conducive to collective ways of studying the topic (Flavell, G., personal communication, March, 29, 2011; Minhinnick, N., personal communication, March, 29, 2011). Hence a focus group meeting appealed because the field work would collect data in a setting familiar for participants. The use of kaiako voices to examine teaching and learning issues enabled information to be shared as a collective. Open discussion happens regularly throughout the day and dialogue is a quality indicator in early childhood education where joint understandings are reached through regular conversations.

Therefore, group discussion became the preferred method; firstly, because it is a practice common to early childhood education and secondly, because it offers opportunity to co-construct meaning together. Communities of practice are places where “human interaction, co-construction of meaning and mutual cooperation is central to human agency and empowerment” (Somekh & Lewin, 2011, p.155). The search for the right research design had to honour rich collections of tribal knowledge in an appropriate way. There is a strong cultural preference for Māori research to be conducted in a participatory manner, where the participants and researcher are inextricably and consciously connected and committed to harmonious processes in the research (Health Research Council of New Zealand, 2010; Smith, 1999). This accentuated importance of collaboration and co-construction throughout the research process.

### **Focus groups: strengths and limitations**

A primary goal sought for each participant from the method was empowerment within the body of the work. Focus group as a method could “seek participants’ thoughts, experiences and emotions” (Ryan & Lobman, 2007, p. 63) The choice of focus groups encouraged social co-construction of shared meanings on the topic (Griffiths, 1998), giving focus group interviews the clear strength of being socially oriented. This made for the method compelling for working alongside Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal family in a marae context; where social relationships are highly regarded as fundamental tribal principles. Talking and questioning in groups is common practice. It is appreciated that the process of being asked a question can cause us to think about something in a different way: awareness of automated thoughts or action can occur when posed with a question about it (Newby 2010). Focus groups are vigorous with “format allowing the facilitator the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues as they arise in the discussion.” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p.149).

The competency in facilitator skills impacts on the quality of data collected: with focus group inquiry relying on facilitator’s skill to uphold respectful proceedings, personal safety and confidentiality (Sekaran, 2003). This can be a challenge in some cases according to Neuman (2006) as facilitators are responsible to set clear boundaries when articulating the objective of the discussion. A further responsibility is to break down any perceptions of power which could disrupt the open and honest exchanges desired. Managing opinions amongst participants in the focus groups where some participant voices struggle to be heard is another pitfall. Facilitators must remain neutral in their role by actively listening to all participants while sensitively keeping the discussion on topic by “carefully structuring and directing but restraining...discussion” (Neuman, 2006 p. 412).

### **Development of the focus group questions**

The focus group questions were created to probe how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga was implicated in children’s learning (Mutch, 2005). Indicative questions were semi-structured and intended to ignite thinking around the topic (see Appendix A). The open nature of the questions meant that all participants were invited to contribute; reflecting the collective and community nature of early childhood education and care. Questions respected Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga. The questions focussed on exploring the

hiatus in educational information in tribal knowledge in early childhood curriculum as outlined in chapter three. A desire to create the space for informants to narrate their own lived experiences as teachers both collectively and individually was supported by the use of open-ended prompts to guide inquiry; without restricting dialogue.

The first indicative question was planned to probe thinking around the influence of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language in young children's learning. Subsequent questions were intended to open dialogue on the traditional tribal practices and tribal aspirations as conduits of knowledge in the Puna. The group interactions provided security in voicing opinions and contributing different perspectives on the focus topics. It was hoped that the last prompt question would invite participants to choose their own issue for discussion. This was a deliberate attempt to scope the possibilities of personal relevance to the group. Meeting in a familiar place was strategic in participants contributing to a rich flow of ideas on tribal ideology and curriculum practices in the early childhood education and care setting at Tāhuna marae. This empowered the informants and helped to divert any sense of unequal power balance.

### **Fieldwork**

The fieldwork was undertaken at Tāhuna Marae at Waiuku with Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna. The strength of this fieldwork lies in the relationships cemented before, during and post-research. Philosophically conceptualising relationships is intrinsic in all methods described in this project (Griffiths, 1998). This happened naturally during the frequent trips to the site which allowed me time to immerse myself in the rhythms of the daily routine. As I became more familiar I was able to join the team in working alongside the whānau and children; picking up a tea towel and joining in watching the tamariki play. These experiences provided time to read centre documents and observe the programme in action.

To ensure a cross-section of participants were drawn from those who have been actively involved with Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna, recruitment was sought in collaboration with tumuaki (head teacher). During the many visits to the early childhood centre the researcher developed relationships with the teaching team who were invited to take part in the project (Durie, 2005; Hudson, 2005). Valuable discussion about the purposes of a project that could appreciate and celebrate the



realities of tribal knowledge in a tribal early childhood education service happened informally. Informants were chosen to represent qualified teachers, teachers in training and comprised a cross section of age groups giving a range of perspective. Active involvement in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna was an expectation in research selection with all participants being fully active in the day to day routines at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna.

Participants were invited to join a focus group meeting. Each participant received information outlining the project; explaining confidentiality and personal safety (as outlined in Appendix B). Meeting times were negotiated to suit the kaiako who are busy in their roles. Allegiance was given to the preferences of kaiako throughout the research especially regarding availability and choice of timing. The challenge posed by accommodating a visitor (me as researcher) added another layer of demands to already busy caregivers. The consideration of timing was carefully managed so not to intrude on the kaiako home commitments. But because of the very nature of early childhood work, it meant that during the time of focus group discussion, there were children who required care and attention including an infant of a participant.

It was decided to hold the focus group late morning; the aim being to maximise convenience for all involved. The focus group hui took place in an open space conducive to a small gathering while allowing participants the ability be available to visitors or parental inquiries if necessary. Early childhood centres are dynamic environments where moment by moment happenings require teachers and caregivers to fully engage in opportunities of care and education with children and other adults. Careful planning can never capture unexpected events when working with children; so flexibility needed to characterise the research. Confidentiality is an important component of participant –researcher authenticity and trust. Assurance that all participants gave their consent freely was safeguarded via signing a consent form (see Appendix C). However, preparing the field work meetings gave rise to valuable conversations that provided insights.

The focus group gathering began with a karakia to ask for blessings on the work which was in keeping with Waiohūa tikanga Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūa. Discussion was digitally recorded. Initially the presence of an electronic recording device appeared to stifle

conversation in spite of efforts to put participants at ease. After a few minutes, conversation began to flow more freely; giving rise to laughing and joking on occasion. Some participants floated out briefly during the gathering to tend to a child. Discussion lasted for approximately an hour as planned.

The electronic recording of the conversations were then transcribed which allowed for kaiako experiences and opinions to transform from vocal form to a written account. It also meant that the transcriptions could be made available to all participants so they could check for accuracy. After the preliminary transcriptions were complete, the researcher highlighted those parts that were indecipherable or needed further explanation. This procedure encouraged the researcher to seek clarification and to ask participants to expand on ideas shared in the meeting. These regular encounters added to the rich narrative gathered in the field notes.

The fieldwork included a review of relevant policy documents from Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna. Mission statements and policies offered information on *modus operandi*. These were clearly laid out and available in files or perusal. All written documentation proved valuable in providing background information to contextualise the research study. Substantial records which included children's artefacts were freely available and helped to plot the historical events and explained the evolution of the programme and curriculum at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna.

Information-laden data is necessary to shedding light on the phenomenon being studied (Ryan & Lobman, 2007). During these transcript exchanges the researcher worked in a respectful manner with participants (Grace, 1999, Hape, 1999). When kaiako elaborated on events; deeper meanings emerged: Giving kaiako opportunities to participate in the early stages of data analysis. The culmination of material from the focus group became the primary data source from which to explore the implications of tribal knowledge in early childhood education.

### **Data Analysis**

A detailed examination of the dataset encompassed multiple readings of the scripts. Thematic data analysis was applied during intense examinations of the narrative. Analysis searched for common and contrasting ideas in participant voices (Mutch,

2005). Colour coding chunks of data helped to organise scripts linguistically and allowed patterns to be revealed from focus group information (Newby, 2010). Three copies of the transcriptions were devised as working copies; one original, one colour coded and one participant numbered: The intention being to wring out maximum information on the indicative themes. The first approach was to chunk data under the themes denoted by questions. Next the responses were numbered to unpack deeper meanings from the individual voice. This showed the variations and differences between participant contributions. Lastly the search for meaning in-context happened by returning to the original transcript which remained 'whole'. This helped to determine the "right balance between the direct quotations ... and some kind of interpretive narrative" (Ryan & Lobman, 2007, p.71).

This strategy of frequent read and re-read of the written narrative helped to interpret commonalities amongst participants' ideas. The aim was to ascertain some logical and consistent agreement coming up in the conversation topics. At the same time identifying recurring words and themes allowed researcher to drill down into the comments and voices that appeared random or divergent from the group. Multiple readings involved weaving backwards and forwards between participant responses to gain a closer connection from nuances (Bell, 1999). A socio-linguistic review of the Māori words became a tool to deeply examine the transcripts for recurring words and themes (Bishop, 1996; Edwards, 2013a, 2013b; Hape, 1999; Henry, 1999; Grace, 1999; Pohatu, 2002b; Smith, 1999; Te Awekotuku, 1991). Though the analysis of the transcript was a technical process; the conversation as a whole including dialogue before and after were not disregarded (Lichtman, 2010). Pouring over the transcript supported deep probing into how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga impacts on early childhood education.

Critical discourse analysis invites a space to interpret text and to seek transparency into what otherwise may have been perceived as unproblematic. Discourse analysis is a viable method in drawing ideas together by examining institutional power and power relations in historical and contemporary, practices and pedagogy: becoming a platform from which to consider cultural agency and to rethink meanings of identity, language and politics. The method offers a frame of "intellectual attack against totalising metanarratives...breaking down the sharp distinction between traditional and popular

culture” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p.93). Critical discourse analysis de-centres assumptions about universality of truth and the oneness of reality by extending thinking into many different directions: professing “the act of educational research and choices of theory and methodology are themselves in the power/knowledge nexus” (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p.57).

### **Research challenges**

The nature of the research was voluminous and deciding what remained and what would be laid aside was difficult. Qualitative enquiry recognises that research is “not a black and white but a rainbow of all colours where hues gradually merge” (Newby, 2010, p.36). This metaphor highlights the facets of study that defy analysis and escape definition so empower the reader to envision their own picture. Freire (1998) discusses research as a curiosity involving a process of searching for justice, while arousing a critical consciousness. Challenges for researchers to remain impartial should not alter their commitment to uphold justice; adhering “always a rigorously ethical position” rather than succumbing to fence-sitting (Freire, 1998, p.22).

While the goal is to produce a factual, robust piece of research, there is tension involved in detachment. Though the researcher holds fast to ethical reporting, research is not a neutral space void of partiality. Negotiations with key research informants require flexibility because “researchers are answerable to” participants in research (Bishop, 1996, p.145) Research involves social encounter and human engagement is not entirely predictable. Researching spaces where objective meets subjective; neutral meets partial; passion dispassion; create distinct fusions in how gathering and presenting happens. This leads to an admonition that research is complex, multi-layered reflecting the many shades of reality.

### **Time and motion**

Time lines were exacerbated by the fact that the researcher lived 100kms away from the marae and Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. This resulted in longer periods of time than desirable between kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face). The research commitments were carried as remnants of time with pauses. In some instances discussion was exchanged before or after tribal hui or quick telephone updates sufficed in between busy schedules. When rendez-vous proved impossible, communication relied on the

limitation of email. Informal meetings happened at hui at Tāhuna Marae helping to sustain the momentum and were invaluable in consolidating relationships.

However, like the pressure Keelan (2005) noted in her research there were times when tension arose regarding timelines in the project. These needed to be reciprocally advantageous in charting the research pathway. Institutional timeframes are an important component of academic study but relegated second to meaningful relationships with family and associates of Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Negotiation and improvisation became key strategies in plotting mutually beneficial meeting spaces for busy Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua participants. Milroy & Temara (2013) deduce the rangahau (research) that “our tīpuna did ... was carried over many, many decades and many, many generations” (p.10) and it took time because it involved experiencing, listening, hearing and observing.

Whilst the researcher was committed during the week to teaching fulltime in early childhood education; time constraints caused the project to draw out. On the other hand the role connections between researcher as teacher and researcher as learner served to complement one another. Freire (1998) concludes that research and teaching are embodiments of the same:

I question because I submit myself to questioning. I research because I notice things, take cognizance of them and in doing so I intervene. And intervening, I educate myself. I do research so as to know what I do not yet know and to communicate and proclaim what I discover. (p. 35).

## **Language**

It is acknowledged that the deepest insights into Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua epistemology are embedded in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language. However, the focus group discussion happened predominantly in English because the researcher fluency in te reo is limited. Researcher’s linguistic competence in te reo-a- Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua meant that from the project inception, the researcher was reliant upon support for the translation of some words. This factor required another layer of tribal consultancy in the project. Being reliant on translations was judged to be a positive impetus in increasing participant involvement instead of purely as a limitation.

### **Concluding remarks**

Methodology decisions fashioned a research design that blended tribal epistemology and early childhood education with academia, while aiming to breathe life into the human relationships occupying the research spaces in-between. As a result, the investigative networks formed are unique to this case study. Under the auspices of kaupapa Māori as methodology the project became capable of reflecting the complexities of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga. A case study was chosen for its ability to showcase multifaceted intricacies yet the specificity that exist in a tribal early childhood education and care community. The conglomeration of methods in the research design became fitting choices through which to probe how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta epistemology was implicated in young children's learning at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna.

Focus groups favoured a communal way of working as all participants were familiar with working together as a collective; it also captured kaiako voices as a source of rich information on the topic. Data was triangulated through reviewing policies at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna and exploring tribal mission statements; both of which supplemented the focus groups narrative. Thematic data analysis, transcript coding along with critical discourse analysis were implemented as tools to interpret information.

## **Chapter Five: Research Findings**

### **Introduction**

The information shared by kaiako gathered in focus group discussion is collated and analysed to reveal how tribal knowledges affect their work. Analysis of the data reveals how kaiako make meaning of their own and collective perceptions regarding tribal influences in their work with children and whānau. The first section of the chapter focuses on distributing the information given by individuals in the focus group in relation to each focus question prompt. Interpretive analysis is intended to reflect the overarching inquiry through co-constructed meaning. Excerpts from the data collection are used to bring clarity to how tribal epistemology influences the care and education of young children.

The second phase of the chapter distinguishes a collective voice by identifying themes across the multiple ideas. The thematic concepts have been determined by inspecting, comparing and contrasting all informant responses in the transcripts. The latter part of the chapter interprets common themes in the reoccurring ideas heard during the key informant's narrative. Identifying common elements allows Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal ideology to be drawn out from the focus group via kaiako theory. Analytical discussion of the views shared is assembled to become insights into how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledges are integrated into the teaching and learning of young children at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is embedded in the community and as such there is an inextricable link between kaiako and whānau. Focus group indicative questions capitalise on this relationship to explore the impact on early childhood education. The four prepared prompt questions are:

1. What are your thoughts about teaching and learning te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect here at Puna?
2. How does the tribal traditional knowledge impact on teaching and learning?
3. What are the challenges for kaiako, in the teaching and learning of traditional language and knowledge at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo?

4. Is there any other discussion you wish to have that has not already been mentioned?

### **Focus Group Question 1**

*What are your thoughts about teaching and learning te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuria dialect here at Puna?*

Tribal language is imperative in the care and education of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuria young children and whānau. In early childhood education language and learning are synonymous. Language acquisition is essential to the development of all learning domains and underpins all relationships. Children's earliest perceptions and thoughts are formed via language (Vygotsky, 1978). Ministry of Education (1996) name 'mana reo' (communication) as a basic tenet in meeting obligations to early childhood education curriculum. Learning as a social construct demands sharing language. Opportunities for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuria whānau and young children to listen, speak and interpret symbols in tribal dialect are valued:

*Participant 1: Reo [language] is a priority here. We always encourage each other to speak.*

*Participant 2: They are our moko [grandchildren and children]. They come here to us to talk to us and we talk to them.*

*Participant 4: We love our language and so do our children.*

*Participant 3: Every parent was proud when their child came up and spoke. It is about their child. Every grandparent felt proud. You know, it was their moko. Even the children themselves, knew eh? They sat there listening and watching. It was just awesome*

*Participant 6: We are always trying to improve the way we speak and teach te reo so we can get better.*

*Participant 5: Our language is our identity; it is who we are.*

As speakers of te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuria, kaiako and mokopuna (grandchildren) carry tribal hallmarks in their ability to acquire and speak linguistic tribal patterns. Exploration of the word mokopuna as used in this context is interpreted to mean a generation in which 'imprints of', 'springing from' and 'sources of' link to those involved in their care and education at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The role language plays is pivotal in a metaphorical sense as tā



moko (a tattoo); identifying moko (grandchild/ren) as distinctive language users, in the same way that a tattoo on the skin is a permanent symbol of visual recognition. Implicit in the word ‘mokopuna’ is the centrality of language as a seamless connection across tribal generations; past, present and future:

Participant 2: *We treasure opportunities to talk. We don't have pukapuka [books] we usually have the kaumātua, nan or ōku mātua who tell the moko about the area.*

Participant 5: *The only way to maintain our language is to use it. You've got to share it with the kids because it's them that will have to carry it.*

Children are considered vital links in the maintenance and preservation of tribal dialect which is clearly articulated in policy statements. The Puna mission statement pledges “Atawhai i te reo me ngā tikanga o Ngāti Te Ata” as a deliberate perpetuation of language, values, beliefs and practices of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū (Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo, 2008, p.2). Early childhood education curriculum prioritises language use and skill base so that children's language learning is supported.

Participant 3: *I think our kids are turning them [whānau] back to the reo. The kids are going home speaking in te reo; that's probably what drives them seeking to learn te reo. It's the kids, eh. They want to keep up with their babies so they go to reo classes.*

Participant 4: *We [kaiako] are all trying to get better at speaking our language too.*

Kaiako support whānau to maintain te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū so tribal language can become children's lived experience. Children take a leadership role in taking language home for some whānau. The transmission of language encourages an inclusive approach to learning. Iwi aspirations that all tribal members are able to access and develop competency in te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū requires integrated commitment to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialect. The responsibility to enliven te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū is at the heart of tribal sustainability and asserts the tribal principle of mana whenuatanga as rights, responsibilities in recognising identity of their Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal rohe.

Participant 3: *They have two classes. They have a beginner's class and they have an intermediate. They're pretty full. We have parents go from here. They're starting to keep up with their tamariki. They'll ask us "What's this word mean? What's this word mean?"*

Participant 1: *The iwi tries to do everything it can to promote the Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect to keep it living.*

The personification of te reo-o-Ngāti te Ata Waiohua as a living entity accentuates tribal motivation to buttress and maintain Ngāti te Ata Waiohua tribal idiom. Reflected also, is Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua reliance on fluent speakers to support language learning for tribal members by transferring their knowledge. There is an expectation that learning and teaching of language happens more successfully across generations and in a collective setting.

Participant 3: *I was thinking how we install it in the babies here, our children. And they take it home and teach their parents, their brothers, and sisters. Then the grandparents learn. It goes out further than just here, It actually stems out into the wider community.*

When using a distributive model of community networking, language can be maintained (Hemara, 2000). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua leaders understand the vulnerable position te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua is currently experiencing. The language is in danger. The joy and hope experienced in intergenerational learning helps to raise te reo language profile both locally and regionally. The resulting tension and strain has called for desperate measures such as organising classes to raise language consciousness. These are freely accessible and welcomed by whānau who are encouraged to participate.

Participant 2: *They join up and they love the Māori classes. And it helps with their tamariki too.*

Participant 4: *We've got parents now that are going to reo classes, because of their babies.*

As a receptacle for understanding tribal knowledges and wisdoms, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect contains the key to preservation of tribal knowing. Tribal language provides the window through which meanings can be deeply understood, analysed and applied. Te reo-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua supports disseminating knowledges held

amongst recognised tribal experts. Intergenerational learning of language supports language maintenance and allows the transfer of oral tribal history.

Participant 3: *They're talking Ngāti Te Ata because of the koro [elders] Ngāti Te Ata. The parents, they go there and they learn. That's how we are passing it on.*

Participant 1: *If we are not sure, we ask them and they tell us.*

Participant 2: *Ngāti Te Ata [Waiohua] language is our heritage. It belongs to them [whānau and children].*

An open expression that both kaiako and whānau are mutual partners in teaching and learning young children together; makes spiritual, cultural, social and economic benefits about the well-being for the entire tribe and all people associated. Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is dedicated to extending hospitality to all whānau: aware that the early childhood service may be the first point of contact to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language, protocols, values and beliefs.

Participant 5: *We are all committed to making sure the language endures.*

Iwi knowledge, histories and traditions are intrinsically linked with place through historical connections to all land formations, geographical masses and phenomena in the natural world. Ministry of Education (1996) acknowledge that it is not only people and language that have profound influence on children's early learning but recognise the importance of place as a focal tenet of learning. The second conversation starter aimed to draw out kaiako perspectives about how traditional knowing informed early childhood curriculum programming and pedagogy at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo tribal childcare.

## **Focus Group Question 2**

*How does the tribal traditional knowledge impact on teaching and learning?*

The marae is the home of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo, therefore the entire modus operandi of the childcare facility is attached to its position on the marae. Tribal mores are observed and experienced naturally as children and whānau pass onto the marae daily to visit the educational and care centre.

Participant 2: *Being here at the marae. We utilise that. We can attend any hui going at the marae. They [children] learn lots from that.*

Participant 4: *Every tangi on that marae ties them to that marae. We all go. It's a part of us, eh? Part of who we are. I think the kids are better off here than they would be in town. Because the experiences they get here they wouldn't get in town. Like marae settings. Our kids can go up to the marae any time.*

Participant 3: *Our tamariki can go over there [pointing to whare tūpuna] anytime. They're a part of the marae. When anything's on they're there. They have actual hands-on experience with any hui or tangi that's happening.*

Participant 6: *We go up to the marae all the time. We go there to have pākeke mahi (learning for older pre-schoolers) in the meeting house. We'll go in there; read books or do mahi in there. The young ones are the ones that usually take them up there. That marae is used.*

Participant 1: *Whānau come to the marae every day and they feel the care that we have for them.*

Participant 5: *Our marae is already here. Our Tūpuna are on the marae with us.*

Children's involvement in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū traditional practices happens through participation in the regular routines and rhythms that permeate marae. Children learn protocol and tribal etiquette when observing and actively contributing to events. Tribal knowledge is embedded in the presence of Te Whare Tūpuna, wāhi tapu (burial ground) and other marae buildings that are present on the marae and the children's inheritance to experience this first hand. It is clear from discussion that children's tribal learning occurs naturally through exploration and experiential learning in a curriculum that is aligned to marae life.

Participant 3: *Down here at our marae it's all here; it's whānau. We have got all our Tūpuna (ancestors) around here; all from that side [pointing to the burial ground].*

Participant 2: *All the history is here, it's where we are from. All the history and how it came to be. The children are part of it.*

Traditionally Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū have emphasised the importance of sound physical health of members. Historically health was understood to be dependent on survival of the tribe: individual's and whānau strength was of community interest.

Tribal responsibility would ensure that tribal members had the best living conditions available to them.

Participant 4: *Not only do we go to the marae for tikanga and kawa [marae etiquette], we take them to the whare oranga for hauora [gymnasium for health checks]. We utilise all the buildings around the marae.*

Participant 1: *We have built good networks and relationships with the doctors in town who come out to the marae for our health checks.*

Historically children's well-being was understood by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū to be intrinsically connected to the healthy future of the iwi. Relationships with whānau and children exemplified children's place as unique issues of creation and radiated the well-being of the tribe (Jenkins & Harte, 2011).

Participant 1: *Before Ministry of Education documents were made we used traditional Ngāti Te Ata whare kura (tribal learning) aspirations. These methods recognised children as taonga and looked to the āhua [makeup or disposition] of each child through the process of observing their strengths and through supporting them to develop master-hood through their unique nature.*

Recognition of mana whenua is a defining aspect of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū knowing which respects place. Papatūānuku offers learning opportunities through geographical places of inherited treasure. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū traditional recitations feature these prestigious land masses and link land, water, sea and weather patterns to tribal historical events. The prestige of the place is embroiled in the tribe's relationship with the place in which they occupy and serve as constant reminders of the history that has afforded the tribe their historical stories. Situational learning is a key factor in learning at and provides both spontaneous and emergent curriculum for the children (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Participant 2: *It's the Puna, where it is, you know it's because the Puna is in Ngāti Te Ata area. Its mana whenua.*

Participant 6: *Teuwira is the name of our Whare. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū care about nature's signs.*

The childcare is positioned on the side of the river inlet impacts on children's learning and teacher pedagogy. The environment is a primary teacher and is deeply

ingrained in the knowing both implicitly and through explicit integration in the programme, such as regular walk to the riverbank.

Participant 3: *It is good to have the Puna here beside the river. We like to take them down to there to look at the view. It's amazing to be here with this outlook.*

Participant 4: *When we take them to the moana (river inlet), the kids play there. They love it.*

Participant 2: *Sometimes when the kids go down there, some come back with pupu (shellfish). They learn about them and how to play around water.*

Participant 3: *We've got a lot of fishermen; little divers and they go and get kaimoana.*

Participant 4: *We tell them stories about the places around here.*

Participant 3: *The tamariki (children) know the name of the correct name of the water. One day someone asked to go down the back and another kid said "No, that is Awaroa Iti". I think it's awesome that they know the proper name.*

Participant 5: *When we are down at Awaroa Iti, we talk about the history of there. That's how they learn the tribal history by going to the places in the area. Not actual books.*

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal aspirations are couched in teaching and learning beliefs and values for tamariki/mokopuna at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo and emphasise the tribal tenet of kaitiakitanga. Place-based curriculum comes from experiencing and appreciating the environment in which the childcare is situated and the sharing in the community who care for it.

Participant 3: *Instead of plastic, we try to use natural resources for the playground area. There was a need to extend the yard anyhow because it was too small. It's better now. Plus look at the view; we have a beautiful view.*

Participant 5: *We have done lots of gardening here. They see us doing it and they help us too.*

Participant 4: *That's how they learn about outside when we are out there.*

Participant 5: *We welcome whānau here. Our parents come in here too and help to do planting and digging. They helped us with the work for our new playground.*

Participant 2: *That's why we changed the outside playground so the children had more room to play. They like to play outside all the time. They needed to have more interesting challenges so we put the bridge in.*

Participant 2: *We are going to have a community garden. We're going to dig up down there so everyone can go and plant kai and look after the garden. So it's for everybody.*

Moreover there is clear understanding that the children and whānau who attend are the reason for the existence of the facility, being regarded as the primary source of inspiration and motivation for all that is undertaken at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū.

Participant 1: *An aspiration for each child comes from ngā Mātāpuna o Ngāti Te Ata (the source of Ngāti Te Ata Iwi). We appreciate each of our children as unique creations here at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo because Ngāti Te Ata iwi values and encourages each child's creative spirit.*

Participant 2: *We work with Kei Tua o Te Pae and Te Whatu Pokeka [Ministry of Education assessment exemplars] as assessment for learning currently but before these documents were made we used traditional Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū aspirations.*

Each child is celebrated as an individual of unique characteristics with genetic inheritances. Tribal practices and traditional beliefs offer a strong framework upon which to document each child's learning. All documentation of teaching and learning is underpinned by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū traditional ways of knowing and traditional relationships. Curriculum enrichment grounded in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū values and worldview enhances Ministry of Education guidelines:

Participant 1: *Children's learning is assessed through the lens of Mātāpuna o Ngāti Te Ata to find out how learning does meet the beliefs in an iwi context. Here at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Reo Puna, our practices and learning programmes are guided by an interwoven approach of Ngāti Te Ata philosophies through intricate ties to Tikanga a Ngāti Te Ata, the Treaty of Waitangi and the New Zealand curriculum, Te Whariki..*

The legacy of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū ideology offer the kaiako the capacity to build theory and practice into their early childhood teaching and learning pedagogies at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū. Service to whānau is the mission of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū.

Participant 1: *Recently we organised a whānau celebration dinner. It was an opportunity to inform our whānau about our work and to learn more about their aspirations for their children's education here at Puna. It was awesome. They had a real sense of empowerment.*

Participant 2: *Lisa prepared a slideshow about young children brain development in young children for the parents. It helped to show them how important their children's play is at Puna.*

Participant 3: *That dinner, the tamariki aspirations dinner, really opened a lot of people's eyes, especially the parents. That happened because what they told us and what we told them, It actually worked both ways. We all learned something.*

Participant 4: *Before kai we gave each whānau a sheet and asked them to write their aspirations for their tamaiti down and we're going to implement their aspirations for their kids.*

Participant 5: *The main idea was to share with them what the children their children do at Puna. We wanted to find out how we can extend on what whānau wanted for their tamaiti.*

Participant 6: *We felt a lot closer by sharing with them and the whānau still talk about that night.*

Participant 3: *Parents wrote that they wanted the children to learn about the history; to learn about the awa, the moana, kai moana and kingitanga.*

Stories about what the children are learning and how they are taught are mandatory requirements (Ministry of Education, 1996; 2008). The key word emanating from participant one's contribution above is the potency to be found in the word 'puna' meaning 'source'. Mātāpuna as used in this context not only emphasises the location of Te Kāhui iti nei Te Kōpū Puna Reo (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū early childhood care and education centre) at the source of the Waikato River but also gives credence and significance to the metaphorical 'source' of all knowledge in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal derivations of understanding and traditions. Local landscape is significant and has a powerful bearing on curriculum knowledge and learning in tribal education.

Participant 3: *We went on a trip to Maungawhau and nan told us the history of that place. The stories about of how it relates to us from the old days. Yeah, nan, she's precious with her kōrero about everything.*

Participant 4: *The stories are good because we learn about the places so we can tell the others.*



Historical sites that are further afield present place-based learning with opportunities for culturally affirming practices within the whānau a iwi (tribal family) context. The oral storytelling delivers a traditional shared cultural experience in celebrating and bringing to life the collective knowledges (Tinirau & Marshall-Lob, 2010).

Participant 2: *Staff tell the history about the places that they know.*

Participant 3: *When we go to these places, it gets passed down in the history. We have pretty much passed on what each of us knows.*

A fresh appreciation of tribal history is found in chance to preserve history through sharing with children into the contemporary world. Remembering people, places, stories, and origins allows whānau and children to make sense of their place in the world. Recalling ancestral ideals and values support working theories that will enhance life-long learning. Tribal legacies for our mokopuna to inherit can be realised through intergenerational encounters.

Participant 3: *Kaumātua (elders), nan and them tell us things. They have naturally got it because they've been around here all that time.*

Participant 2: *The kōrero will stop though if we don't ask them [the elders]. They know heaps more than we do. It's good to remember.*

Participant 4: *We invite them to come in and be with the children and sometimes they pop into see us. We are all whānau.*

Participant 5: *One parent said that she wanted her tamariki to spend more time with the kaumātua and she wanted them to learn more about pakiwaitara [stories] around this area.*

Realisation of iwi visions requires dedication and perseverance in the face of difficulty. Kaiako need to be devoted in order to meet whānau expectations for their children's learning. The following discussion highlights some of the hurdles that the teaching staff encounters.

### **Focus Group Question 3**

*What are the challenges for kaiako, in the teaching and learning of traditional language and knowledge at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo?*

Participant 2: *It's not easy to be a role model for the children and whānau when you have more to learn yourself.*

Commitment to language maintenance and retention is embodied in the values and beliefs of contemporary tribal strategic plans but each family has to meet the challenges of teaching and learning te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū when living in an English speaking world.

Participant 3: *It is hard with the pressures on our language. It's got to be strong in the whānau.*

Although kaumātua, kuia and mātua (parents) share their knowledge and expertise as tribal leaders, additional resources support young children's language learning. Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū is an outward expression of tribal hope in the preservation of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialect, however, kaiako have a critical role in discerning what constitutes quality care and education as experienced by Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe.

Participant 1: *On many occasions we have received beautiful Māori books and musical cd's from Ministry of Education resource providers that have been difficult to use. Complications have been due to different dialects and some issues associated to tikanga. Māori [tribal] understandings are nestled in generations and generations of experience.*

The ignorance of specific iwi languages and customs is astounding in Ministry of Education teaching aids. When dealing with large organisations such as Ministry of Education, kaiako are mindful to represent Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū and are firm in their commitment to preserve tribal protocol. Although the teaching team continues to refine the practice, it is accepted that whānau and kaiako have a reciprocal role in achieving high quality care and education for young children.

Participant 1: *It is the obligation of parents, tūpuna, whānau, hapū and iwi members to keep the traditions traditional, to keep beliefs believed, to keep the values valued and to keep the spiritual sacred, by handing down knowledge to younger generations.*

Challenges have meant that teachers have had to think strategically to create interest and momentum to preserve language amongst the tribe. Innovative practices and

pedagogy such as ‘mahi pai’ have invested viability in te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo has become a laboratory of innovation as teacher’s trial pedagogy in their strategies when teaching and learning te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. One Kaiako is involved in professional development with early childhood teaching teams in different iwi communities:

Participant 1: *I have developed a programme of te reo-a-ringā [learning language with hand gesture] to support when teaching language to children. Te reo Māori with local dialect and to build the confidence and competence. Reo-a-ringā and the waiata-a-ringā [action songs] have been tailored to reflect mana whenua uniqueness and utilise differing iwi dialect of that area, to compose classroom waiata that are specific to te reo Māori in the dialect through significant events and histories associated to place.*

A commitment to (re)produce te reo Māori-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua as a spoken medium for whānau in the Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is an on-going vision for the Puna. This requires a united and perpetual focus. Creative approaches to enliven te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua present resource challenges to preserve the dialectal idiosyncrasies of tribal fluent speakers.

Participant 5: *I am fortunate that I have access to a Ngāti te Ata speaker. It’s not so much to do with the individual kupu [vocabulary] but more with the phrasing. A lot of the reo I use is Ngāpuhi because it’s the other language that I have and know. If I am using the resources like the game ‘kei a wai? I change it to Ngāti Te Ata when I’m delivering it to the children.*

An early childhood setting presents whānau and kaiako with opportunities to define boundaries and frameworks so that specific tribal dialect can be applied in practice. A commitment to te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect requires conscious effort and critical approach on behalf of teachers.

Participant 1: *We have spent time changing kupu to suit our region by pasting over text with appropriate words. We have created new cards for games such as kei a wai. On one occasion we sent books to learning media to be published about whitebaiting that students took a lot of pride in creatin. They represented very unique reo traditionally appropriate to the history of this area; only to be returned beautifully published with edited dialect from another iwi, which was most disappointing for all involved.*

Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo teachers want to be responsive to families but it is not easy to involve them all in the centre events and practices.

*Participant 3: Some were considering this as a babysitting service, you know, That was something the staff recognised. We didn't want parents to drop and not stop. Most of the parents will come through with their kids. Then we noticed that they just stopped at the door and then stopping at the gate.*

*Participant 2: Most of them just pick their children up and go home. Sometimes you hear the children say, "Did you see my work? Can you see what I did?"*

Fiscal constraints can restrict economic buoyancy but management, abiding in true Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga, refuse to exclude whānau from attending.

*Participant 1: The fees are a barrier for whānau but even though they can't afford it, we'll still have them come in.*

*Participant 6: Those are the ones that should be at the front of the queue if they need it.*

*Participant 2: We break down the barriers any way we can by allowing our whānau in any way we can.*

*Participant 3: Whether it be cleaning, providing kai or helping with the grounds, there is a way so they don't feel whakamā [ashamed] either. They are alright to come in.*

The final conversation prompt was an opportunity for an open forum in which participants could lead discussion.

#### **Focus Group Question 4**

*Is there any other discussion you wish to have that has not already been mentioned?*

Being comfortable with their own distinct beliefs, knowledges and teaching theory allows Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo teachers and leadership to accommodate strong connections with other iwi outside their area. Inclusive and respectful practices with all whānau acknowledge common struggles.

*Participant 1: Te Kōpū have framed an approach that contextualises Māori knowledge by connecting with local iwi to establish leadership in the shared vision of achieving Māori success. Te Kōpū acknowledges the*

*key role of Mana whenua to contribute to the development of authentic meaning in resource development: where educators can access appropriate materials that are relevant for their use.*

The following comment made by a kaiako early in the discussion is noteworthy due to its ambivalence; stating education goals a common to all iwi, this view was in contrast to accentuating specific tribal knowledge.

*Participant 2: Aren't all iwi just doing their thing in their programmes? I wonder if they are much different from us.*

An education institution such as Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo becomes a language repository for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe by prioritising Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal dialect as a quality indicator in the care and education of young children. Identified as “mana tūpuna”, (Durie, 2003, p. 52) the prestige that exists in ancestral knowledge is highly prized. The complexities and diversities that underpin curriculum governance and teaching pedagogy in early childhood education are complicated by the language and cultural fusions that exist in whānau and hapū due to inter-iwi marriages between individuals of diverse tribal affiliation.

*Participant 3: All iwi are welcome here. That a part of our manaakitanga [generous hospitality]. We've got lots of other iwi [tribes] in our whānau here at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna.*

In order to build relationships with the education community outside Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua requires the leadership team to orchestrate opportunities to network. When a child left Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo to attend a rural primary school recently, an occasion arose to accompany the child on his visit to his new school.

*Participant 4: We transitioned one of our boys into primary. He wanted us to go to visit so took him and he was so proud to have his Puna there. His teacher didn't know we were here. They wanted to build a relationship with us to see if they could bring the class here. They drive passed here to go to Waipipi but they never knew that there was a marae here: two marae. They didn't know the iwi.*

*Participant 2: They learned that our tamariki could speak well; that they were in immersion but they never knew how much they knew until we went out there. Our kids showed them that.*

Participant 3: *It was the knowledge that he got from here that gave him the confidence to teach the teacher the waiata [song].*

Arohatanga (deliberate attitudes and application of care and love) is a valued tikanga of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi. The teaching team consider that extending aroha (attentive love and care) to all whānau and children who attend is an attribute that sets them apart.

Diversity and difference amongst the teaching team is celebrated with teacher strengths and personal attributes utilised to the fullest.

Participant 3: *It's important that the parent see us as loving and kind. They notice our different characters and they were saying that we've got a good mixture of teachers because we have got two mamas who give all the love and they are happy when their kids come running in to see us. She is the bubbly waiata one and she is the cuddly one. Each one of us gives a different thing; we were surprised that the parents noticed it and said that to us.*

Participant 4: *You know they can feel the love that we give to the kids and the parents when they come.*

Participant 2: *It makes them feel welcome and a mum told me that our place is unique; having love at the centre like we do.*

Participant 3: *It's the unconditional love that those kids feel when they walk through the door and the parents feel the same because of the staff that we are, That's it in a nutshell for me. It's the unconditional love everyone gives off not matter who comes through the door. It's not like a nine to five job. The tamaiti come running in to give you a kiss or give you a hug. He [pointing to a child] comes running in and gives us all hugs. All the kids do that.*

Participant 1: *There's a spiritual feel in here. They come here and things happen here. I think that it is a deep love that is sensed here. It's not a nine to five feeling.*

Participant 6: *I just think what makes it work here is we're all whānau. Being all whānau and run by whānau, every parent here has the opportunity to jump on board.*

Participant 3: *Aroha is what makes us different to other places. It is natural for us.*

Aloha [aroha] is the greatest intelligence with which to view the world (Meyer, 2006). Teachers describe aroha in the care of families and children. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga understands aroha involves the human spirit. Learning and teaching

is informed by the spirit. Enrichment for children, families and teachers happens when they work together in spirit. When there is fragmentation of the mind, body and spirit, a disconnection appears in the care of young children. When knowledge is considered the domain of the mind only; a split occurs as the spirit is left out. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal philosophy sees parents, children and teachers connected in the spirit; the spirit of arohatanga (deliberate attitudes and application of care and love) at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Tribal early childhood education flourishes and finds goodness through the spirit of aroha.

### **Themes extracted from the findings**

The following table identifies the overarching themes emerging from focus group discussions. The rich contributions embedded in the individual participant voices have been reviewed thoroughly to drill into the question of how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing is implicated in early childhood education. An inclusive approach to the study findings has allowed key ideas to be deduced through studying the co-relationships between kaiako voice, tribal knowledge and policy and Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo mission statements. This triangulation of findings has found an array of intersections and possibilities in the inquiry. Therefore, all themes listed below are interconnected and are intended to be considered holistically.

#### Themes from the focus group research

1. Tribal knowing in te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language
2. Tribal history as tribal knowing
3. Tribal curriculum in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga marae
4. Tribal curriculum in mana whenuatanga
5. Tribal curriculum in whānau aspirations
6. Tribal kaitiakitanga leadership in curriculum
7. Arohatanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua: a tribal vision

These themes are examined in detail in chapter six to expand more fully, on the ideas raised in discussion. Searching the narratives more closely divulges how tribal epistemology impacts on early childhood education curriculum.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the focus group inquiry gave voice to those who are teaching in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo in a collective group discussion that enabled kaiako to share their lived experiences when working with whānau and young children. During conversations, researcher prompts encouraged kaiako to delve more deeply into Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal influences underpinning their work. A co-construction of new understandings and meanings was determined by participants themselves as they interpreted ideas and became involved during the flow of discussion. As they replied they were able to recall, remember and reclaim the value in their work, which gave them opportunity to appreciate one another's contribution; each point of view built a new perspectives and awareness about the relationship between tribal epistemology and the care and education of young children.

Open dialogue is a hallmark of kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The selected quotations clustered under the prime conversations starters expressed both variation and commonalities; explaining the multifaceted axiom of tribal epistemology. Each quotation from the focus group proceedings have led to insights into how curriculum and pedagogy for young children's learning evolves from Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing.



## **Chapter Six: Discussion of Research Findings**

### **Introduction**

An investigation into tribal knowing and early childhood education was found to be an expansive topic so information in this chapter has been streamlined into categories which identify key tribal pedagogies and philosophies from data findings. Discussion of these principle ideas intends to expand thinking about the interface between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua knowledge systems and early childhood educator theory and praxis. The literature review identified paucity in research on specific tribal epistemologies and the applicability of these in early childhood education and care services. This chapter provides some insights into the implications of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing and viability of early childhood education as experienced by educators, whānau and tamariki at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

The early section of the chapter clusters research information into seven significant themes: Tribal knowing in te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language: Tribal history as tribal knowing: Tribal curriculum in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga marae: Tribal curriculum in mana whenuatanga: Tribal curriculum in whānau aspirations: Tribal kaitiakitanga leadership in curriculum: Arohatanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua: a tribal vision. They are not listed in order of importance but instead follow ideas as they unfolded during the meandering narratives in focus group conversations. The latter part of this chapter recommends further research possibilities that arise from this study of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowledge, kaiako and early education young children at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

### **Theme 1: Tribal knowing in te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua**

Teacher narrative and tribal mission statements recognise Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect as integral to tribal identity. Sustainability of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect is a source of tribal development and drives strategic plans and policy development amongst which is the provision of quality early childhood education and care (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991; Flavell, 2011).

This study is evidence that te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua holds tribal knowledges in distinct expressions such as meaning inherent in place names. The spirit of the language is found in beliefs that ancestral knowledge lives on in language and acts as wisdom for members to apply to living. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal knowing is accessed through tribal language. The freedom to use traditional language brings to life expressions and viewpoints that are found only in using Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal language. The hope and freedom that is embedded in tribal dialect illustrates the importance of sustaining Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal language.

Over many years, the use of te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua idiosyncratic language has been complimented by tribal contact with other languages. By the late eighteenth fifties significant numbers of people including members of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua could read and write both Māori and English (Cameron, 1958). *Te Hokioi e Rere Atu Na*, the first Māori newspaper, was published in 1861 in Mangere and Ngāruawāhia: Both were sites of close proximity to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua rohe. Even though the life of this first Māori newspaper was short it had a political influence allowing some tribal members to access language and ideas at that time (Cameron, 1958).

Tawhiao the Māori King who officiated at the opening blessing of Teuwira wharenui (meeting house) at Tāhuna Marae urged tribal members to stay informed about land issues that were causing direct threats to their Waikato homelands by reading the newspaper *Te Hokioi e Rere Atu Na* which debated the land issues of the day (Moorfield & Ka'ai, 2011). Te Reo Māori language wields tribal political authority still, especially in tribal forum: As such language is a powerful conduit of meaning and inspiration.

The research shows that te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua is a political strategy to strengthen the tribe and prevent tribal knowledges being compromised. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua Waiohua language is not considered in isolation but is located through familial links to Kīngitanga in the Waikato region and other tribes; Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language has formed a distinct dialect over time. Language is powerful in its ability to circulate contemporary thoughts and enables lively political discussion

and debate amongst members and iwi. Te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūa is therefore a valuable ancestral and political repository for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga.

## **Theme 2: Tribal history as tribal knowing**

Findings in the study describe Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga as instrumental in their ongoing encounters with whānau and children in their care at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū. Kaiako provide curriculum that reveals tribal ‘(k)nowing’. Ancestral tribal ‘(k)nowing’ is established as relevant k(now)ing today. Age-old ways become explicit in curriculum, practices, values and beliefs through tribal language.

Wihongi (2010) affirms “we are all born with a certain integral, ancestral knowledge. This ‘knowing’ may be buried deep within, it may be subconscious, but that is what resonates when we recognise [it]...” (p. 88). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga supports successful tribal learning and teaching at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

The importance of tribal knowing in curriculum for successful children’s learning is emphasised (Macfarlane, 2000, 2002, 2004). “Engaging students in studying local wisdom, reo, and tikanga as well as global knowledge, becoming involved holistically through style, spirit ...and drawing from theory, ancient or contemporary or both, to enrich practice” (Macfarlane 2004, p.101). Knowledge that is able to propel children’s social, emotion, intellectual and spiritual world/capacities is not only relevant but empowering in education. The potential of tribal learning and teaching is confirmed in educational research projects examining successful outcomes for students (Bishop, 1996; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Smith, 1992a). Participant narrative is committed to tribal vision:

*Participant 1: Tribal knowledge of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūa will ensure that high quality immersion education is provided for all age groups.*

*Participant 3: We need to have the Puna to help the whānau learn about the history. Not everybody knows the Ngāti Te Ata stories. There are so many to learn about the rohe [area].*

Tribal knowledge and philosophy is a societal asset with impetus for positive social change in Aotearoa New Zealand. By imparting Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūa tribal knowledge to learners in their care, tribal education has potential to transform the

impacts learners have in society. “Education will enable them to understand and support Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal development and Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū aspiration ... to establish a good working relationship with others for the benefit of the rohe as a whole” (Flavell, 2011, p. 30). This positive is situated “in the spaces between, Māori identity, lifestyle, culture and knowledge root themselves and grow so that they transform the structures within which they exist” (Penetito, 2010, p. 97). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal knowing is disseminated through tribal curriculum in early childhood education and care.

The ideological framework of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga is embedded in principle of genealogical lines establishing ancestry. Whakapapa creates the embodiment of intricate interrelationships between people; origins of whakapapa (genealogical lines establishing ancestry) that link humanity to one another, the environment and the universe. Beliefs may vary but origin knowledges are held across tribes and essentially connect Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū to all other Māori tribes of Aotearoa New Zealand and the cosmos (Best, 1934; McNeill et. al, 2010; Marsden, 1992, 2003; Mead, 2003; Mihini, 20002; Pere, 1994).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohūatanga does not exist in isolation. Doctrines are based on the interplay between traditions, values and tikanga (Māori customs) of Māori tribes and te reo Māori (Māori language) as essential vehicles enabling the transmission of traditions and permitting successful socialisation of children within a tribal context. Marsden (2003) advocates the necessity to socialise using particular manners within a Māori context through direct use of appropriate language to assure the entire interaction is based on customs, values and traditions. The rationale for familiarisation of iwi traditions is fundamental in education curricula for young children. Suggestions that tribal knowledges not only act as bonds to God, our ancestors, and the land but enable children to uptake tribal membership are issued in this statement:

The integration of an individual into full membership of society takes place over a long period of time... The process of learning, by which the raw material of the young is transformed into full citizenship, is inherent in the workings of each institution so that the instilling of values, norms and attitudes is effected by the apprenticeship to tribal life, that is, by existence in the cultural milieu (Marsden, 2003, p.23).

Accordingly, Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe situate Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga as central in the practice and policy in the education and care of young children. Tāhuna Marae is a pivotal place where tribal protocols demonstrate historical knowledge.

### **Theme 3: Tribal curriculum in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga marae**

Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo has the privilege of operating on Tāhuna Marae. Tribal policy documents state marae kawa (marae protocol):

Marae protocol for whaikōrero within Ngāti Te Ata territory and in Ngāti Te Ata marae follow the Tau utuutu format in which manuwhiri alternate with tangata whenua, with tangata whenua speakers beginning and finally ending the speechmaking (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p. 20).

It is incongruent to expect children or adults to fully appreciate Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga competently without the ability to speak and understand Te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua because marae protocol and language are interdependent. Mead (2003) concedes are “it is worth noting that one’s understanding of tikanga Māori is informed and mediated by the language of communication. One’s understanding through te reo Māori is different from one obtained through the English language” (Mead, 2003, p. 2).

Tikanga are living values and practices that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe perpetuate ways that consolidate sound relationships between people and the land on which they live. Specific customs follow Tainui-Waikato practices in the wharenui, Teuwira, reflecting respect and reverence for place and historical traditions. Sacred laws maintain tikanga as meaningful ways of conduct which contain both implicit and explicit significance exemplifying meritorious behaviour (Durie, 2008). However, Marsden (2003) warned against explaining knowledge to the point of homogenisation by simplifying it so it can be easily understood by an audience; knowing that it is spiritual dimensions and practices that defy explanation.

The kaiako help the children to understand the spirituality attached to the protocols of the marae. An awareness of both the seen and unseen world impinges on the group when the children see the wāhi tapu on their walk to the marae. Ngāti Te Ata

Waiohutatanga exemplifies this in marae customs such as karakia and karanga (ceremonial call of welcome). Kaumātua recall ancestral knowledges “we were given brief references to incantation and rituals which are still being practised by many” (Flavell, 2011, p.6). Young children grow to understand these foundational marae rituals when they participate in marae life. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta tikanga offer young children a myriad of curriculum experiences when they are exposed to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta cultural ways of knowing and proceeding on the marae.

*Participant 4: For the really big hui we organise ourselves into teams so we can manage the work. We all know what has to be done so we share everything out so that everyone including the children can help to bring it together. Some of the whānau are good at getting kaimoana; some are good in the kitchen. There's something for everyone to do.*

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta specific customs and protocols are observed when young children see correct conduct and behaviour in responses to particular events by tribal individuals and groups. Children become accustomed to tribal methods of organisation through exposure during participation at marae occasions. Tikanga allow for the continuation of shared beliefs and the perpetuation of tribal ways of life as inherited. While some practices are inherited, others emerge out of responses to the environment but all are perpetuated out of high regard for specific tribal customs. These are considered distinct to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta in relation to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta district.

#### **Theme 4: Tribal curriculum in mana whenuatanga**

Opportunities for children to experience mana whenua happens when kaiako intentionally plan curriculum that introduces Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta tribal whakapapa to celebrate group identity. Mana whenua place based curriculum is visible during the organised trips in the tribal rohe. Traditional stories of the area develop children's pride of place and tribal history. Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo interrupts children's over-exposure to “cultural and ideological practices of the dominating society” (Durie, 1997, p. 155). Tribal identity forms a rich aspect of learning for children and their whānau. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuta organises collective annual tribal commemorations for members. These promote mana whenua with marae as a focal point in establishing a collective iwi identity.

Participant 2: *Every year on Waitangi Day, we come together as a tribe to celebrate Children's Day with our youngest members. The day is positive encouragement for all the children. Every child is good at something and receives a prize for effort. Good food, fun and games mark the day so that all age groups can come out and enjoy the day. Large numbers of whānau take part.*

The close connection between identity and whenua is celebrated in the relationships to the bodies of land and sea that have been historically inhabited, recognised, and associated with Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe. This richness establishes tribal identity and is acknowledged in tribal mihi recitations. Trips to tribal particular places of significance are organised on celebratory days. Leaders retell tribal stories of historical events and tribal member take advantage of these opportunities to visit important sites and learn tribal history. Relationships to the land, sea and sky, animate and inanimate objects have been learned over time. Mana whenua-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū (relationship between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū and tribal territory) pertains to multiple applications in the social, spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional and cultural dimensions in the world. "For Maori, there is no concept of being that does not include notions of spirit" (Penetito 2010, p. 47).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū like many other iwi have acted as (and will continue to act as) the environmental conscience within their tribal territory. Cultural and spiritual relationships with natural [resources] water states that they cannot be dismissed as merely personal but that spiritual relationships are admissible and can be considered as part of water right applications (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p.25-26).

The head teacher at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo is contracted by Ministry of Education to support other services in the application of mana whenua in early childhood education. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribe recognise their tribal area and adhere to the "maintenance of its territorial integrity, along with peace and justice for its people" (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p.11).

Tribal sanctions in the area endorse their position as iwi to authorise control over the way curriculum is interpreted to include tribal wisdoms. Tribal authority stems from mana atua (sacred spiritual power), mana tūpuna (power through descent) and mana

whenua to tribal identity and self-sufficiency (Te Iwi o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū Authority, 2011).

Within the context of Ngāti Te Ata usage of the term self-sufficiency, it includes the maximum utilisation of all resources of the iwi including its people, its land and physical and natural resources (including those which have been confiscated or illegally taken) in a manner which improves the physical, spiritual, cultural, and economic well-being of the iwi and its members (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p. 17).

### **Theme 5: Tribal curriculum in whānau aspirations**

Upon analysing kaiako narrative, it became clear that consultation and collaboration with families were considered pivotal for the delivery of quality early childhood education. Information sharing between teaching staff and whānau was sought regularly and highly regarded:

*Participant 3: The parents give a whānau view. Meeting up with parents helps to give us ideas about what they want for their children. The parents learn things from us too. It changes the dynamics in the way they [parents] care for them too. The funny thing is that it makes the parents think about when they tutū (play idly). They know it's not just tutū (idle play), it can be them doing what they are good at. It changes their view and the way they look at them.*

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū whānau requested their children have more contact with tribal elders who can retell tribal stories. They value the system that links them inextricably through relationship to tribal members who have lived and shared tribal spaces with others living there. Kaumātua and Kuia are understood to be sophisticated repositories of tribal knowing “timeless tested philosophical and theoretical positions that provide for Māori ways of knowing and being” (Edwards, 2013, p. 46). Acknowledging interrelationships between people and the universe creates a positive context for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū environmental education:

To establish a Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū Education Centre which clearly signals the central role of education for future of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū and its role in the rohe (area). To provide education for Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū people based on kaitiakitanga and other values central to ngā tikanga o Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū (Flavell, 2011. p.30).



Whānau benevolence underpins all Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua vision statements and action plans. Open consultation with families about what they desire for their children adds value to curriculum. Easy access to education maximises whānau potential and supports tribal educational entrepreneurship. Tribal families hold the power to fuel successful tribal ventures.

*Participant 3: It's the support they need. If the whānau want it they'll get up and they'll make it happen. Seeing their expressions and we all wanted to read their aspirations for their children. That was what we set out to achieve and I think we achieved it and more.*

Whānau expressed an interest in the power of intergenerational relationships; “what it gives ... is a very long-term perspective. It doesn't just focus on immediate financial return but on building a strong and sustainable economic base. A strategic timeframe isn't five to ten years but up to one hundred” (Jayne, 2005, p. 26). Tribal early childhood education focuses on future-proofing beneficial outcomes for the collective; giving permission to the generations coming up to make decisions that are right for them in a new era environment. As for many iwi, tribal development considers the whole community; “a robust economy, faster job creation, educational success and an end to passive welfare dependency” (Jayne, 2005, p. 26).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua invites whānau to contribute spiritually, culturally, socially and economically to the education of their young children. Open door policies and regular meeting welcome children and families as valued contributors who inspire programme. Tribal self-belief for the younger generation entrusts education will encourage them to make decisions that are right for them and the tribe in a new era. “The purpose is to learn and then the next stage of that learning is how to apply that learning in another context” (Milroy & Temara, 2013, p. 23). It is understood that the future brilliance and vibrancy of the tribe will bubble up from children and families within it, This has been referred to as “cultural effervescence” (Shane Jones, 2005, as cited in Jayne, 2005, p. 28). Hence the name Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood education and care centre) enshrines the source of life springing up from the gatherings of the young as founts of new tribal life.

Consultation with families is sought after in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal early childhood education. The development of close relationships is fostered by the kinship ties within the families. Teaching staff capitalise on these connections and strive to retain clear lines of communication always:

*Participant 3: Our kids are awesome. They play well together. We encourage them to be creative and try to bring out their individual strengths so they can make their own choices. They can do amazing things when we watch them play. We make a point of highlighting these strengths when we share with their whānau. We're always positive in the way we feed back to our whānau so they learn what their moko are good at.*

Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo policy of inclusion means that some children who attend do not have genealogical tribal connections, but all are welcomed and “children are given equitable opportunities to learn with and alongside others” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 70).

Balancing tribal goals to be self-reliant with desires to provide a high quality environment is always an economic struggle. “You know, I think the thinking is beginning to turn and come back to the way in which communities can assist each other and work with each other and spread the wealth around instead of confining it to the few” (Milroy & Temara, 2013, p. 28). Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū as with other tribes commit to supporting their community. Economic issues identified in kaiako narrative were not perceived as barriers but motivated resolve to overcome economic restrictions. “We are living in a time of change. We must strategise now to provide for our future and that of our mokopuna and not be left behind” (Flavell, 2011, p. 21).

### **Theme 6: Tribal kaitiakitanga leadership in curriculum**

Group discussions with kaiako highlighted the respect given to the natural environment by children and whānau at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The premise upon which kaitiakitanga evolved out of local tribal knowledge of local conditions is steeped in the relationships of care, preservation and trust attached to spiritual beliefs and knowledge of the balance necessitated in creation:

The natural environment is a taonga. It is the source of our nourishment, our kai, and our spiritual and physical welfare, we whakapapa to it and we are not separate from it. Inability to exercise our rightful kaitiakitanga affects our welfare and despoils our environment. (Te Iwi o Ngāti Ata Waiohua Iwi Authority, 2011, p.16).

Children's awareness of the physical world in which they live is played out in opportunities to learn alongside the natural world. The river and other elements of nature are harnessed as opportunities to learn. The climate and natural conditions in the playground such as wind and mud provide curriculum for children's learning. Seasonal rhythms, weather patterns and natural phenomena produce ways to 'work with' rather than 'overcome' and 'commodify' the natural world. Tribal perception extols:

As we walk on our lands we walk with our tūpuna. We see our lands as they once were how they are and more importantly how they should be. Our perspective is long term and our thoughts are on the future of our mokopuna. Our aspiration is that our lands and waters will be returned to us through the exercise of kaitiakitanga; overtime will recover, be rehabilitated and thrive (Flavell, 2011, p. 8).

Wetere-Bryant (2000) points to leadership as experienced in early childhood education as a way to construct visionary links amongst community. By challenging those in authority, environmental issues can clearly motivate others to become involved in protecting tribal land and resources for perpetuity. The restoration of place in the meanings of cultural, spiritual and linguistic knowledges is seen as a way to build stronger communities. Wishes for a community garden at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo are examples of community endeavour. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal policies promote kaitiakitanga:

The kaitiaki approach to environmental management is holistic and provides for restoration of damaged ecological systems; restoration of ecological harmony, ensures that resources and their usefulness increases; reduces risk to present and future generations and provides for the needs of present and future generations (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p. 18).

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga leadership obligations and responsibilities are never solitary although issues may be specific to place and people; there is always a sense of solidarity when acting on behalf of a community. Tribal members, appointed kaumātua and kuia who act as custodians of tribal interests and resources are called

on to contribute to curriculum and programme events at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The ethic of kaitiakitanga is seen as the “exercise of guardianship” relating to a resource and includes the “ethic of stewardship based on the nature of the resource” (Ngāti Te Ata, 1991, p. 26). Families and children experience caring for their environment on the marae in gardening vegetables in the playground. The teaching team are mindful of the use of plastic material and include natural resources when working with children. Sustainable development policies state:

Our challenge is to reduce and manage our ecological footprint...we support proposals for energy efficiency and transition away from fossil fuels, We support minimisation initiatives to reduce, reuse and recycle. We advocate native tree planting on major scale... (Flavell, 2011, p. 16).

### **Theme 7: Arohatanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua: a tribal vision**

Arohatanga as described by kaiako becomes potent pedagogy when working with children and families in early childhood education and care services. Teachers show that the values of aroha enliven their hearts, minds and spirits in the ways they work. They find aroha energises their practice in the care of tamariki and whānau at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood education and care centre). Arohatanga underpins Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua philosophies and tribal visions.

*Participant 4: Love is the foundation of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. It's in our connection bonds. Tamariki are loved. Tamariki share love. Tamariki feel loved. Tamariki express love. Whānau experience a loving environment and loving relationships between the staff at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo and they pick up on it.*

Aroha is a principle of operation in social interactions. It aims to draw the best out of people and displays generosity in action. Although aroha is not considered a compound word, an etymological examination of aroha provides insights into the meaning and application of the concept of aroha. Aroha [aro-ha] finds derivation in the word *aro*: meaning to take notice of, to heed, to pay attention to, to understand, to show interest in and the word, *ha*: denotes essence, breath, taste (Ryan, 2006). Together these indicate aroha as a noun expressing life essence and as a verb to be the deliberate practice of paying heed to and acting in a way that demonstrates respect for the life force or life essence of another.

Examination of these two words allows us to appreciate more deeply, the potential found in aroha. The spirit of aroha is found in tribal education as a way of extracting tribal knowing. Aroha is understood to be implicated in the act of creation as happened with ‘breathing life’ into human form. Teacher practice is derived out of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal philosophy of aroha. Aroha therefore becomes a visible form of tribal philosophy which ‘breathes life’ into teacher practices in early childhood education and care. Aroha transcends a worldly experience in the present by acknowledging an unseen spiritual world (Marsden, 2003; Meyer, 2006).

Aroha introduces the notion of soul and spirit into theories and practices of early childhood education and care. Spiritual connotations of aroha express the ethic of attentive care and represent a connectedness of all things in the universe; aroha accesses an energy manifested in the life source of all living things. Working in a team requires that individual teachers practice aroha in their daily work “to teach in a way for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions when learning [and teaching] begin” (hooks 1994, p.13). Aroha epitomises the pedagogy practised by educators and caregivers of young children who seek the highest ideals of affection, compassion, empathy, enjoyment, fairness, goodness, graciousness, honesty, sympathy and trust in their work.

A caregiver of young children who is working out of aroha will be deliberate in their care, paying attention to the way they can bring life into their work, as opposed to the temptation to become mechanical in delivering care routines to children.

Arohatanga allows the spirit of life and being to seek higher expectations and practice in care and service to families and children of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi. To extend aroha in the interpersonal bonds between young children, families and the wider community is seen as a powerful practice in which to breathe life, joy and criticality into the work of early childhood education.

### **Implications of this study for future Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū research**

Out of data discussion it is evident there are a range of implications for the early childhood sector of education in relation to tribal epistemologies. The first implication concerns the dynamic of how tribal knowing becomes visible in curriculum for the education and care of young children. Some teachers spoke about

the fusion of Te Whariki and tribal knowledges and beliefs. The research points to teacher interpretations and understanding of tribal knowledge being influential in applying specific Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua principles to working with families and children. It is beneficial to understand what factors contribute to the synthesis of curriculum in tribal early childhood education. Awareness of intersections occurring in tribal knowledge and curriculum could be useful in teacher training education to deepen teacher trainees' understanding of curriculum construction in tribal immersion early childhood education.

The second implication involves recognising the influence that tribal knowledge has on teacher pedagogy particularly in the area of language acquisition. This study found teacher practices in tribal education to be mutable; emerging from both traditional tribal knowledge and innovative responses to contemporary contexts. Gaining cognisance of pedagogical methods to advance te reo me ngā tikanga-o-iwi (specific tribal languages, customs, values and beliefs) will open up perceptions about how pedagogical practices support learning for young children and families. The unfolding of individual and collective aspirations for teaching and learning ideologies such as arohatanga in tribal education provides the early childhood education sector with further possibilities to explore.

Another implication concerns the interpretations of tribal leadership as a community endeavour in early childhood education. Participant narrative and tribal policy highlighted the leadership potential for teachers, and children that percolate from tribal education. Further investigation into how identity, location and tribal values propel leadership will deepen insights into what constitutes leadership in early childhood education and care. Teachers in this study described how whānau partnerships lead and direct curriculum at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Deeper understandings of how tribal early childhood education leadership models evolve could provoke broader thinking amongst leadership philosophers.

The final implication for early childhood education is found in the importance of giving and receiving kaiako stories. Feminist implications presented in this inquiry are evidence that kaiako narrative is a valid source of tribal knowing and acts as a powerful projectile in translating tribal knowing into lived experience for young

children and whānau (hooks, 1994). This research shows that interpretations of tribal knowledge in early childhood can be expressed as both an individual and collective voice of teachers. Kaiako teacher vocal recollections of early childhood experiences for the youngest tribal members are impressive in prompting thinking around tribal early childhood educational landscapes.

## **Recommendations**

This section of the chapter suggests further areas of research that can extend thinking around tribal epistemology and early childhood education that has begun in this project. The first recommendation is the necessity to advance distinct iwi research projects into early childhood education. This project has established positive education trajectories found in tribal pathways for children and families who attend tribal early childhood education and care. However, extensive iwi studies would provide additional information from which to compare and contrast educational outcomes for those young children and families who attend tribal early childhood settings. If specific tribes instigated research on their own particular tribal impetus for education, these multiple iwi study sites would provide expansive knowledge about how tribal identity frames and mediates in early childhood education.

There is substantial research into the variables of how tribal language immersion services act to facilitate tribal dialectal language growth and development. Teachers at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo described some innovative strategies that have been embraced by them as mana whenua to support the growth of tribal speakers of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū language. However, more extensive studies on different tribal responses would expose specific tribal approaches and pedagogies. Intertribal research where two or more iwi groups could be involved in collaborative research projects would be useful in building capacity in tribal curriculum and pedagogical approaches. This research would serve as valuable information to various other tribes and indigenous people interested in sustainability and preservation of tribal languages including professional bodies within Ministry of Education and New Zealand Teacher's Council.

Another area waiting research is tribal leadership style in early childhood education. Leadership is not seen as static by kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo rather all kaiako contribute to a distributive model of team leadership. Leadership is characterised by tribal members who bring strengths to their work and embrace roles accordingly. The findings indicate that kaiako embrace leadership roles within and outside the tribal community. Additional research into tribal leadership would open up perceptions in the domain of leadership studies; regarding modus operandi within early childhood care and education.

A final recommendation calls for deeper research into the tribal pedagogies arising out of the intersections of tribal philosophy and kaiako values and beliefs. Kaiako narrative identified specific practices around arohatanga and kaitiakitanga as integral in their work with children and families. All teaching professionals would benefit from data that examines how tribal epistemology acts as catalyst in teacher pedagogy. There is a demand for more comprehensive and inclusive teaching practices that reflect diverse tribal philosophies and realities for young children and families, amongst practitioners in early childhood care and education.

## **Conclusion**

The discussion introduced further research potential in tribal education and care for young children. The investigation around tribal knowing and early childhood education and care has revealed implications for tribal language and philosophies to become liberating pedagogies. The themes highlight connections between Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology and kaiako theory and praxis. The influential nature of specific Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua ways of knowing in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo amplifies early childhood education as a site of tribal freedom with educational trajectories for all involved.

Study findings point to additional possibilities for research explanations on how tribal epistemology is characterised as curriculum and practice in early childhood education and care services for young children and families. Ideas emerging from these findings are designed to encourage more extensive investigations amongst diverse iwi, indigenous educators and other interested parties who wish to delve more deeply. Above all, future inquiry into tribal knowing and early childhood education provokes



multiple avenues of research with studies providing more expansive applications of and appreciation for tribal epistemologies in the field of early childhood education.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion**

As the project closes, it is clear that there is a lot left to say about tribal knowledge and early childhood education. This final chapter intends to unfold the implications and applications of this research study and outline some of the limitations and strengths that are a part of this project. Lastly, chapter discussion outlines possible ideas for future research concerning how tribal epistemology can enrich. Finally the chapter offers some concluding comments.

### **Argument of the thesis**

In spite of the contested nature of early childhood education curriculum in a context where global economics and international interpretation of curricula exert pressure and influence education in Aotearoa New Zealand; this case study has found positive educational trajectories emerge in the fusion of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal epistemologies and learning in tribal early childhood education and care. An analysis of data from the narrative afforded by kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo identified distinct pedagogical approaches that reflected tribal knowing in the teaching and learning of young children and their whānau. Tribal early childhood education is synonymous with tribal development and sustainability.

### **Key findings**

The following themes from the findings are written as summaries separately but as stated previously, they need to be considered holistically because the ideas are interrelated. They are all contributing factors in teaching and learning of tribal knowledges for young children at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. These are listed under the following headings:

- Tribal knowing in te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū language
- Tribal history as tribal knowing
- Tribal curriculum in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tikanga marae
- Tribal curriculum in mana whenuatanga
- Tribal curriculum in whānau aspirations
- Tribal kaitiakitanga leadership in curriculum

- Arohatanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua: a tribal vision

### **Tribal knowing in te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua**

Not surprisingly, te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua specific dialectal language was found to be the primary conduit in transmitting tribal knowledges to families and young children. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal policies and statements confirm Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect is treasured tribally and protected in prioritising usage amongst tribal members. Kaiako pedagogy for teaching language is innovative; with creative pedagogies leading to ideas being disseminated to other iwi groups through professional development. Pedagogy that is identified by kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo as ‘reo-a-ringa’ (learning language through hand gestures) honours mana whenua of other iwi. Te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua language is a political tool. It symbolises freedom of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua members to live as a distinct iwi in Aotearoa New Zealand. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect is a hallmark of quality in early childhood education at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo.

### **Tribal history as tribal knowing**

Research findings emphasised how tribal traditions endure through tribal celebrations that remember, retell and reinvigorate connections between the past and present. Participants shared how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua trips to significant tribal locations supported tribal stories being told by kaumātua and kuia. Important tribal events contextualised tribal knowledge into contemporary realities. During tribal gatherings, children and families are exposed to ancestral ‘(k) nowing’. The teaching team at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū designs curriculum around Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology. Kaiako reported how historical tribal knowledge is shared across generations; with preferred pedagogy conducted in an oral medium (Edwards, 2013a).

### **Tribal curriculum in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga marae**

The study findings showed that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua marae tikanga is pivotal to learning in early childhood tribal curriculum for young children. Tāhuna Marae has an all-encompassing presence in the life of the children, families and teachers and contributes to young children’s lived experience at every possible opportunity. It is understood that children learn traditional tribal marae protocols and customs first-hand through regular participation in marae events. Teachers and children celebrate marae

life with deliberate visits to Teuwira; Whare Tūpuna and Whare Oranga, the name given to the gymnasium located on the marae. The location of Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo on the marae complex fosters intimate relationships between marae, whānau, children and kaiako.

### **Tribal curriculum in mana whenuatanga**

Informants spoke of place based curriculum in the teaching and learning of young children. Tribal values associated with mana whenua stress the close relationship that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua holds with geological sites in the area. Kaiako identified curriculum experiences that included enjoying the natural elements offered at the site outside the classroom. Outdoor curriculum at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo reported to be instrumental in creating children's awareness of Papatūānuku and Ranginui in the space in which they played. Kaiako spoke of children's heightened awareness of specific names for rivers, trees and places within Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal rohe.

### **Tribal curriculum in whānau aspirations**

The findings from group discussions emphasised the close relationships that exist between families and teachers who in community, strive to centre children's learning experiences on family desires for their children, particularly in the area of tribal knowledge. Discovering family aspirations is a crux, so that family requests can be at the intersection of the planning, implementation and assessment in learning and teaching at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Family requests for their children to learn more karakia, pakiwaitara and spend more time with kaumātua being indicative of this. Whānau hopes and goals for their children act as a dynamic in evaluating, shaping and contribute to evolving the curriculum content at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo: The relationships between kaiako and whānau are experienced as a living tribal curriculum.

### **Tribal kaitiakitanga leadership in curriculum**

Heightened awareness of kaitiakitanga was apparent throughout the research information. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal documents were steeped in historical applications of tribal protective rights and responsibilities; all of which exhibit strong links to mana whenua. Leadership in caring for the natural resources arose naturally

amongst kaiako, whānau and children during planting, gardening and planning outdoor playground improvements. Kaiako reported that exposing children to outside curriculum at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo supported young children's relationship with nature and developed an appreciation of the changing natural world. This inquiry has emphasised the impact that environmental awareness has in the learning and teaching of young children at tribal education institutions.

### **Arohatanga-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū: a tribal vision**

In this study, arohatanga was expressed by all kaiako at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo as a 'standout' pedagogical approach. The literature suggests that tribal education is reliant upon intergenerational transmission of knowledge. Assuming that arohatanga is foundational in the raising of young children: it becomes capable of interrupting the metanarrative that suggests prevalence of child abuse and neglect in contemporary child-rearing practices. The ensuing implications of arohatanga are deliberate attitudes and application of care and love are infinite; not only for families and children experiencing Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tribal education but also for the wider early childhood education community of Aotearoa New Zealand. The concept is identified in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū and made visible in Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo as pedagogy underpinning tribal teaching and learning at all levels of early childhood education. As the etymological examination of the concept suggests, arohatanga celebrates and appreciates human life.

### **Summary of implications and applications of the research**

In summary, the findings from this research have diverse and wide-ranging implications in both tribal and mainstream education settings. Implications indicate power holders and money managers in education can direct funding in order to grow innovative pedagogy in the delivery of tribal early childhood education and care services. An assortment of government organisations will find the information from this project useful in supporting initiatives to increase tribal approaches to teaching and learning in early childhood education. Interdisciplinary agents may benefit from the wisdoms found in inclusion of tribal knowledges as positive socio-cultural indicators.

Findings from this research suggest that mana whenuatanga tribal rights and responsibilities binds tribal curriculum and contributes to children's learning in Ngāti

Te Ata Waiohua region. Understanding tribal early childhood education will add agency to increased participation in the sector of early childhood education. Policy makers and other professional stakeholders will benefit from new perceptions of tribal curriculum: teacher training institutions particularly can apply these interpretations in the training of new teachers in early childhood education so that a new breed of educators can activate the powerful agency that can be found in tribal education for future children/citizens.

The application of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga to the teaching and learning of young children and families offers opportunities for kaiako to develop leadership in disseminating language teaching and learning techniques with other tribal groups and interested parties. This study documents the potential tribal leadership that exists in sharing information both locally and nationally. Opportunities for other iwi to investigate the potential in their own tribal histories and knowing are peripheral ideas implicated in this study: provoking other tribal early childhood education and care services to become active in exploring the possibilities that exist amidst their own tribal beliefs and knowledges.

Another broad implication from this project proposes that teacher and caregiver ideology is powerful in transforming young children families and themselves through working in early childhood settings. Teacher perspectives are catalysts in informing the education sector both philosophically and pedagogically about learning and teaching in the early years. Teacher knowledge of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal dialect and Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tikanga identifies tribal leadership in their work: The ways in which kaiako perceive their tribal responsibility demonstrates leadership and vitality both inside and outside the tribe.

### **Recommendations**

Emerging out of this project are some suggestions for future research investigations that would supplement existing educational literature. These are summarised briefly as:

- Diverse research into specific tribal languages, epistemologies and education

- More in-depth research into kaiako leadership in the field of early childhood education
- Further studies into how Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū epistemology inspires curriculum and pedagogical tools in early childhood education

More extensive co-tribal studies on different iwi approaches to education and care of young children would be beneficial in informing all professionals working in the field of education (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007, 2010). There is interest in knowing how specific tribal methods and pedagogies meet the needs of their respective communities. Deeper research would allow iwi-specific, distinct tribal voices to be show-cased (Durie, 2008, 2012; Jenkins & Harte, 2011; Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994; Penetito, 2010).

Field work reveals valuable understanding regarding tribal knowledges and pedagogical approaches in early childhood education. This study has found kaiako narrative to be a rich source of data in illuminating Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi epistemology and children's learning. Under the auspices of working with children and families, the wisdoms and experience of women in the field of early childhood education remains largely untapped (hooks, 1990; Pihama, 2001). Leadership as perceived by teams of women working with children and families in tribal settings would raise the bar of leadership in the broadest of domains.

A recommendation for deeper research into the application of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū into pedagogy and curriculum is needed so that this might inform more inclusive practices in education for children and their families from other iwi groups (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Findsen & Tamarua, 2007; Flavell, 2011; Ngāti Te Ata, 1991; Te Kāhui Iti Nei O Te Kōpū, 2008). Better understanding of tribal practices such as arohatanga, kaitiakitanga and mana whenuatanga would assist caregivers and educators of young children to explore additional pedagogies. A call for Māori researchers to undertake study of an interdisciplinary nature in the future, could address multiple applications of tribal knowledges as untapped positive trajectories in the lives of Māori children and whānau.

Overall, the recommendations outlined above have been identified in the research as areas that can offer further enlightenment into tribal knowing; how the spaces between knowledge and practice might be negotiated and what landscapes are still left to be discovered. The inclusion of tribal knowledges as benefits across multiple disciplines remains open for exploration.

### **Strengths and limitations of this study**

This study has provided readers a perspective on how tribal knowledge can be implicated in the education of young children and their families. The project that was founded in Kaupapa Māori ontology had a rich framework from which to build. In doing so, the process has endorsed Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga as an effective logic in the education of young families and their children. The data collection was undertaken through a format of open discussions conducted in focus group gatherings at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo, using broad indicative conversations starters. All participants remained comfortable in familiar surroundings on the marae. This created a relaxed environment where they contributed to extensive and descriptive data.

Qualitative case studies are limited in their usefulness to be generalisable. It may appear that the specificity of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga and early childhood education may have restricted applications in other settings. However, it is noted that the specific nature of the research content raises similar issues experienced by other indigenous and tribal groups; therefore the project will offer some ideas that might be transferable to these early childhood and care settings. The tendency for key research findings in case studies to be oversimplified in order to make them easily re-locatable is possible but due to the holistic nature of te ao Māori, it is unlikely. Collaborative quests for better educational outcomes for young children connect multiple Māori tribes reducing the risk of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga findings being exploited or contorted.

Another constraint of the methodology used in this study is the sample size which represented a small number of participant kaiako who contributed to the bulk of the data; thereby limiting the understandings of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga. Introducing deeper interviews would have allowed more information to be elicited, however, the study needed to be manageable so the data gathered in this research is merely indicative because Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga tribal epistemology proved to be an expansive



topic. This project relied on the triangulation of findings from tribal statements, policies from Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo and kaiako narrative. Insights were gleaned from all three sources. Consequently this project opens a small window only; albeit that this examination indicates clearly that children's tribal cultural capital can begin to develop from an early age.

### **Concluding thoughts**

The anticipation of learning about Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal based pedagogy was central to keeping this study rewarding. At a personal level, the relationships that built up over the time were enriching and these are fruits of the study that will endure.

Curricula are controversial, but this case study has proved that tribal epistemology makes valuable contributions to learning and teaching for children and families who attend a tribal early childhood education and care service. Although present education favours outcome driven teaching and learning that links to national standards, this study is evident that selective tribal knowledges create relevant curriculum to maintain and preserve Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga. Providing insights into the good that exists in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua early childhood education shows that whānau and tamariki attending Te Kāhui Iti Nei o te Kōpū Puna Reo benefit when offered a curriculum of hope and freedom through marae-based early childhood education. The social world within Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi is a source of tribal, self and collective identity and pride.

The fact that ngā tikanga-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua exhibit unique characteristics pertaining to a specific iwi in a particular region, means that there is richness in national diversity which offers gains for all New Zealanders. However, this thesis does not speak on behalf of all Māori but is evidenced in the experience of kaiako, whānau and hapū of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua. Some may view this as limitation but I present this elucidation as strength by presenting tribal diversity as added value and a way for various Māori iwi to resist the notion of globalised cultural banking of universal truths. Universal educational outcomes act to subjugate local educational theory and outcomes for children locally. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga poses an interruption to these meta-narratives by providing beneficial experiences in tribal based education for young children and families.

Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal history is a site of struggle but one which provides stories of resilience, resistance and restitution. Tribal members are involved currently in re-writing history through (re)membering traditional tribal knowledge and events. Tribal (k) nowing assists in allowing the past to empower Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi members as those living in the now [present]. Creative imaginings can be concocted to offset condemning statistics. Positive attributes to be fostered in whānau and children are found in Ngāti Te Ata Waiohuatanga.

This study has highlighted the links between socio-ecological and environmental sustainability and renewal. Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal survival and revival is synonymous with the natural habitat and lands in which they reside. The responsibility of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua leadership in the areas of environment is deeply embedded in traditional relationships that Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe has invested in their place, land and area. Protesting has always presented Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua with tribal challenges both at a regional and international level. However the spirit of social justice and freedom gleaned from history drives a forward momentum even though it appears to be in the fringes of public interest in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Although this research project is a small beginning, it has examined the narratives of the kaiako as one socio-educational trajectory of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua iwi at Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. Giving voice to teachers opens up leadership potential for those who work in nurturing young children and affirms the important role they play in validating lives of families and children; particularly in a world that often undervalues and underinvests in the care of the youngest in society.

The inquiry encourages impetus for deeper research. Te Kāhui Iti Nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo remains a site for future study. Many concepts shared by kaiako caring and teaching children at Tāhuna Marae have not been able to be fully examined in this project but wait further theorising. For example more extensive hypotheses around arohatanga as pedagogy when working with children and adults in a tribal early education setting would be of great worth to those working in the field of care and education for young children.

Possibilities for future early childhood education and care landscapes await enrichment from the milieu of tribal philosophy in order to generate fresh potential for being and becoming culturally wiser. The intricacies and complexities of tribal knowledges can propel teachers in early childhood communities to understand more deeply how specific tribal learning and teaching can become maxims for learning and teaching in early childhood settings. This research experience confirms a belief that tribal education is a source of hope and freedom for all participants involved.

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## Glossary

Āhua	makeup or disposition
Aihe	common dolphin
Aroha	attentive love and care
Arohatanga	deliberate attitudes and application of care and love
Hapū	sub-tribe
Haukāinga	local people of a marae
Hikoi	walk
Hinengaro	mind
Hui	gathering, meeting, discussion
Iwi	tribe
Kaiako	teacher, teachers
Kaitiaki	guardian
Kaitiakitanga	guardianship
Kanohi ki te kanohi	face to face
Karakia	prayer
Karanga	ceremonial call of welcome
Kaumātua	elders
Kaupapa Māori	Māori ideology
Kawa	marae protocol
Kuia	female elder
kupu	vocabulary
Kūmara	sweet potato
Kīngitanga	Māori King Movement
Manaakitanga	generous hospitality
Mana atua	sacred spiritual power
Mana reo	communication
Mana tūpuna	power through descent
Mana whenua	territorial rights
Mana whenuatanga	recognition of tribal associations with particular land and resources within specific tribal areas
Mātauranga	knowledge
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge
Mātua	parents
Mātāpuna	source
Moko	grandchild
Mokopuna	grandchildren
Mōrehu	survivors
Ngāti Te Ata Waiohutatanga	Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal epistemology
Ngā tikanga me te reo-o-iwi	tribal customary practices and tribal dialects
Ngā tikanga-o- Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua	customary beliefs and practices of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua
Ngā waka	the migratory canoes
Pākeke mahi	learning for older pre-schoolers
Pakiwaitara	stories
Papakāinga	original home, home base, village
Pāpātūānuku	earth mother

Pukapuka	books
Puna	spring as of water
Rangahau	research
Rangatahi	young adult/s
Rangatira	leaders
Rangatiratanga	self- determination
Ranginui	sky father
Raupatu	land confiscation
Rohe	area, region
Tāmaki-makau-rau	Auckland
Tamariki	child, children
Tā moko	tattoo
Tangata whenua	Indigenous People
Taonga	treasure
Tauparapara	tribal mantra or chant
Te ao Māori	Māori worldview
Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo	Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribal early childhood education and care language immersion centre
Te Kōhanga Reo	Māori language immersion early childhood education
Te Raki-pae-whenua	North Shore of Auckland
Te reo Māori	the Māori language
Te reo me ngā tikanga-o-iwi	tribal languages and customs
Te reo-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua	Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect
Te reo-a-ringā	learning language through hand gestures
Te reo me ngā tikanga tuku iho	language, traditional customs and ways of conduct handed down from previous generations
Te Taio	environment
Te Tokatapu a Kupe	Name of a islet at the head of the Manukau Harbour which literally means: The sacred rock of Kupe: Named after the eponymous voyager who discovered Aotearoa New Zealand
Te Uri o Tawhaki	name of one large family grouping within Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua tribe
Te Wai-o-Hua	tribes that lived on the Tāmaki isthmus before the arrival of the migratory canoes; being conquered by and intermarrying with Ngāti Whātua.
Te Wānanga o Aotearoa	First Māori university
Tikanga-o-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua	Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua customary practices
Tinana	body
Tohunga	priest
Tumuaki	head teacher
Tūpuna	ancestors
Wahine toa	strong woman
Wāhi tapu	burial ground
waiata	song
waiata-a-ringā	action songs

Waiora	pure uncontaminated water
Wairua	spirit, soul
Wānanga	place of higher learning
Whaikōrero	speechmaking
Whakapapa	genealogy
whakamā	ashamed
Whakataukī	proverb
Whakawhanaungatanga	process of establishing relationships
Whānau	family group, extended family
Whanaungatanga	relationships of kinship and support
Whare tūpuna	meeting house
Whenua	Land, placenta / after-birth

## APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP INDICATIVE QUESTIONS



### KAIAKO FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

**Research Topic:** Tribal knowledge in early childhood education: A Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua case study

Researcher: Desma Cornhill

Supervisor: Dr Hinematau McNeill

This hui will be an opportunity to share your ideas on Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua learning and teaching in Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo?

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#### **Question 1**

What are your thoughts about teaching and learning te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua dialect here at Puna?

#### **Question 2**

How does the tribal traditional knowledge impact on teaching and learning?

#### **Question 3**

What are the challenges for kaiako, in the teaching and learning of traditional language and knowledge at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo?

#### **Question 4**

Is there anything else that you would like to discuss that has not already been mentioned?



# Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced: February 2013

**Project Title:** Tribal knowledge in early childhood education: A Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū case study.

Ko Puketapu tōku maunga  
Ko Manukau tōku awa  
Ko Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū tōku iwi  
Ko Te Uri o Tawhaki tōku hapū  
Ko Tāhūnakaitoto tōku marae  
Ko Desma Cornhill tōku ingoa

## An Invitation

Ngā mihi aroha nui ki a koe.

I am currently completing my Master of Education by writing a thesis on the importance of the learning Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū language and culture in our early childhood centre; Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. I want to invite you to be a participant in this research. I appreciate that you are a busy person, and will respect your decision not to participate but your participation would be greatly appreciated. Should you choose to participate you will be invited to attend the discussion group hui. This is an opportunity for whānau of Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo to discuss ideas on the importance of tikanga in early childhood education. I will be asking you to share your thoughts about teaching and learning of Ngāti Te Ata cultural knowledge at Tāhuna Marae.

## What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of the study is to explore the teaching and learning of tribal language and culture at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. In general the education sector has ignored the importance of tribal language and culture. Fortunately many tribes, including ours think that tribal language and traditions are important in children's education and lives today. This research will be presented as a thesis to be submitted as the final requirement to complete the Master of Arts degree in Te Ara Poutama (Māori Faculty) at AUT University. The

outcomes could well contribute to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū iwi development by contributing written material to the existing tribal resources.

**How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

I am inviting you to participate because you are a kaiako at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo whānau. The contribution you have made to the teaching and learning environment for our tamariki to learn about who they are as Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū is of value to our community.

**What will happen in this research?**

The invitation is for you to join a group discussion about how children learn at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The discussion will take place at Puna in familiar surroundings. We will talk about:

- *Your thoughts about teaching and learning te reo-a-Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū dialect here at Puna?*
- *Tribal traditional knowledge and its impact on teaching and learning?*
- *The challenges for kaiako, in the teaching and learning of traditional knowledge and language at Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo?*
- *Any related discussion not already mentioned?*

**What are the discomforts and risks?**

There are no discomforts or risks but should you feel uncomfortable for any reason you may withdraw at any time.

**What are the benefits?**

Our cultural understandings have a place and history that transcend time. Research can preserve traditional ways of knowing and living by creating a written account. Therefore this work will provide a tribal perspective about the importance of tribal knowledge in an early childhood tribal facility. I anticipate benefits coming out of our research discussions for all whānau. I am confident that this resource will be a useful reference for all members of Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū in the future.

**How will my privacy be protected?**

After receiving the Information Sheet you will have the opportunity to ask questions. You will be asked to sign a Consent Form which is confidential. All participants in the focus group hui will have agreed that the identity of their fellow participants and the discussions in the focus group are to remain confidential. Notes will be taken during the focus groups hui and they will also be recorded. A pseudonym (alternative to personal name) will be used in the recorded information (transcript) to protect your privacy. The transcript will be made available to you in order to give you the opportunity to check that your words have been correctly recorded. You will be asked to return the copy, with any changes made to me. No individuals, children or families will be named in the final thesis.

You may choose to withdraw yourself or any information that you have provided without any disadvantage to you. If you withdraw it may not be possible to destroy all the tapes for the focus group that you were involved, however, all the information that you contributed will not be used in the final thesis.

**What are the costs of participating in this research?**

There is no cost however you will be asked to volunteer approximately two hours of your time for group discussion.

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**

If you agree and are available, please complete and sign the consent forms enclosed. Keep one for your own records, and return the other to me in the enclosed prepaid envelope. If you have questions at any stage, please feel free to email me at the address below, or phone me at AUT University. If you get my voicemail, please leave a message, and I will call you back.

**Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

A summary report of the findings and recommendations will be sent to you at your preferred contact or can be collected from Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. A copy of the thesis will be sent to Te Kāhui iti nei o Te Kōpū Puna Reo. The thesis will also be available online and in the AUT University library. This is likely to happen in 2014.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Hinematau McNeill, Te Ara Poutama, AUT University. [hmcneill@aut.ac.nz](mailto:hmcneill@aut.ac.nz) or telephone (09) 921 9999 ext 6077

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH,

**Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

**Researcher Contact Details:**

Desma Cornhill, School of Education, AUT University. [desma.cornhill@aut.ac.nz](mailto:desma.cornhill@aut.ac.nz)  
(09) 921 9999 ext 7902

**Project Supervisor Contact Details:**

Dr. Hinematau McNeill, Te Ara Poutama, AUT University. [hmcneill@aut.ac.nz](mailto:hmcneill@aut.ac.nz)  
(09) 921 9999 ext 6077

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on:**

**AUTECH Reference number: 12/233**

## APPENDIX C: Participant Consent agreement

# Consent and Confidentiality Agreement



### ***Project Title:***

Tribal knowledge in early childhood education: A Ngāti Te Ata Waiohū case study.

***Project Supervisor:*** Hinemataū McNeill Ph D

***Researcher:*** Desma-Ann Cornhill

- 
- ☐ I understand that my contributions to hui discussion and my identity in hui discussions will be kept confidential.
  - ☐ I understand and agree to keep the identity of all participants and discussion confidential.
  - ☐ I understand that my participation on this project is part of a Master of Arts research thesis.

Participant Name : -----

Signature : -----

Participant Contact Details :

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-----  
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Date: -----

Project Supervisor's Contact Details (if appropriate):

Dr Hinemataū McNeill, AUT University. Telephone (09) 921 9999 ext. 6077  
[hmcneill@aut.ac.nz](mailto:hmcneill@aut.ac.nz)

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on:***

***AUTEC Reference number:*** Ethics Approval Number 12/233

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.*