

Culturally Responsive Leadership in  
Aotearoa New Zealand Secondary Schools

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### ABSTRACT

At the heart of leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand schools is a focus on how everyone can work together to improve educational and social outcomes for all young people (Ministry of Education, 2008). To actualise this intention, educators face a number of challenges including an increasingly diverse mix of students, enacting the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi, and continued academic, social, economic and political disparities that exist between different ethnic groups within the education system. Culturally responsive leadership is seen as a possible approach that can support inclusive environments and improved learning for students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This approach values students' different ways of knowing and doing, and incorporates their cultural experiences, histories and perspectives into teaching and learning.

In recent years, researchers have focussed on using a culturally responsive framework in relation to school leadership and have begun to identify the values, philosophies and practices of leaders who successfully support learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students. To further understanding in this area, particularly in the Aotearoa New Zealand context, this research project used comparative case study research and semi-structured interview methods to explore four secondary school leader's experience of developing and practising cultural responsiveness within themselves and with colleagues.

Comparative analysis between the individual stories found that participants perceived a close link between their own early cultural upbringing and the development of cultural responsiveness. Participation in Ministry of Education initiatives, academic study, and the experiences of the day-to-day job were perceived to have resulted in further development of culturally responsive characteristics. In both their own development and their leadership with staff, the participants noted how relating to other people and having experiences of their struggles and triumphs resulted in the increased enactment of values such as caring and empathy. The findings suggested it was important for leaders to consider the complexity and stages of each staff member's journey of developing cultural responsiveness and acknowledge the different cultural experiences and beliefs that they held.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

ABSTRACT .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP .....	vii
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW .....	6
Culture .....	6
Cultural responsiveness .....	9
Culturally responsive leadership .....	19
Summary .....	25
CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY .....	27
Research design .....	27
Data collection and analysis .....	32
Ethical considerations .....	38
Summary .....	41
CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS .....	42
Loto .....	42
Atawhai .....	48
Amanda .....	54
Freya .....	61
Summary .....	67
CHAPTER FIVE – DISCUSSION .....	68
Personal development .....	68
Professional development .....	74
Significant experiences .....	79
Leadership influences .....	83
CONCLUSION .....	97
REFERENCES .....	110
APPENDIX A – Glossary .....	121
APPENDIX B – Aotearoa New Zealand school rolls by ethnic group .....	123
APPENDIX C – Participant information sheet .....	124
APPENDIX D – Consent form .....	127
APPENDIX E – Interview questions .....	128
APPENDIX F – Coding analysis .....	129

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Culture as an onion .....	7
Figure 2: The case as the unit of analysis .....	30
Figure 3: Processes resulting from participants' significant experiences .....	82
Figure 4: Becoming and being culturally responsive .....	101

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Personal factors that influence the development of cultural responsiveness.....	73
Table 2: Professional factors that influence the development cultural responsiveness.....	79
Table 3: Leadership practices that influence staff to develop culturally responsive practices .....	95
Table 4: Development and practice of cultural responsiveness .....	99

**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 – INTRODUCTION

At the heart of leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand schools is a clear focus on how everyone can work together to improve educational and social outcomes for all young people (Ministry of Education, 2008). As students come from a range of different cultural backgrounds that include diversity in language, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion, there is a question of how to best respond within teaching and school practices to the similarities and differences that exist. One approach is to promote classroom teachers' use of culturally responsive<sup>1</sup> pedagogy that validates students' unique ways of knowing and acting in the world, and incorporates their cultural values, beliefs and experiences in teaching in order to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). More recently, researchers have begun to use a culturally responsive framework in relation to school leadership to explore how the philosophies, practices and policies of leaders can create inclusive schooling environments for students and families from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds (Ford, 2010; Johnson, 2014; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). This thesis sets out a research project that has investigated how leaders develop culturally responsive practices both intrapersonally and interpersonally with staff to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students, particularly Māori and Pasifika, within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools. It begins with this introduction, which describes the relevance of the research and outlines the chapters that will follow.

Understanding of the nature and influence of culture within education is important because worldwide demographics are changing due to globalisation, movement of people, and the exchange of ideas and values, and this is resulting in communities of greater racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity (Banks, 2010; Irving, 2010; Lumby & Morrison, 2010). The changes in demographics are being reflected in schools that are having to respond to different and greater challenges than ever before in order to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population (Billot, 2008;

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<sup>1</sup>There are many virtually identical names and labels to describe why it is important classroom instruction is more consistent with cultural orientations, including such terms as culturally sensitive, culturally aware, culturally appropriate, culturally relevant, culturally proficient, and culturally competent (Gay, 2010). In this thesis the term culturally responsive has been used.

Ministry of Education, 2008; Santamaría, Santamaría, Webber, & Pearson, 2014). Māori<sup>2</sup> are the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand. The arrival of Pākehā (white-skinned immigrants) from the late 1700s and the introduction of a predominately Eurocentric education system significantly impacted traditional Māori ways of transmitting cultural knowledge from one generation to the next. It also had an effect on the formal wānanga (schools of learning)<sup>3</sup>, which served to preserve the customs, language, history, and traditions (Hook, 2007). Over time, schools have developed to cater for the increased numbers of European immigrants who have become the majority culture. More recently, migration from other ethnic groups has increased, and this has seen further significant changes in the demographics of Aotearoa New Zealand schools (Billot, Goddard, & Cranston, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2016; Robertson & Miller, 2007). Statistics of school roll numbers over the last 20 years, detailed in Appendix B, show that all recorded ethnic populations have increased, apart from European/Pākehā, which has steadily declined (Ministry of Education, 2016). Since 1996, the percentage of Māori students has risen from 19.76% to 23.57%, almost 1 in 4 in current enrolments. Similarly, Pasifika students, which includes people of Cook Island, Niue, Tokelau, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and other Pacific ethnicity, have grown from 7.03% to 9.81%. A significant change has been the increase of the percentage of Asian students, which have more than doubled during this time. Asian students now make up 10.61% of all school enrolments (Ministry of Education, 2016). These changes in student demographics, both historically and more recently, have resulted in the need to investigate how teaching and school practices can best enhance the cultural identity and learning needs of Māori, Pasifika, and other culturally diverse students (Banks, 2010; Lumby & Morrison, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2008; Santamaría et al., 2014).

A distinct factor in Aotearoa New Zealand education is te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi, which is recognised as a national foundation marking the formal beginning of the relationship between Māori and Pākehā (Bishop & Glynn, 1999;

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that the term 'Māori' is not homogenous, but represents a diversity of beliefs, values and practices within the different iwi (tribes) and hapū (sub tribes) within the country. Similarly, each of the terms 'Pasifika', 'Asian' and 'European' represent a diverse and distinct range of cultures and languages.

<sup>3</sup> Translations for Māori words and phrases have been included the first time they occur within the text, and are also recorded in Appendix A for further reference.

Ford, 2010; Henderson, 2013; Santamaría et al., 2014). This agreement, created in 1840 between Māori and the Crown, outlines the implied constitutional basis for the peaceful governance of Aotearoa New Zealand and equal rights, partnership, protection, and participation for Māori (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2001). The Treaty of Waitangi is a foundational principle of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and provides a mandate to preserve te reo Māori (Māori language) and tikanga Māori (Māori culture) and incorporate cultural teaching practices that allow Māori to reach their potential and achieve education success (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2013). Despite these directives, some educators and schools have struggled to enact these principles in practice (Bishop, O’Sullivan, & Berryman, 2010; Education Review Office, 2010; Hook, 2007). Culturally responsive practices are seen as a possible way to understand how identity, language and culture impact on Māori students’ learning, and to develop relationships and work collaboratively with students, whānau (family), and iwi (tribes) to ensure te Tiriti o Waitangi is enacted throughout the education system (Bishop et al., 2010; Ford, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2013b; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016).

A third factor that points to the need for research in the area of culturally responsive leadership is the fact that, despite having been recognised for over 40 years, educational disparities among different ethnic groups have remained relatively unchanged (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, & Teddy, 2009; Ford, 2012; Gay, 2010; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). Research in Aotearoa New Zealand has mirrored findings in the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom in recognising continued academic, social and economic gaps between culturally and linguistically diverse groups, indigenous students, and their mainstream peers (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). In Aotearoa New Zealand, research has shown long-term differences among ethnic groups in early childhood participation, achievement of national standards and formal qualifications, truancy rates, stand-down rates, school leaving ages, and enrolment in tertiary courses (Ministry of Education, 2015a). It is argued that culturally responsive pedagogy can support teachers in making learning encounters more relevant and effective for ethnically diverse students, and can bring about change to the social, economic and political challenges that different cultural groups face (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The changing demographics of Aotearoa New Zealand's school populations, the continued struggle to enact the principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the disparities that exist between diverse cultural groups demonstrate the need for research in the area of culturally responsive pedagogies. As leaders are recognised as having an effect on student learning (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009; Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010), the shared beliefs and culture of schools (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003), and tackling persistent and widespread disparities to bring about school improvement (Robinson et al., 2009), studies that focus on this specific aspect of education are needed. Despite these assertions, the field of educational leadership has lagged behind other disciplines in understanding the influence of societal culture (Dimmock & Walker, 2005) and only recently has research in this area begun to grow (Coleman, 2012; Ford, 2010; Johnson, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). While there have been some studies in Aotearoa New Zealand at the primary level, investigations in secondary schools have been limited. Research has also tended to focus on what leaders do and there is limited understanding of how leaders become culturally responsive.

This research project, therefore, set out to investigate culturally responsive leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools and how leaders develop culturally responsive practices that support education for diverse student populations, particularly Māori and Pasifika. The following questions guided the research:

1. How do secondary school leaders account for their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness?
2. How do secondary school leaders perceive they influence staff to improve culturally responsive practices that potentially meet the needs of diverse and underachieving students?

The study was positioned within an interpretivist paradigm and used comparative case study research and semi-structured interview methods to explore the experiences of four secondary school leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds. A culturally responsive research practice was investigated and adopted by the researcher through the process.

This thesis outlines each of the aspects of the research and the findings that emerged.

It is set out in the following chapters:

- Chapter 1 introduces the topic and describes the relevance of the research in the context of Aotearoa New Zealand education.
- Chapter 2 describes, critiques and synthesises relevant national and international literature to give a comprehensive overview of the topic and identify the key issues that emerge through theory and practice.
- Chapter 3 explains a research design that outlines the methodology, methods, data collection and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations that were chosen and applied in the study.
- Chapter 4 presents the stories of the individual participants, describing how they have developed and enacted cultural responsiveness within their leadership practice.
- Chapter 5 provides a critical analysis and interpretation of the research findings and relates them to literature and other research in the field.
- Chapter 6 summarises the findings and possible limitations of the study, and presents recommendations for further research and practice.

## CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

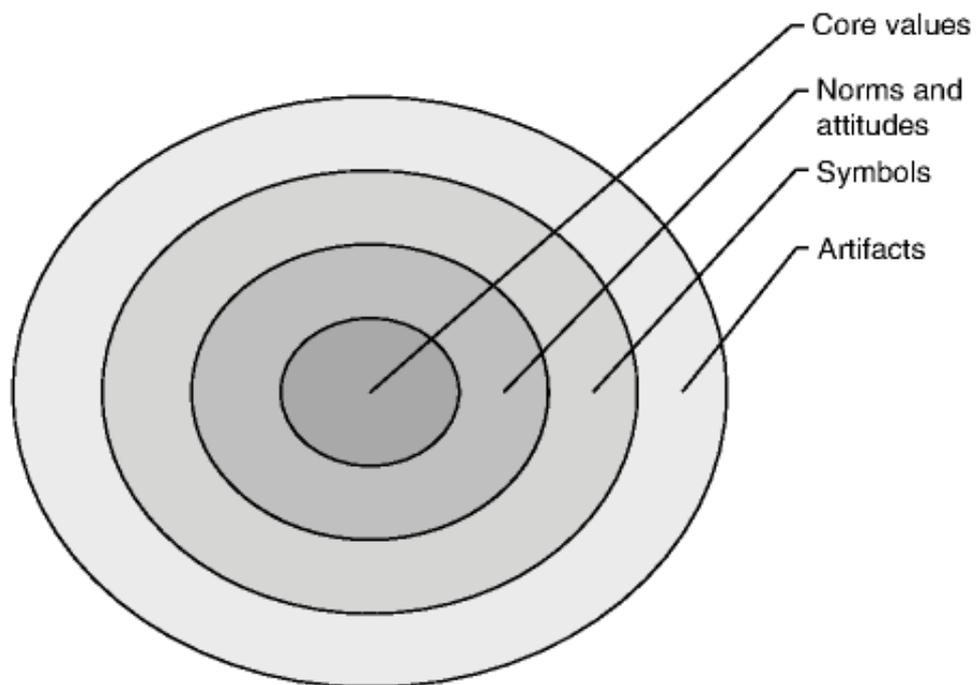
In this chapter, the relevant literature in the field of culturally responsive leadership in education is critiqued and synthesised to give a comprehensive overview of the topic and identify key themes that emerge through theory and practice. The concept of culture sits at the heart of culturally responsive leadership (Gay, 2000) and is outlined in the first part of the chapter. Culturally responsive leadership theory is derived from culturally responsive teaching (Johnson & Fuller, 2014; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). Literature in this area is, therefore, reviewed next. This section gives understanding of the characteristics of cultural responsiveness and ways that teachers and leaders, who are commonly teachers first, develop values, beliefs and practices to cater for culturally and linguistically diverse students. In the third section, the concept of culturally responsive leadership is defined and the interface between theory and practice is reviewed to investigate how leaders influence teachers to develop culturally responsive practices that support education for diverse student populations, particularly Māori and Pasifika.

### **Culture**

Culture is a complex concept made up of multiple definitions (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Wadham et al., 2007; Wren, 2012). It is commonly used within educational literature to describe the pattern of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours shared by a given group of people that distinguish it from other groups (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Gay, 2010; Muna & Zennie, 2010; Neito, 2010). The patterns are generally accepted in a group and allow people to order and make sense of their world (Gay, 2010; Wadham et al., 2007) and adapt to particular environments and to living together (Gollnick & Chinn, 2013). The concept of culture is often associated with language, ethnicity and race, but also includes social class, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion (Banks, 2010; Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell Jones, 2005; Nieto, 2002).

The patterns of different cultures are claimed to be manifested in physical symbols and artefacts such as clothes, music and buildings, as well as observable behaviours such as language and social interactions with others (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Wadham et al., 2007). Unlike the outer expressions, which are more visible, the inner aspects of culture, such as beliefs about the world as well as values that are used to

differentiate good and bad, are much harder to recognise and influence (Muna & Zennie, 2010). Referencing the work of Hofstede (2001), Muna and Zennie (2010) explained culture using the analogy of an onion as shown in Figure 1 below. The core values of a culture tend to be deep seated, relatively stable and enduring, and have their origins in history, religion and philosophy, whereas the outer symbols and actions that reflect those values can often be dynamic and changing (Gay, 2010; Gollnick & Chinn, 2013; Guthey & Jackson, 2011; Muna & Zennie, 2010).



*Figure 1.* “Culture as an onion.” (Muna & Zennie, 2010, p. 69).

Gray (2012) presented his perspective of *tika*ka<sup>4</sup> Māori explaining that *tika*ka (values, customs and beliefs) are actively expressed in human behaviour through *riteka* (rituals, rules, laws, and institutions) and *kawa* (procedures, protocols and etiquettes). The concept of *tika*ka/*tikanga* incorporates the Māori belief that the world exists because it was created by the *Atua* (Gods/Goddesses) and it has meaning and is not inert without purpose or significance (Barlow, 1991; Gray, 2012). Culture is seen as the womb that gives birth and renewal to the values, meaning and purpose inherent in the

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<sup>4</sup> *Tika*ka is the Ngai Tahu dialect, while *tikanga* is the dialect used by other tribes in Aotearoa New Zealand (Gray, 2012). The different terms are used interchangeably here to acknowledge the different dialects of authors who have been referenced.

interaction of wairua (spiritual pure elemental essence) and mauri (physical pure elemental essence) that emanate from Io (the source or creator) (Gray, 2012). Expressed in another way<sup>5</sup>, tikanga Māori can be understood as the way mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge, philosophy, wisdom, and truth) is put into practice and action with correctness and ritual support (Mead, 2003).

The concept of culture in education is based on a sociocultural constructivist theory (Gay, 2010), which holds that learning emerges from the social, cultural and political spaces in which it takes place (Nieto, 2002). This theory suggests cultural characteristics are taught by members in a group (Banks, 2010), particularly from parents and caregivers (Gollnick & Chin, 2013) and through education and schooling (Wadham et al., 2007). Cultural patterns and rules are learnt and internalised, and these shape how people view, interpret and respond to the world (Banks, 2010; Wadham et al., 2007). Gollnick and Chin (2013) described that some people grow up in more than one culture and consequently become proficient in multiple systems for perceiving, evaluating, believing and acting according to the patterns of the groups in which they participate.

A person may be comfortable with people that share their same culture because they know the meaning of their words and actions, but they may misunderstand cues and practices of people from different cultures or fail to realise that not everyone shares the same way of thinking and behaving (Gollnick & Chin, 2013). As people from different cultures have different understandings and ways of knowing, this has implications for all aspects of teaching and learning (Erikson, 2010). It is therefore argued that a critical examination of culture and the importance of cultural differentiation within education and educational leadership is vital (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Gay, 2010).

The research of culture is not without its difficulties and critiques (Lumby & Morrison, 2010; Wren, 2012). Culture is a highly contested concept (Wren, 2012), is difficult to define and therefore measure (Erikson, 2010), and is closely linked to the concept of

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<sup>5</sup> Mead (2003) described how there are differences of perspective and opinion among Māori tribal groups as to the meaning of tikanga and kawa. For instance, some scholars would argue that kawa is the term that deals with the knowledge base and tikanga is the practice of that knowledge.

society (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Using the concept of culture can be limiting because it can obscure and distort the complexity of the lives of individuals and groups (Lumby & Morrison, 2010). Dimmock and Walker (2005) explained that due to migration there are a relatively few homogenous cultures, and intermarriage as well as people from different cultures living in close proximity has tended to blur and reduce cultural divides within society. Similarly, Gollnick and Chin (2013) described that because culture is so internalised, people tend to confuse biological and cultural heritage. They gave the example of a Vietnamese child who learnt the cultural heritage of adopted Italian-American Catholic parents but was still identified by observers as Vietnamese because of her physical appearance (Gollnick & Chin, 2013). Further critiques question other factors linked to the process of culture, including religion (Dimmock & Walker, 2005) and politics and economics, which have much to do with access and distribution of power (May & Sleeter, 2010).

### **Cultural Responsiveness**

The development of cultural responsiveness in education has been predominately situated in teaching contexts and emerged as part of multicultural education, which originated in the 1970s (Gay, 2010). Concerned for continued racial and ethnic inequality, proponents of multicultural theory have argued that education that predominately reflects American and European cultural values and beliefs of how knowledge is created and what constitutes good teaching, often fail to recognise other cultures' structures and practices as equally viable alternatives for teaching and learning (Gay, 2010; Nieto, 2002). Often people can be unaware of ethnocentrism, their belief that their cultural way of life is the norm and standard by which all other cultures are judged (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Gollnick & Chin, 2013). This can result in teachers having difficulty understanding diverse students and how they learn and behave (Gay, 2010; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012), struggling to communicate and form positive connections (Bishop & Glynn, 1999), and not being able to capitalise on the background experiences and culture of the students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Therefore, culturally diverse students, teachers, leaders, and whānau sometimes cannot bring who they are and what they know to the learning interactions (Bishop, 2011).

**Cultural understanding and pluralistic teaching strategies.** Culturally responsive pedagogy uses pluralistic practices that validate students' ways of knowing and doing (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). Gay (2000) gave the following definition:

Culturally responsive teaching can be defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming. (p. 29)

Teachers and leaders who are culturally responsive have a broadened cultural perspective that allows them to see students for who they are and be familiar with the values and beliefs that they bring to the classroom (Gay, 2000; Nelson & Guerra, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Culturally responsive pedagogy includes having understanding of and sensitivity to the learning styles and behaviours of diverse students (Lindsey et al., 2005), and incorporating their unique talents, knowledge and experiences into the organisation and teaching in the classroom (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Culturally responsive pedagogy not only addresses academic achievement and the classroom programme, but also focuses on the whole child, and empowers students to accept and affirm their diversity (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). It is pervasive and permeates all aspects of the school climate, policy, physical environment, curriculum, and relationships among teachers, students, leaders and the community (Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2002).

**Personal understanding.** Culturally responsive pedagogies recognise that prejudices, bias, fear and racism can affect the learning of culturally diverse students (Bishop et al., 2010; Lindsey et al., 2005). Referring to the work of Argyris (1977) and Senge (1990), CampbellJones, CampbellJones, and Lindsey (2010) explained that the cultural values, beliefs and attitudes a teacher or leader learns at a young age act like a filter or lens through which they see and interpret students and their learning. The lenses, or interpretations, can often be unconscious or misunderstood (Branson, 2007; Larrivee, 2000) which can result in people having certain perceptions, assumptions, and responses to culturally diverse students without being aware of this (Banks, 2010; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Wadham et al., 2007). An example of how inner cultural patterns can act as a lens and influence behaviour was shown in research in Aotearoa New Zealand. It found that some teachers had low expectations of Māori students' ability and believed low achievement in the classroom was the result of the

students' lifestyle and family (Bishop et al., 2009). Bishop et al. (2009) explained that as a result of these beliefs, which they called "deficit theorising" (p. 736), teachers tended to have fatalistic attitudes, felt they had very little agency or responsibility, and therefore created classroom practices and relationships that were reflective of their beliefs and detrimental for Māori students. Villegas (2007) gave another example of how teachers attending culturally responsive professional development could be blocked in their learning because they had fixed beliefs about what constituted good teaching based on their own schooling and upbringing. Consequently, they looked for information that validated their own beliefs that resulted in them seeing only what they wanted to see and being unable or unwilling to incorporate new ideas from different cultures (Larrivee, 2000; Villegas, 2007).

Argyris and Schön (1974) and Branson (2007) identified that professional development focussed on shifting outer behaviour may result in a change of strategies, but the underlying theory and reasoning that governs a person's actions can remain the same and resurface when they are back in practice. It is therefore argued that teachers and leaders need to develop personal awareness and critically analyse their own and others' behavioural patterns, beliefs and values in order to become culturally self-aware, raise their consciousness of the underlying influences of their behaviour, and open up to a greater range of practices and responses to diverse students (Banks, 2010; Bishop et al., 2009; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Gay, 2000).

**Caring relationships.** Culturally responsive pedagogies recognise that positive, caring relationships are central to successful learning (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2000; McAllister & Irvine, 2000). In research conducted by Bishop et al. (2007), Māori students spoke at length about the importance of whakawhanaungatanga (the process of identifying, maintaining, or forming past, present, and future relationships) and whanaungatanga (the quality of those relationships that are established). Similarly, in a study conducted in the United States that asked African American students what they liked about their class, they talked about their teacher and how she listened, respected them, and encouraged them to share their opinion (Ladson-Billings, 2001). It is argued, therefore, that teachers and leaders need to develop and demonstrate a caring for all students that is characterised by concern for their well-being, respect and sensitivity to them as culturally located individuals, and leads to a commitment to do

anything to meet expectations of high performance (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001). Some authors have stated that, more than just ‘feeling concern for’ another person, which might maintain emotional distance and come from a position of judgment or power, cultural responsiveness involves developing empathy, which is the ability to be able to step into the shoes of another and experience their ideas and feelings (Dolby, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Noddings, 2010). Dolby (2012) and Noddings (2010) explained that empathy involves feeling with and being truly open to the other person, and leads to the motivation to temporarily put aside personal goals and purposes in order to satisfy the expressed needs of others. In discussing empathy, Henderson (2013) stated:

One of the most powerful ways to develop this is to immerse oneself in real-life experiences which allow heart-level engagement in cultural richness which creates connectedness and understanding at a deeper level than can be ever attained from books and readings. (p. 13)

Caring and empathy are therefore not engendered through the mere learning of cultural information or having an emotional response towards another person’s struggle, but rather need to be nurtured through social interaction and contact with people from different cultural backgrounds (Dolby, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2002).

**Will and agency to change.** The characteristics of having knowledge, awareness and sensitivity are important in educating culturally and linguistically diverse students. However, cultural responsiveness is further characterised by having alignment to moral purpose and the will, commitment and skills to be able to respond and act as agents of change (Cooper, He, & Levin, 2011; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). It is argued that, despite caring and well-intentioned educators, fundamental social, economic and political issues can remain unchanged and continue to limit educational opportunities for some students (Gay, 2000; Shields, 2014). Some groups, such as indigenous cultures, can face ongoing challenges as a result of factors such as the dominance of and subordination by the majority culture, structural inequities within schools and the community, and policies aimed at integration and assimilation (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Smith, 2012). Cultural responsiveness is therefore also derived from critical pedagogy, which embodies emancipatory, empowering and inclusive values (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). Critical pedagogy focuses

on social justice and educational equity, and advocates for teachers, leaders, students and the community to have a critical perspective that enables them to recognise, disrupt and facilitate transformation of inequities and power imbalances in their schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995; May & Sleeter, 2010; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016; Shields, 2014). This aspect of cultural responsiveness involves developing the ability to analyse and examine the issues, and the deeper meaning and root causes that create them (May & Sleeter, 2010). Critical pedagogy is not just concerned with the ability to understand and explain the issues, but is also about embracing the struggle and taking action in order to empower, liberate and give voice to people, particularly those groups that are oppressed within society (Gay, 2000; Neito, 2002; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). In this context, relationships are restructured so that learning occurs as a dialogical process rather than simply a transfer of knowledge (Neito, 2002), and power is shared between self-determining individuals within non-dominating, interdependent relationships (Bishop et al., 2009).

Gay (2000) explained that having intention without action is insufficient and educators need to have pedagogical knowledge and skill as well as the courage to dismantle the status quo. Often in practice, actions can be inconsistent or seemingly opposed to the values that people espouse (Argyris & Schön, 1974; CampbellJones et al., 2010). When teachers and leaders are faced with change or issues of social justice, they can have personal challenges such as fear and insecurity or interpersonal interactions involving disagreement and discomfort that can make it difficult to make decisions and take action in line with their values (Ford, 1999). Educators therefore need to develop social consciousness, intellectual critique, and political and personal efficacy in order to be able to recognise potential challenges and take actions that are aligned with their morals and values (CampbellJones et al., 2010; Gay, 2010).

**Developing cultural responsiveness – Personal factors.** Learning to be culturally responsive is a complex and ongoing process (Burton, 2013; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Gay, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Research into the personal factors that affect cultural responsiveness has found that teachers are influenced by early experiences with people from different cultural backgrounds (Burton, 2015; Garman, 2004; Pohan, 1996; Smith, Moallem, & Sherrill, 1997), time spent travelling or living in another country (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Smith et al.,

1997; Westrick & Yen, 2007), influence of teachers and schooling (Smith et al., 1997), and personal experiences of discrimination or racism (Burton, 2015; Smith et al., 1997). Similarly, in a study of 12 aspiring principals, Gooden and O'Doherty (2015) reported that leaders described how early family influences and experiences of racial separation or isolation strongly affected their cultural awareness and understanding of race and privilege.

Research of teacher trainees has also found that people that come to teaching with favourable beliefs and attributes toward racial and cultural diversity are more likely to move toward embracing viewpoints considered to be more responsive to the needs of diverse learners (Garman, 2004; Pohan, 1996; Sleeter, 2001). In a review of research, Sleeter (2001) identified that there was some evidence that teachers of colour<sup>6</sup> were more likely to have a richer knowledge base and perspective of multicultural teaching compared to White teachers who bring little awareness of different cultures and discrimination. This idea was critiqued by Ullman and Hecsh (2011) with research that found that, although teachers of colour were more likely to express understanding of structural inequality, the vast majority of students from all cultural backgrounds did not come with those views.

**Developing cultural responsiveness – Professional factors.** Research has shown that participation in professional training and courses can influence the development of cultural responsiveness, however, some programmes can lead to little or no change (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Dolby, 2012; Garman, 2004; Sleeter, 2001). In reviews of research conducted on teacher trainees, Garman (2004) and Sleeter (2001) found some studies reported trainee teachers had more positive attitudes and racial beliefs as a result of attending education courses with a focus on cultural responsiveness. This was similarly reflected in a review of eight studies of teachers who attended culturally responsive professional development while teaching, of which two of the three Aotearoa New Zealand studies reported that teachers had changed their deficit views (Smyth, 2013). In comparison, a review of research on teacher

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<sup>6</sup> Teachers of colour is a term used primarily in the United States to describe a person who is not White, including African-American, Latino/a, and American Indian/indigenous. The term is meant to be inclusive among non-White groups, emphasising common experiences of racism (Santamaría et al., 2014).

training courses designed to develop cultural responsiveness by Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) was similar to the studies by Garman (2004) and Sleeter (2001), which reported little or no change in attitudes and beliefs. Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) described how, despite candidates being able to think more complexly about diversity, there was little evidence of profound shifts in perspectives.

Research has also shown that professional development that includes a community-based experience where training teachers are immersed in different cultures can have a powerful impact on developing cultural responsiveness because it gives teachers an experience of being the minority and being in unfamiliar cultural settings (Sleeter, 2001). Similarly, giving teachers the opportunity to have authentic cross-cultural experiences can also have positive effects (Garmon, 2004; Sleeter, 2001).

**Developing cultural responsiveness – Process-oriented models.** Process-oriented or developmental models give understanding of the way people learn cultural responsiveness through a progressive set of stages. These range from little recognition of the differences and complexity of cultures to higher levels of differentiation and abstraction (Hansuvadha & Slater, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2000). Reviews of theoretical frameworks from different disciplines conducted by McAllister and Irvine (2000) summarised that each of the models showed people moved from a self-centred, or ethnocentric, state to increasing identification with society and eventually a global competency where they could function well in multiple communities. As people develop through the levels they become more accepting of diversity and different points of view (Hansuvadha & Slater, 2012) and increasingly inclusive, discriminating and integrative of different cultural experiences (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). DeJaeghere and Yongling Zhang (2008) and McAllister and Irvine (2000) noted that models could help situate teachers' and leaders' behaviours, attitudes and interactions, including why they might be resistant to change, and this helped in designing professional development programmes and strategies. It was also noted, however, that developmental models have been critiqued for providing a Western view of development that is not necessarily true of all cultures, and for simplifying complex processes that can include many influences such as age, social class and race (McAllister & Irvine, 2000).

**Cultural responsiveness in the Aotearoa New Zealand context.** The development of quality teaching and learning that reflects and values the identity, language and culture of diverse student populations has a significant focus in Aotearoa New Zealand (Bishop et al., 2010; Education Review Office, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2012a, 2013). Much of the literature on cultural responsiveness in Aotearoa New Zealand begins by recognising Māori as the indigenous peoples of the country and te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi as the foundation upon which the formal relationship between Māori and Pākehā was formed (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Ford, 2010; Henderson, 2013; Santamaría et al., 2014). This legal agreement created in 1840 between Māori and the Crown for equal rights and partnership, protection, and participation for Māori has been reflected in numerous education policies and professional standards affecting educationalists (Robertson & Miller, 2007; Wilson, 2002).

Despite the decades of reforms and development in Aotearoa New Zealand focussed on Māori education, biculturalism and multiculturalism, research over the last 40 years has shown little change to educational disparities among different cultural groups (Bishop et al., 2009; Ford, 2012; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). These factors have led to a significant body of research, literature and pedagogies for Māori students (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Bishop et al., 2010) and government initiatives focussed on developing culturally responsive teaching and learning (Education Review Office, 2012a; Ministry of Education, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2015b; University of Auckland, 2015; University of Waikato, 2015). These have included the establishment of kōhanga reo (early childhood language nests) for the preservation of the Māori language, Māori immersion classes in mainstream schools, and schools at all levels where students can learn completely in Māori language and cultural ways of being and knowing (Robertson & Miller, 2007).

*Ka Hikitia* is a government strategy that sets the direction for improving education outcomes for and with Māori learners in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2009). Building on the first Māori education strategy, which was released in 1999, *Ka Hikitia: Managing for success 2008-2012* aimed to change the education system to ensure Māori were maximising their potential and “enjoying education success as Māori” (Ministry of Education, 2009, p.18). The initiative, which has been

updated in *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating success 2013-2017*, has a central focus of quality education that reflects and values Māori identity, language and culture, as well as creating strong engagement with parents, whānau, hapū (sub tribes) and iwi (tribes) (Ministry of Education, 2013b).

*Te Kotahitanga* is a kaupapa Māori<sup>7</sup> research and professional development programme similarly aimed at improving the secondary schooling experience for Māori and other culturally diverse students (Bishop & Berryman, 2010; Bishop et al., 2009). Drawing partially from the work of Gay (2000) and Villegas and Lucas (2002), Bishop et al. (2007) created what they called a “culturally responsive pedagogy of relations” (p. 7) to create learning environments where power is shared and teachers are supported to develop culturally appropriate and responsive ways of teaching that legitimise who Māori students are and how they make sense of their world. *Te Kotahitanga* included an “Effective Teaching Profile” (p. 1) that formed the basis of a professional development innovation for principals and teachers (Bishop et al., 2007) and a classroom walk-through observation and survey process to collect relevant evidence called *Rongohia te Hau* (Berryman, 2013).

Research in the initial stages of *Te Kotahitanga* found that, while focusing on teacher development was important, the interdependence of leaders at all levels of the education system was crucial for sustaining and expanding effective educational reform (Bishop et al., 2010). Bishop et al. (2010) presented a model called *GPILSEO*<sup>8</sup> that outlined what responsive structural reform looked like in practice and what leaders needed to do to implement this in the classroom, school, and system-wide levels. The professional development programme helped leaders to develop specific measurable goals to show Māori students’ progress, redesign the institutional and organisational frameworks, and develop the capacity of people and systems to gather and use data (Bishop et al., 2010). The *GPILSEO* theoretical framework was further developed as a base for *He Kākano*, a school-based professional development programme focussed

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<sup>7</sup> Kaupapa Māori is a discourse of proactive theory and practice that developed as a political consciousness among Māori people. When applied in the context of research, it describes a methodology that promotes the revitalization of Māori cultural aspirations, preferences and practices as a philosophical and productive stance, and resists the hegemony of the dominant discourse (Bishop & Berryman, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> *GPILSEO* is an acronym that describes the essential elements of the reform initiative. These include Goals, Pedagogy, Institutions, Leadership, Spread, Evidence, and Ownership (Bishop et al., 2010).

primarily on improving secondary school leaders to be culturally relational and lead pedagogical learning to enable schools and teachers to build educational success for and with Māori (Hynds et al., 2013; Ministry of Education, 2013a). The key findings and work of Te Kotahitanga and He Kākano, along with the *Starpath Project*<sup>9</sup> and the *Secondary Literacy and Numeracy Projects*<sup>10</sup> have been more recently brought together in an initiative called *Kia Eke Panuku*, which seeks to give life to Ka Hikitia in secondary schools and develop a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations across all levels of schooling and the community (Ministry of Education, 2015b; University of Waikato, 2015).

The Ministry of Education has stated the need for culturally responsive pedagogy to recognise and enhance the multicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand school populations (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2012a, 2013). A specific initiative focussed on achieving this intention is the *Pasifika education plan 2013-2017*, which has a vision for schools of “five out of five Pasifika learners participating, engaging and achieving in education, secure in their identities, languages and cultures and contributing fully to Aotearoa New Zealand’s social, cultural and economic wellbeing” (Ministry of Education, 2012a, p. 3). The plan takes into account the “processes, methodologies, theories, and knowledge that are fa‘asamoa (the Samoan way), faka-Tonga (the Tongan way), faka Tokelau (the Tokelau way), faka-Niue (the Niue way), akano‘anga Kūki ‘Āirani (the Cook Islands way), and vaka-Viti (the Fijian way)” (Ministry of Education, 2012a, p. 3). As part of this initiative, *Pasifika Success* is a professional learning and development programme offered to support schools to implement social, cultural and linguistic conditions necessary to improve outcomes for Pasifika students (Ministry of Education, 2012b). In considering cultural responsiveness in regards to these initiatives, it is important to consider the potential for the word ‘Pacific’ to be seen as homogenous instead of representing a diverse range of cultures with distinct languages, values and practices (McFall-McCaffery, 2010).

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<sup>9</sup> Starpath is a research project led by the University of Auckland in partnership with the New Zealand Government. It aims to transform educational outcomes for Aotearoa New Zealand students who are currently under-achieving at secondary school and particularly address educational inequality with Māori and Pacific students (University of Auckland, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> The Secondary Literacy Project (SLP), and Secondary Numeracy Project (SNP) were introduced in 2003 and 2005 respectively. They aimed to increase leaders’ and teachers’ knowledge of effective practices, and raise student achievement in Years 9 and 10, particularly focussing on Māori and Pacific students (Education Review Office, 2012b).

**Critique of cultural responsive pedagogy.** Culturally responsive pedagogy is critiqued by some authors for its inability to address the structural inequalities and disadvantages that some groups of people face (Blackmore, 2006; Gunter, 2006; May & Sleeter, 2010). Gunter (2006) stated that education policy and practice can be influenced by market and managerialist approaches that are based on neoliberal notions of maximising control and economic profit. As a result of these factors, educators can see cultural diversity as a problem to be managed and culturally responsive pedagogy used as a way to handle the issue rather than embracing cultural difference (Gunter, 2006). Similarly, despite schools' efforts to practice cultural responsiveness, generic competencies and standardised testing can continue to perpetuate systems of performativity that do not meet the needs of diverse students (Blackmore, 2006). May and Sleeter (2010) also described how the underlying social, economic and cultural inequalities caused through colonial and political history may remain unchanged despite the best efforts of culturally responsive pedagogy. In response to these tensions, Blackmore (2006), Gunter (2006), and May and Sleeter (2010) argued for critical and reflexive approaches that encompass cultural knowledge while also analysing and changing unequal power relations and structural inequalities. Research that investigates how these aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy are enacted in the field of educational leadership are reviewed in the next section.

### **Culturally Responsive Leadership**

Definitions and connotations of leadership are extensive, vary widely and are constantly shifting (Bush, 2011; Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Jackson & Parry, 2011; Shields, 2014). Reviews of leadership literature show that most scholars recognise leadership involves leaders and followers and is a process of providing direction and exercising influence (Bush, 2011; Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Yukl, 2002). Reverend Maurice Gray (2014) summarised his understanding of a Māori perspective of leadership:

Leader is a rangatira, and rangatira comes from the word raranga. That's the first part of word. Raranga means to weave, and tira means the people to the way. So it means that the leader has vision in which it's going to lead its people to a particular direction in life to fulfil. It's a person who has followers. You cannot really be a rangatira if you don't have people. (personal communication, April 2, 2014)

Leaders are believed to influence people to act in ways that they may not have been inclined to choose, or inspire performance and achievements beyond what might have been reasonably accepted (Bush, 2011; Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Leaders provide direction by setting the values and vision of an organisation (Bush, 2011; Coleman & Glover, 2010) and supporting others to become aware of and achieve certain mutual aims and goals (Cardno, 2012; Jackson & Parry, 2011). Learning is the central focus of educational organisations and therefore is at the core of all aspects of educational leadership (Cardno, 2012; Lingard, Hayes, Mills, & Christie, 2003; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009).

The nature of leadership is that it always involves a relationship between leaders and followers (Cardno, 2012; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Citing the work of Burns (2010), Muna and Zennie (2010) explained that, as well as the influence that leaders have on people, leadership behaviour and styles are influenced by the expectations and values of the followers. Burns (2010) described it as follows:

Leadership is a collective. “One man leadership” is a contradiction in terms. Leaders, in responding to their own motives, appeal to the motive of potential followers. As followers respond, a symbiotic relationship develops that binds the leader and the follower together. (p. 452)

This reciprocal influence between leaders and followers is similar to the Māori concept of *ako*, which involves an interactive dialogic relationship in which two or more people learn from, as well teach, each other (Bishop et al., 2010). Positive interpersonal dynamics between leaders and followers are particularly important because the process of change and developing interdependence is usually associated with a sense of fear and vulnerability (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). Educational relationships thrive in a supportive, caring and respectful environment (Lingard et al., 2003; Waters et al., 2003), and the importance of trust within that connection is vital (Cardno, 2012; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Timperley et al., 2007).

Educational leadership is often claimed to be contextual and situational (Lingard et al., 2003; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Shields, 2014). Some mainstream leadership theories, however, are critiqued for tending to focus on intrapersonal and interpersonal leadership skills that are cultivated in traditionally homogenous environments (Chen & Van Velsor, 1996, Shields, 2014). It is argued

that theories that tend to be couched in general or universal terms can sometimes fail to take into account the diverse cultural values, beliefs and behaviours of people among whom leadership is enacted, or of the leaders themselves (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Madsen & Mobekela, 2005; Muna & Zennie, 2010). Like multicultural theorists' critiques of teaching, Dimmock and Walker (2005) explained that leadership in schools can predominately reflect Western ideals and frameworks, and leaders may be ethnocentric in their practices. It is argued, therefore, that what is needed is educational leadership that is responsive to the cultural conditions of the particular schools and communities in which it is situated (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Madsen & Mobekela, 2005; Muna & Zennie, 2010).

**Defining culturally responsive leadership.** Current scholars focussed in this field have explained that culturally responsive leadership derives from the concepts of critical pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching, and involves those leadership practices that create inclusive schooling environments for teachers, students and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Ford, 2010; Johnson & Fuller, 2014; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). Culturally responsive leaders ensure pedagogical and social inclusion of students values, histories and cultural knowledge (Johnson, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016), develop trusting relationships with staff, students and community (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Madsen & Mobekela, 2005), create adaptive school structures to empower underserved students and families (Madsen & Mobekela, 2005; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), and work towards developing critical consciousness and pedagogy among students and faculty (Johnson, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Literature and research that defines, unpacks and investigates culturally responsive leadership has been limited until recent years (Coleman, 2012; Ford, 2010; Johnson, 2014; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). To further identify the characteristics of culturally responsive leadership, research that investigates the interface between culturally responsive theory and leadership practice from New Zealand and other countries is reviewed and synthesised below.

**Culturally responsive versus universal leadership.** Analysis of previous research of educational leaders found there were mixed results and contradictions regarding whether leadership should be based on general, universal models or grounded in the societal and cultural conditions of the schools and communities in which it is situated. Data from three separate qualitative case studies of principals in New Zealand primary schools with diverse student populations showed that all the principals actively sought to understand the students and their cultural backgrounds (Ford, 2012; Robertson & Miller, 2007; Santamaría et al., 2014). The researchers found that leaders engaged in strategies to support teachers to develop culturally responsive practices that infused students' experiences and worldviews. This was similarly reflected in three studies in other countries involving secondary schools with significant cultural diversity, which found that leaders were committed to social justice and continuously fostered an environment that allowed all members to become responsive to others (Billot et al., 2007; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Walker & Dimmock, 2008). The research by Madhlangobe and Stephen (2012) found that a principal intentionally modelled cultural responsiveness in order to sensitise staff and help them to develop the abilities to succeed with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Two case studies by Fitzgerald (2010) and Santamaría (2014) of indigenous leaders and leaders of colour determined the educational leaders' practices differed from mainstream leadership. While there were many parallels, the authors noted the leaders had strong connections and a need to advocate for whānau, and they were conscious of and willing to engage in critical conversations about stereotypes and inequality. The voices of participants echoed leaders in other studies by Billot et al. (2007) and Ford (2012) who expressed that a one-size-fits-all or universal model of leadership was not adequate in guiding them to successfully meet the needs of diverse and students.

This is contrasted somewhat by larger quantitative studies and synthesis of research on leadership. The largest ever study of the relationship between leadership and culture, the GLOBE project, found that there was very little variation in the ascribed values and practices of successful leaders in 62 countries surveyed (House et al., as cited in Guthey & Jackson, 2011). Meta-analyses of research by Robinson et al. (2009) and Seashore Louis et al. (2010) investigating the effect of school leadership on

student learning also identified a small set of core leadership dimensions that were consistently found to have a positive effect on student outcomes. Despite the findings, however, the authors argued that individual leadership practices are different depending on the circumstance, and the “context must be discerned in situ rather than be specified by means of a complex set of generalisations” (Robinson et al., 2009, p. 71). Thrupp (2010) and Youngs (2011) critiqued Robinson et al.’s (2009) *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why: Best Evidence Synthesis* cautioning that, although context was acknowledged in the findings, it was not explored in depth in the text and there was the risk the report provided a one-size-fits-all package for leaders. Thrupp (2010) also argued that the BES was a government-funded paper and presented a Ministry of Education view that favoured work contracted by the Ministry while omitting or hardly mentioning the research of many other key leadership authors. These critiques, contradictions in the research, and contrasts with smaller case studies compared to meta-analysis of research, highlight the tension between universal and culturally responsive models of leadership.

**Influencing cultural responsiveness – Caring relationships.** Research across the field was consistent in reflecting that developing caring relationships was a central practice of culturally responsive leaders. Observations and interviews showed that leaders successful in meeting the needs of diverse students placed a strong emphasis on establishing trusting, respecting and caring relationships (Ford, 2012; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014), and actively worked towards creating inclusive school cultures (Robertson & Miller, 2007; Walker & Dimmock, 2008). Leaders in schools with diverse student populations developed relationships with and among staff by providing opportunities for sharing of ideas, perspectives, and decision making (Ford, 2012; Roberston & Miller, 2007; Santamaría et al., 2014). Students’ unique identities were celebrated and they were given voice in creating the learning processes and vision for the school (Billot et al., 2007; Bishop et al., 2010). Culturally responsive leaders created multiple opportunities for themselves and staff to engage and communicate with whānau and the community (Ford, 2012; Santamaría, 2014). This involved developing reciprocity and including parents in decision making (Hynds et al., 2013; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012).

**Influencing cultural responsiveness – Personal understanding.** There was some research that found that leaders supported teachers to develop personal awareness and critical reflection, however only the studies by Ford (2012), Hynds et al. (2013), and Walker and Dimmock (2008) reported that leaders personally engaged in self-reflection. Separate studies of two principals in Aotearoa New Zealand primary schools found that leaders helped staff to examine assumptions, attitudes and practices (Ford, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014). Similarly, research of a secondary school leader in the United States noted that the principal continually reminded staff to reflect on their teaching approaches and be more inclusive (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). In the research of Robertson and Miller (2007) leaders engaged in promoting professional development of culturally responsive practices, but there was no mention in the findings of leaders influencing critical reflection among staff.

The Te Kotahitanga and He Kākano projects have provided ongoing professional development to help teachers and leaders examine their thoughts, beliefs and discursive positioning (Bishop et al., 2010; Hynds et al., 2013). In research investigating He Kākano, leaders spoke of the importance of examining themselves and their relational positions, values and beliefs towards Māori, and subsequent changes to their attitudes and perceptions as a result (Hynds et al., 2013).

**Influencing cultural responsiveness – Will and agency to change.** There were some studies that reported leaders showed awareness, motivation, and agency to bring about change to historical, social, political and economic inequities, however there was little evidence of them developing critical consciousness and pedagogy among staff. In comparative studies between Aotearoa New Zealand and America, leaders engaged in critical conversations about culture and equity, used consensus in decision making, and led by example to meet unresolved educational challenges (Santamaría et al., 2014). Similarly, in a study of a secondary school principal in the United States, the leader demonstrated a committed and proactive approach to addressing societal inequalities and ensured teachers were included and given responsibility for implementing strategies (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). Research of five principals in England by Walker and Dimmock (2008) found the leaders clearly articulated their commitment to challenging ingrained social inequalities and they extended considerable strategic and practical energy towards these ends. This included

grounding leadership in shared ownership and responsibility with staff to ensure efforts of improved human relations were sustained (Walker & Dimmock, 2008). A study of a primary school principal in Aotearoa New Zealand also showed focus was given to continuously reviewing school documents and changing a rigid top-down management structure to ensure it was inclusive (Ford, 2012). Personal and institutionalised racism were identified as systemic and widespread within schools by indigenous leaders (Fitzgerald, 2010) and European leaders from New Zealand, Australia, Canada and England (Billot et al., 2007; Bishop et al., 2010; Walker & Dimmock, 2008). These findings have significance for educational leaders as they highlight the challenges some students and educators face, and the practices that are currently used to address these issues.

### **Summary**

This chapter has synthesised and critiqued relevant literature in the field of culture, cultural responsiveness, and culturally responsive leadership to give a comprehensive overview of the topic of culturally responsive leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools. At the centre of culturally responsive leadership is the concept of culture, which recognises the patterns of values, beliefs and customs shared by a given group of people that distinguish it from other groups and affect how people view, interpret and behave in different situations. Cultural responsiveness recognises students' different ways of knowing and doing, and incorporates their cultural experiences, histories and perspectives in teaching and learning. Authors contend that what is needed is educational leadership that is responsive to the cultural conditions of the particular schools and communities in which it is situated. Equally, leaders need to develop caring relationships, engage in and support teachers to develop personal awareness and critical reflection, and demonstrate the will and agency to bring about change for students from diverse backgrounds.

The literature review highlighted that previous research on cultural responsiveness has predominately been situated in the context of teaching and, until recently, there has been limited understanding of how it is developed and enacted within educational leadership. Those studies that have investigated culturally responsive leadership have tended to focus on leadership practices and there has been little research of how leaders become culturally responsive themselves. The review also identified that research is

needed that investigates culturally responsive leadership practices in Aotearoa New Zealand at a secondary school level.

This research project has been designed to add to understanding in these areas. The next chapter will outline the research design that includes the methodology, methods, data collection and analysis, as well as the ethical considerations that were chosen and applied to investigate the research questions.

### CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology and methods chosen and applied in this investigation of culturally responsive leadership. The positioning of the study in an interpretivist paradigm is described and critiqued in order to explain the underlying rationale for the selected research process and analysis. Components of the research design, including comparative case study research and semi-structured interview methods, along with narrative and coding analysis, are explained. The chapter introduces the four principals from different cultural backgrounds and explains the process by which potential participants were selected. A culturally responsive practice adopted by the researcher, and ethical considerations taken into account through the research process are also discussed.

#### **Research Design**

A qualitative research approach was used in the research to draw on the leaders' knowledge and understand how they made sense of their intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences of developing and influencing cultural responsiveness. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach that locates the observer in the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It allows the inductive exploration of the complexity of relational and contextual factors that influence people, and provides a rich description of the individual and shared themes of their lives (Creswell, 2014). In line with this approach, the following two questions were created to guide the research:

1. How do secondary school leaders account for their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness?
2. How do secondary school leaders perceive they influence staff to improve culturally responsive practices that potentially meet the needs of diverse and underachieving students?

The interpretivist paradigm and case study research adopted to investigate these questions are described in the following sub sections.

**Interpretivist paradigm.** Interpretivism is one of a number of paradigms that includes a set of philosophical principles and assumptions that guide the theories, methodologies and practice of researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It is a way of viewing the world that defines the nature of reality, or ontologies, and the ways in

which it can be known, called epistemologies (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013). Traditionally, research has been strongly influenced by the positivist perspective that nature is fixed, there are ultimate truths about a real world that exists beyond a person, and this world can be known and quantified by an objective observer using a scientific approach of observation and measurement (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997; Neuman, 2014). Interpretivism encompasses a contrasting world view where each human being constructs meaning of the world based on their direct experiences of interacting with people in natural settings (Neuman, 2014). The interpretivist view of the nature of reality, often named relativism, is that reality is subjective (Guba & Lincoln, 2005), meaning-making is not fixed but rather dynamic and shifting (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013) and there are multiple and varied views of reality (Creswell, 2013).

There is a close link between the interpretivist paradigm and the socio-cultural constructivist theory that underpins the concept of culture (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Schram, 2006). This alignment made the interpretivist paradigm an appropriate lens to investigate the topic of culturally responsive leadership. From an interpretivist epistemological assumption, the design of the research allowed discovery of knowledge through exploring the complexity of the participants' different meanings and interpretations of how they have developed and influenced cultural responsiveness in their lives (Neuman, 2014). The interpretivist ontological perspective is that people do not develop subjective meaning in isolation, but rather through ongoing communication, negotiation and interaction (Neuman, 2014), and the historical, cultural and social interactions of the groups and society they live in (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Therefore, in order to understand the topic more deeply, this research study sought to investigate those cultural and contextual factors that leaders perceived contributed to their development of cultural responsiveness, as well as provide understanding of the reciprocal influence between the leaders and the people and the environment within which they worked.

From an interpretivist perspective, the research process was seen as an interaction between the researcher and the participants where there was influence and co-construction of interpretations (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Consequently, in my role of researcher, I positioned myself as an involved and connected observer in an equal relationship with the participants (Titchen & Hobson, 2011). This included

acknowledging my own position and beliefs throughout the research and interview process (Creswell, 2013).

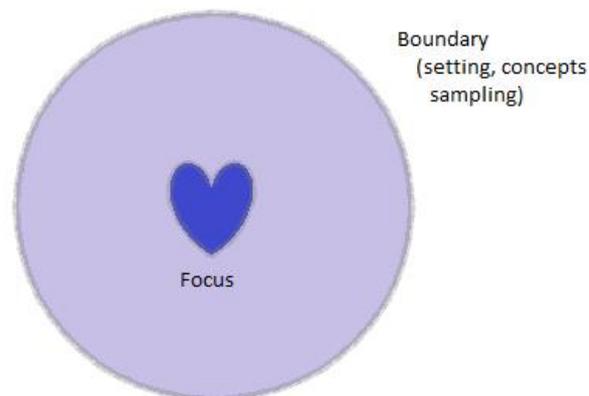
Critique and debate among people who hold different ontological and epistemological views is common (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Some researchers with post-structuralism perspectives have critiqued the interpretivist focus on the singular, self-contained individual (Davies, 2010). Davies (2010) suggested that rather than focussing on categories such as social or cultural groups, researchers need to investigate the 'immanence' that is within all life and that dissolves all boundaries. Interpretivism has also been critiqued for not going far enough to advocate and create change for marginalised peoples (Creswell, 2014). Critical researchers espouse the notion that research needs to investigate the political, economic, and social structures that lead to inequalities in order to empower people and contribute to a better world (Shields, 2012).

As the focus of this investigation is culturally responsive leadership, a term that has links to critical theory (Berryman et al., 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016), it could be asked why the research was not positioned within a critical theory perspective. Although I share some of the beliefs of this paradigm, such as social justice, peace and human rights (Creswell, 2013), I did not feel confident enough as a beginner researcher to adopt an advocacy stance through my research, and I was also cautious of pushing my own views and beliefs about what needs to be changed in relation to the participants. I was conscious, however, of how my own European background and that the nature of the study, which investigated four people from different cultural backgrounds, could potentially lead to harm, disrespect or disempowerment for the participants involved (Smith, 2012). With this ethical consideration in mind, I planned to explore and practise cultural responsiveness throughout the research process (Berryman et al., 2013). A description of this is given in the following section.

**Comparative case study research.** Case study is a methodology aligned with the interpretivist paradigm (Creswell, 2014). Case study research investigates complex social phenomena within their real-life, contemporary contexts or settings (Yin, 2014). In comparison to survey or experimental research, which seeks to objectively examine

the relationships of isolated variables with the aim of generalising findings to a larger population (Creswell, 2014), case study research explores situations and issues where there are many variables that the researcher has less control over, and the phenomenon and context cannot be separated (Yin, 2014). The interpretivist assumptions that meaning-making is rooted in context and people have their own experiences and understandings (Merriam, 2009) are reflected in the way case study research attempts to describe and interpret the detailed experiential knowledge of a case, and the influence of the particular context on that case (Stake, 2005).

A defining characteristic of case study research is that it is an in-depth study of a bounded system that emphasises the unity and wholeness of the case, as well as focusing attention on those aspects that are relevant to the research problem (Stake, 2005). The bounded case is described within certain parameters of time and space and may be an individual, a classroom, an organisation, or at a less concrete level, a community, decision process or specific project (Creswell, 2013). The bounded case and research focus are illustrated by the following diagram.



*Figure 2.* “The case as the unit of analysis.” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 29).

In this research project, case studies of four participants from diverse cultural backgrounds have been conducted to provide unique and possibly contrasting views of the topic of culturally responsive leadership. Each of the participants has been considered a bounded case and the parameters of the case were the personal and professional experiences through their lives that have contributed to their development

of cultural responsiveness, and the schools in which they have worked and influenced staff to be culturally responsive through their leadership roles.

Case study research can be of a single case that typically investigates a common, unusual, or previously unexplored phenomenon (Yin, 2014), or it can be a multi-case study that includes purposefully selected cases to illustrate or show different perspectives of an issue (Creswell, 2013). Also known as collective or comparative cases, multi-case studies use within-case analysis to investigate the individual case as a whole, and cross-case analysis to look for themes common or different to each of the cases (Yin, 2014). In this research project, comparative case study research was particularly suited to honouring and respecting the cultural pluralism and subjectivity of the participants who were from different cultural backgrounds (Berryman et al., 2013), while also allowing for cross-case analysis to look for themes common to their culturally responsive leadership development and practice (Stake, 2005). The findings chapter of this thesis presents a description and holistic analysis of each individual, or case, and the diverse perspectives are compared and synthesised in the discussion chapter.

One particular strength of case study research is that it often uses multiple sources of information, including documents, interviews, narrative reports, observations, and physical artefacts (Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) explained that this allows for converging lines of inquiry, or triangulation, which strengthen the validity and depth of understanding in the study. In this investigation, however, the nature of the research inquiry, which focuses on each leader's perceptions and experiences of becoming and being culturally responsive, meant that interviews were the most appropriate data collection method (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Punch, 2009). These methods, along with their limitations, are described in more detail below.

A number of debates and critiques are raised about case study research. Case studies are sometimes seen as lacking in rigour in data collection, construction and analysis (Merriam, 2009) and leading to an unmanageable level of effort and large research reports (Yin, 2014). A question often raised concerns the validity of the findings (Merriam, 2009). As the researcher is the instrument of investigation, subjective judgements and bias can affect what information is collected or not collected and how

it is interpreted (Yin, 2014). To help overcome these possible limitations, reflexive practices were an important ongoing process throughout my research (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Fontana & Frey, 2005). This included journal writing, along with regular discussions with a supervisor skilled in the area of one-on-one conversations. Finally, a key critique is that findings cannot be generalised to other situations when the study is only based on a single or small number of cases (Creswell, 2013). Merriam (2009) pointed out that this critique misses the point of case study research, which has strength in investigating difference and understanding the range or variety of human experience.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The data collection and analysis of the research project was designed to gather and interpret a rich array of information about the participants and their perspectives of the topic. In each of the stages, culturally responsive research practices were embedded in the planning and implementation.

**Culturally responsive research practices.** An important consideration within this study was the potential of harm, disrespect or disempowerment for the four participants, most of whom were from indigenous and minority cultures. As a European researcher, I reflected on how my attitudes, beliefs and behaviours towards people from different cultures, and my place within a larger colonial history of Aotearoa New Zealand, could influence the research process. Smith (2012) described how research on indigenous and minority cultures has often been conducted by people from the majority culture and the methodologies, methods and ethics used have traditionally been based on Western cultural constructs. In some cases this has resulted in the perpetuation of historical power imbalances, the silencing of minority voices, or the misrepresentation and undervaluing of the worldview of these peoples (Berryman et al., 2012; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; O'Toole & Beckett, 2013; Smith, 2012). Consequently, there has been a call for research that places Māori and other minority participants at the centre of the research process (Bishop, 2005; Smith, 2012).

With this moral and ethical consideration in mind, a central aspect of my research was the exploration and practice of cultural responsiveness throughout the process. Through the planning, contacting, interviewing, analysing, and writing stages I sought

to acknowledge the cultural and epistemological pluralism of each of the participants, to focus on the primacy of relationships within culturally responsive interactions, and to create an approach that honoured and supported participants rather than trying to change and transform them (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop et al., 2010). As participants were from a diverse range of cultures, I also familiarised myself with and drew upon aspects of kaupapa Māori research (Berryman et al., 2013; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Smith, 2012; Walker, Eketone, & Gibbs, 2006), Pasifika research (McFall-McCaffery, 2010; Otsuka, 2005; Vaioleti, 2006) and indigenous research (Steinberg & Canella, 2012).

In the initial stages and throughout the research process, I consulted with a Māori elder and a cultural supervisor to develop my understanding and ability to work with people from different cultures. I also engaged in an exploration of my own cultural journey and my beliefs and assumptions about Māori, Pasifika and European cultures in order to have awareness of my perspectives, judgements and bias that might influence the research process. The research plan, methodology and methods were designed to give opportunities for the participants to help co-create the interview process (Bishop, 2005; Fontana & Frey, 2005), to check and make any necessary changes to their stories (Mutch, 2013), and for their unique identity and perspective to be respected and upheld (Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

A key aspect of the research was my intention to develop whakawhanaungatanga with the participants (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Mutch, 2013; Smith, 2012). This included taking the time to get to know each person when contacting them and offering a kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) meeting to give each participant and myself the chance to talk informally and share interests and our personal identity, as well as discuss the research, before any questioning or data collection began (Vaioleti, 2006; Walker et al., 2006). In line with the research approach called talanoa, which are defined as the Pacific way of open and informal discussion and exchange of ideas (Vaioleti, 2006), I also structured interviews to be like a conversation and allowed participants to story their experiences, their realities and aspirations without a rigid framework of questions. The focus on relationships has continued through maintaining good communication and updating participants of the progress of the research, verifying the

accuracy of data collected, and providing all participants with a copy of the final findings.

**Participants.** It is difficult to briefly introduce the people involved in the study without objectifying and simplifying the complexity of who they are. The stories and perspectives retold in the findings section best give an understanding and picture of each person. For the purposes of this report, they are briefly introduced here in relation to their role as leaders in specific contexts.

Loto is of Pacific Island<sup>11</sup> descent and grew up in a Pasifika community while also learning about European culture. Loto described the influence of being taught values of humility and respect at an early age and feeling called to take on leadership roles as a beginning teacher. “The neediness of the school called out to me.... I saw the situation and I thought I could make a difference in that. I could change that.” Loto is currently the principal of a medium-sized, low decile, urban secondary school that has a large percentage of Māori and Pasifika students.

Atawhai is of Māori and European descent and acknowledged the hapū, iwi, awa (river), marae (traditional meeting house), tūpuna (ancestors), and God that are the basis on which he stands. Atawhai spent his early years living on a marae before moving to a small urban town. He feels that learning to walk in the world of things Māori, as well as the world of te ao Pākehā has developed his deep respect for people from other cultures and ability to fit into someone else’s world. Atawhai is the leader of a large, low decile, urban secondary school that has a large number of Māori and Pasifika students.

Amanda is of European descent and grew up in a small rural community. Amanda has had a life-long involvement with Māori, particularly as a result of raising her children who strongly identified as Māori through their father’s heritage. Amanda described how early in her teaching career she saw first-hand how Māori kids were marginalised and this led to an absolute conviction to do more and work differently so that they

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<sup>11</sup>Due to the limited number of Pasifika principals in Aotearoa New Zealand, gender and specific ethnic identification has been removed from Loto’s findings in order to ensure confidentiality. This is explained further in the section on ethical considerations.

didn't have to "leave their identity behind at the school gate". Amanda is currently the principal at a medium-sized, low decile, urban secondary school that has a large percentage of Māori and Pasifika students.

Freya grew up in a small country community that had a significant Māori population. Freya's father was half Māori, half Australian and her mother was European. Freya perceived that she has always had a view of equity that has caused her to be solution focussed and think about what she can do to improve situations. Freya has only ever worked in low income schools, often with significant Māori and Pasifika populations, and this has made her aware of the huge socio-economic challenges that these young kids have to deal with. Freya is the principal of a medium-sized, low decile, urban, secondary school that has a high proportion of Māori, Pasifika, and Asian students.

**Participant selection.** The participants were selected using purposive sampling so that they could inform a deeper understanding of the specific research problem (Creswell, 2013). Potential participants were identified to be culturally responsive in their leadership practices through previous Education Review Office reports of their schools and advice from experts in the field. Each person was contacted and sent a participant information sheet and consent form. These are shown in Appendix C and D. In total, 12 potential participants were contacted, of which five agreed to take part in the research. One of these withdrew part way through the research process. Initially, it was hoped that each of the participants would be from a different cultural background, but, due to the limited number of culturally diverse secondary school principals who agreed to participate in this study, this was not possible.

**Interviews.** Interviews are a flexible method that can be adapted to a wide range of research strategies (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) and are a very good way of investigating people's perceptions, meanings and definitions (Punch, 2009). The design and structure of an interview is influenced by the purpose of the research and how researchers position themselves based on their underlying epistemological assumptions about how knowledge is created (Fontana & Frey, 2005). In this research a semi-structured interview process was used with the four participants that contained a pre-interview brief with questions while also giving opportunity for unexpected

insights and the chance for me to seek clarification and explore responses (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013). The interview questions shown in Appendix E were given to participants prior to the interview and they were asked to respond in writing so that initial understanding of their perspectives could be gained and the interview could be shaped around their responses. Some guidance was given in the interview process and there was also space for the participant to set the direction of the conversation (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). In each of the interviews the semi-structured approach resulted in a range of different processes based on the needs of each participant.

Interviews share the same critique of validity as case studies because the interviewer is the instrument of the research. Another issue centres on the credibility of respondents' memories and the danger of silenced voices (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013). People can have response tendencies, dishonesty, self-deception and social desirability, which mean they can withhold information in individual or group interviews, or say something quite different to what they do in practice (Punch, 2009). Interviews are also sometimes critiqued as focusing on the individual and neglecting the effect of social and environmental factors (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

**Recording, transcription and analysis.** The focus on interpretation and holism consequently means that qualitative data analysis is commonly iterative, recursive and dynamic (Gibbs, 2002). Rather than being a separate stage of the research process, analysis takes place during the data collection and guides and forms subsequent data gathering (Gibbs, 2002; Miles et al., 2014). In this research, analysis took place throughout the interview process as well as after the data gathering was completed. Preliminary coding categories were identified from the first meeting and participants' initial written responses to the interview questions, and these were used to guide the subsequent interviews (Miles et al., 2014). As is typical in interviews, the collection and analysis of conversations involved the digital audio recording and transcription of what was discussed (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013) as well as the remembering of processes and observations written in a research journal (Miles et al., 2014).

Rather than simply being an onerous task, transcription is an interpretive process involving judgements and decisions that transform an oral discourse into a written

form (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). To maintain the original integrity and meaning of the participants' accounts, and deepen understanding of the conversations, I transcribed each of the interviews. This gave me insight into the social and emotional aspects of the conversation, and also acted as a reflexive exercise, which allowed me to develop my interview skills throughout the research process.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggested three approaches to analysis. These included analysis focussed on meaning, analysis focussed on language, and theoretical analysis. A common way of analysing meaning, and one that was adopted in this research project, is the process of breaking down the text and examining and comparing it in relation to categories or codes (Miles et al., 2014). Miles et al. (2014) described codes as labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information gathered during a study. Codes can be 'a-prior' where they are developed in advance, before the interviews, or 'in-vivo', where they are developed through reading the data (Barbour, 2007). In keeping with the underlying interpretive perspective and culturally responsive theory that knowledge is co-constructed, in-vivo coding was chosen. Initially in the analysis, codes were created that used words or short phrases from the participants' own language to give meaning to chunks of data (Miles et al., 2014). An example of the coding analysis is shown in Appendix F.

A key difference between the procedures of qualitative compared to quantitative analysis is that, rather than reducing the data to summaries of statistics in order to be counted, qualitative analysis seeks to organise and manage the data to enhance and increase its complexity (Gibbs, 2002; Miles et al., 2014). In the analysis of this study, the original data were preserved as much as possible and, not only was most of the text assigned a code, but much of the data had more than one code added to it. In their study, Miles et al. (2014) noted that this strategy could create limitations in regards to the large amount of data that had to be analysed. I discovered this to be the case and realised that I had to be selective in order to have time to condense, order, and write up the findings. Computer-assisted data-analysis software called NVivo was used to maintain a link between the codes and the original text, as well as to help sort and continuously rework data more easily (Gibbs, 2002; Miles et al., 2014). Within-case analysis and coding was initially conducted for each individual participant and then, once completed, cross-case analysis and coding was used to look at both the

similarities and differences between each of the participants (Miles et al., 2014). Coding categories that emerged from this analysis are presented in the findings and discussion sections.

As well as coding, I also used some basic aspects of narrative analysis to focus on the meaning and perspectives told through the participants' interview stories (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Rather than breaking a conversation into parts and looking for common properties, narrative analysis recognises the uniqueness of each human interaction and interprets and presents the story as a meaningful whole (Chase, 2005). In the research, this involved linking and interconnecting the different components of the chronologically told story of how the participants perceived they had developed cultural responsiveness through their life and how they influenced staff to develop their own culturally responsive practices. The narrative analysis has been reconstructed in the findings section to provide a narrative that is a more condensed and coherent story of what the participants talked about (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In conducting the interpretation and analysis for this research project, I attempted to follow Stakes' (2005) description that the simplest rule of analysis is to "place your best intellect into the thick of what is going on" (p.449) and continuously interpret the data again and again using different arrays, perspectives and strategies. This involved looking at the data from different psychological, educational and leadership angles, talking about my ideas with supervisors, and revisiting the interview recordings and field notes at regular intervals. I also took a break from the analysis to read further and review the literature again in order to come back to the findings and to identify emergent themes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The ultimate intention of research is to generate knowledge that improves the lives of all involved in the study and those that read it (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010; Smith, 2012; Snook, 2011). Despite this ideal, it has been important to consider what value participants, the community and the researcher will gain from the study (Punch, 2009), and potential harm that could be created through conducting the research (Piper & Simons, 2011). Even under the most collaborative of circumstances, researchers and participants have different perspectives, objectives and assumptions about research

(Schram, 2006), and research will always be some form of intrusion into the lives of the people involved (Maxwell, 2013).

Common ethical principles articulated by a number of authors (Creswell, 2014; O'Toole & Beckett, 2010; Piper & Simons, 2011; Punch, 2009) as well as the guidelines of the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (Auckland University of Technology, 2015) formed the basis of my research. An application for ethical approval was submitted to the AUTEK ethics committee and this required me, as the researcher, to consider how informed and voluntary consent, privacy and confidentiality, minimisation of risk, truthfulness including limitation of deception, social and cultural sensitivity, research adequacy, and avoidance of conflict of interest would be applied in my particular research context (Auckland University of Technology, 2015).

**Confidentiality.** In my particular study, where possible, confidentiality has been closely adhered to. Digital recordings, completed interview transcriptions, and observational notes have not been disclosed to anyone in the school or outside the research, apart from my supervisors, and all information will be securely stored on a memory stick or in hard copy in a locked filing cabinet for six years. A potential ethical issue is that it is very difficult to maintain confidentiality within small communities (Snook, 2003), particularly for leaders from minority groups such as Pasifika (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010). Participants were clearly informed of this risk and pseudonyms have been used for their names to protect the participants' anonymity (Christians, 2005). In particular, due to the limited number of Pasifika principals in Aotearoa New Zealand, gender and specific ethnic identification have been removed from one of the participant's findings in order to ensure confidentiality.

**Informed consent.** Due to the personal nature of this study that investigated leaders' stories, it was important that there was ongoing negotiation of consent (Piper & Simons, 2011). As well as ensuring that participants had full information about the study and voluntary consent (Miles et al., 2014), they were given the opportunity to choose to stop an interview at any stage or withdraw from the research during the interview process (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010). In the interviews I was sensitive to the intimacy of personal questions and how participants responded (Punch, 2009), and

there were times when I stopped a line of questioning because I felt the participant did not want to go further. In one case, a participant who had agreed to participate by signing a consent form and had an initial meeting did not reply to follow-up emails and phone calls to arrange the next interview. In consultation with my supervisor, consideration was made about how many times and to what extent it was ethically appropriate to continue trying to contact the person. After a period of time, the participant's choice to not respond was taken to mean that consent had been withdrawn and the research process was stopped. No information from this individual was used in the study.

**Validity.** To ensure that the theories or explanations derived from the research data were true and correctly captured what the participants actually talked about (Gibbs, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), participants were given the opportunity to member check individual interview transcripts and initial findings, and to make changes for up to two weeks after receiving them (Piper & Simons, 2011). As noted earlier, there were possible limitations in the research because of the influence of the researcher in the interview process, the threat of biased transcription and interpretation, and the overemphasis on certain findings or positive cases in the analysis (Gibbs, 2002). To strengthen the validity of these aspects of the research, a critical perspective was taken when exploring possible bias, looking for negative evidence, checking rival explanations, and continually revisiting original recordings and transcripts (Miles et al., 2014).

**Ethical tensions.** Adhering to a set of rules and regulations does not necessarily relate to ethical practice and mitigate harm for all parties involved (Piper & Simons, Shields, 2012). Research typically involves subtle dilemmas that are wide ranging, and where negotiated trade-offs are required (Punch, 2009). A difficulty that needed to be considered in my study was balancing the tension of the research commitments and the desire to obtain a qualification with the needs and rights of the participants (Schram, 2006). This subtle tension was evident in writing the findings and discussion sections where I noticed the desire to write what a participant had said in a certain way to meet the structure and word limit of the thesis requirements while at the same time wanting to honour the essence of what they had talked about. Regular supervision has been practised to maintain awareness of subtle ethical issues, and

continuous reflexive practice was adopted for the research process to identify unconscious assumptions and question the basis of decision making (Maxwell, 2013).

**Potential benefits and outcomes.** The investigation of culturally responsive leadership has given participants and myself, as the researcher, the opportunity to reflect on their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness. This may have provided new understandings for them and potentially led to growth and changes to their leadership practice, which could have further influences on those that they work with. The research will add to the emerging understanding of the learning processes leaders go through in personally and professionally developing cultural responsiveness. Findings could provide other leaders and teachers with an increased understanding of their own personal and professional journey of developing and influencing culturally responsive practices, as well as possibly contribute to leader preparation programmes within this area. This could provide the basis for further study in this area. Most importantly, increased understanding of culturally responsive leadership may, in a small way, contribute to improved education for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

### **Summary**

This chapter has outlined the research design and methods used to investigate how four principals of secondary schools have experienced developing and practising cultural responsiveness within themselves and with their colleagues. It explained how an interpretivist paradigm was incorporated in comparative case study research, semi-structured interview methods, and narrative and coding analysis. This allowed an inductive exploration that honoured and respected the cultural pluralism and subjectivity of the knowledge of participants who were from different cultural backgrounds while also enabling cross-case analysis to look for themes common to their culturally responsive leadership development and practice. In the next chapter, the stories and experiences of Loto, Atawhai, Freya and Amanda are presented.

## CHAPTER FOUR – FINDINGS

This chapter presents the accounts and perspectives of Loto, Atawhai, Freya and Amanda in developing and practising cultural responsiveness within themselves and with colleagues. Each section within the chapter retells a participant's responses to the interview questions listed in Appendix E. In the first part of each section, the participant's story of their personal and professional development is described along with the accounts of significant or critical experiences and how these related to the process of becoming culturally responsive. The second part, entitled leadership influences, describes how each participant perceived he or she influenced staff to develop culturally responsive practices. The findings have been retold in a narrative form in order to recognise the uniqueness of the participants' knowledge and experience, and interpret and present their stories as a meaningful whole. As a consequence, the description of significant or critical incidents is between the subsections on personal and professional development because it provides a more coherent and chronological account of their experiences.

### **Loto**

**Personal development.** Loto explained that s/he grew up in a Pasifika community while also learning about European culture, and this meant that cultural considerations were a natural part of his/her thinking. Loto was immersed in the Pacific culture and at the same time was bilingual right from an early age as both his/her parents were bilingual and s/he attended an English-speaking school. Loto felt that as a result of his/her upbringing s/he could naturally relate to Māori and Pasifika students and respected people from different cultures. Loto said:

Culture is in me, in my thinking, in my psyche, in my person... It is not something that I need to add to myself because it is me. I am that culture... I don't need to think culturally because I already do it all the time.

Loto explained that to consider and talk about culture was difficult because it meant going outside of oneself and removing oneself from the culture in order to be able to do so. Loto also cautioned that his/her interpretation of culture might be quite different from another person's as it had been influenced by his/her own upbringing.

Loto said that s/he was culturally considerate because his/her parents were very particular about teaching the values of respect and humility. “You have to be respectful regardless. Accept people for their differences.” Loto gave an example of being taught at a young age to wear the appropriate clothing and not to swear because it was disrespectful. Similarly, Loto’s siblings learnt the same values and now they all have humility and respect in them wherever they go. Loto explained that, as a result of growing up with these values, they had become a part of him/her and the same values were now passed onto his/her own children and the students at the school:

I had grown up with humility and respect and I teach that to my own children, and I teach that to these children. When I am talking to kids I am going on about respect and humility because to me it is a winning combination... This is the backbone of any conversation that I have with the children and the teachers.

Loto perceived that his/her family had a fortunate life growing up as his/her father had a good job and they had accommodation provided. Loto described that at a young age s/he noticed kids in the class who would come to school with no lunch and wearing ripped uniforms. As a result of the family’s situation, Loto believed his/her parents believed it important to teach them not to consider themselves above other people. S/he gave an example of his/her father making them run to school in the rain because that is what the other kids did. “He made us do that occasionally to remind us that this is how it is for those that are less fortunate than ourselves and we must be grateful for what we have.” Loto pointed out that at 12 s/he didn’t understand what their father was making them do but now looked back and saw how the values of respect and humility had taken him/her a long way. Loto also recounted that his/her parents raised them not just to understand how fortunate they were, but also to do something to make the quality of people’s lives better.

**Significant experiences.** Loto described a significant experience in the second year of teaching that influenced him/her to become culturally responsive. S/he had noticed a student with a black eye and assumed that the student’s father had given her a hiding<sup>12</sup>. Loto asked if the girl had upset her father, to which the student replied that her boyfriend had punched her. Loto explained:

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<sup>12</sup> The word hiding is used in Aotearoa New Zealand to describe a physical beating.

I was quite taken aback and I said, I was sort of quiet and then I said, I hope that you are still not with him. She said why not and I said because that is not acceptable. She said, well my dad beats my mum up, my uncle beats my aunty up, so my boyfriend beats me up.

Loto told how the response was similar to other experiences that s/he had upon arriving at the school. S/he felt sad when s/he noticed that the students were swearing, coming to school late, and disrespecting their teachers. Loto explained, “The neediness of the school called out to me... I saw the situation and I thought I could make a difference in that. I could change that.”

Loto perceived that the motivation to want to do something to make a difference for students influenced him/her in overcoming fears and being able to take on roles of leadership such as dean, deputy principal and then principal. S/he said:

That is why I became the reluctant accidental principal, or whatever you might like to talk about. Because I actually realised that if I was the principal I am sitting in the chair of the person who can make the biggest impact on these young people and the community. And that gave me the courage because, honestly, I did not want to be a principal.

Loto described that s/he disliked being visible to others and desperately did not want to be a leader, but through the experiences realised that the job was not about him/her.

**Professional development.** Loto perceived that a Ministry of Education programme had been a wonderful opportunity for him/her and the staff to become culturally responsive with regards to Māori. The programme allowed him/her to develop awareness and understanding of the Māori culture through marae visits and training by external facilitators, and to learn to recognise and challenge deficit thinking. In particular, it provided a structure to learn how to consider the different cultures of students and their families with regards to teaching and learning, student behaviour policies, and managing relationships. Loto explained that his/her experience was that there had not been any professional development opportunities for principals in the area of cultural responsiveness:

I think on the professional front there needs to be a deliberate plan to provide support for principals to be culturally responsive in their leadership. I am not aware of any professional development opportunities available to principals to enable them to be culturally responsive. I am happy to be wrong in this matter, but if my leadership is to be culturally responsive then there needs to be an

accepted or agreed definition of what this looks like and then some opportunities to help me grow in this area.

Loto described that his/her school had a large percentage of Māori and Pacific students and there had been many opportunities for him/her to develop cultural responsiveness daily on the job. Loto often had to negotiate with parents and teachers on stressful matters that were culturally sensitive and impacted students' learning, such as parents withdrawing their children for multiple days to attend funerals. Loto gave an example of an issue that arose between the Pasifika teachers and the Pasifika parent community where there was a breakdown in the relationship between teachers and parents, and accusations of inappropriate behaviour. S/he had to seek guidance from a parent representative of the appropriate way of handling the matter and perceived that if s/he did not have an understanding of the cultural context and appropriate actions, s/he may have caused more unhappiness.

Loto also described other social and cultural challenges in his/her leadership position. Loto talked about what s/he considered a loss of heart and caring in people:

The heart and the caring. It's going. It's moving. I think in the Pacific Island people in New Zealand, there's less of it. There's more about money and status and all of that, which I feel sad about ... It's not the culture that I know.

S/he explained that much of the school community was living in poverty and yet money and social standing were often prioritised over the children's needs and education. Loto said that in the Pasifika culture the church was given number one priority and there were tensions and pressures that s/he experienced as a result of this. Loto explained that a lot of families in the school gave money to the church and s/he was trying to teach them to recognise what was important and make good decisions.

**Leadership influences.** Loto believed that the best way to deal with the cultural and social issues in the school was to teach the teachers and students to embrace values such as integrity, respect and responsibility. S/he explained that if heart and caring become something that students embraced, then they would be set for life. In order to do this, Loto said that it didn't work to impose the values or wave a finger and say 'show respect'. "You actually have got to create the school environment so that it grows in the children." S/he believed that the only way this could happen

was if teachers embraced the values in everything that they did in teaching and learning, whether in the classroom or on the playground.

Loto explained the way that s/he influences students and staff was firstly by being a living example of embracing values in relationships and leadership practice. Whenever s/he met with students, parents or teachers, respect and humility were the centre of the conversation and s/he always thought about what was appropriate in regards to their culture. As a leader, Loto attempted to be on the same level as everybody. "I don't see myself anywhere above anybody. I think the teachers see that and the kids see that." Loto pointed out that s/he attempted to model cultural responsiveness and values but s/he was "not perfect".

By embracing and teaching values, Loto had attempted to create an environment where the students and teachers felt that the school was a family. Loto described that s/he has a deep level of relationships with students and staff, and believed it was important to have an open door and be accessible to everybody so they could come in at any time with questions they had. Loto said, "The level of engagement I have with them, they do appreciate it, and they do acknowledge that if I was not a Pacific Islander that this possibly may not happen."

Loto described opportunities they had created in the school that exposed staff to the values, beliefs and protocols of the different cultures. S/he gave examples of celebrating the young people's cultures through language weeks, conducting culturally responsive prize giving, and having karakia (prayer) spoken in different languages at school assemblies and meetings. S/he also explained that Māori and Pasifika teachers talked to the staff about their cultures to help develop awareness, and new teachers to the school had a cultural orientation programme. Loto gave an example of a new teacher who was unfamiliar with the Pasifika and Māori cultures and explained that s/he had worked hard to help the new teacher be aware of cultural practices and appropriate ways to communicate with parents.

Loto believed that introducing a Ministry of Education programme was influential in enabling staff to learn to be culturally responsive. Initially s/he chose a group of seven staff members and participated with them in the marae visit and training with the

Ministry of Education. Loto perceived s/he influenced staff by being involved in doing classroom visits and giving feedback about how culturally responsive their classroom practices were, and running whole staff sessions where they had discussions about culture and its relationship to teaching. Loto explained that the next step was to help train the heads of department to do the observations and feedback process.

In considering the development of cultural responsiveness among teachers, Loto thought that often people didn't know about different cultures or were unaware of their expectations of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. S/he highlighted the danger of teachers having low expectations of achievement for Māori and Pasifika students and this causing a dumbing-down of lessons in the classroom. Loto considered his/her job was to help make teachers more aware and think about how their teaching in the classroom was considerate of Māori and Pacific children. A key part of this included having difficult conversations with teachers and using data to overcome difficulty with teachers not changing their practices. Loto gave the example of raising an issue with a department that had underperforming Māori students in the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 1 compared to other departments where the same students were achieving well. The teachers responded by talking about the students coming to class unmotivated, being truant, and having issues at home as the reasons for their poor achievement. Loto explained that by showing them the statistics of the different departments s/he was able to help them realise that their perceived causes were not necessarily linked to the achievement.

In describing the social and cultural challenges that were present in the school community, Loto said s/he believed that if people allowed the culture to dictate what they did, they could end up having huge weddings and funerals or giving their money to the church when they couldn't afford it. Loto described that his/her response was to have difficult conversations with parents, students and teachers, and question the practices of the culture. S/he stated:

I always say, even now, that if our school is successful with our students, the community will look different. I believe that. That is why our work here is extremely important because we can shift the community.

Loto described that a change needed to happen, which was a shift in culture and s/he believed that this was best done by empowering the students to embrace values so they

could adjust the culture to suit their living and make the best decisions for their own good.

### **Atawhai**

**Personal factors.** Atawhai began by naming his hapū, iwi, awa and marae. He explained his perspective of the Māori way of doing things, “He nore, he nore, he kore i te atua, he maungārongo ki te whenua. First and foremost our God, our land, and whakapai ki ngā tāngata katoa, then peace to all mankind.” Atawhai further elaborated by saying that he stands on the basis that there is a supreme being in his life and that is the reason that he is here on this earth. He explained that there are universal predetermined patterns that he is a part of and that he was some form of spirit being before coming to his body, and he will at some time go to life after death. Who he is and how he teaches or leads is something that firstly comes from within and from a relationship with what is called mauri, life force, or spirit. When considering how he developed cultural responsiveness, Atawhai said he believed that everyone had gifts and talents that they had spiritually before they were born. These are diverse and different and make a person who they were, regardless of whether they were Māori or anyone else in the world. He gave an example of how when he was young his parents and other people noticed his natural caring and inclusive attitude.

Atawhai explained how values, protocols, stories and whakataukī (proverbs) had been passed on and carried through the ancestors that came before him and will go on to the descendants that come after him. He felt he had inquired into the stories of his ancestors and had made those values and beliefs part of his own life. Atawhai stated that, rather than talking about his connection to God and his ancestors in the school context, they came through in his teaching and leadership:

I don't justify why I am the way I am in the classroom. When I am practising, I am practising. I am not saying the reason that I am practising is this, this and this. There is a God. I don't think it is my purpose to explain all of that. I think people in the context of education, they want education so I teach whatever. But it is how I teach it, it is how I deliver it. But the curriculum is what the curriculum is, so it is how I deliver the curriculum, and I think in terms of leadership as well. I think it is how I lead.

Atawhai described that he had grown up with a ‘culture of respect’:

That's my culture, a culture of respect. And under that heading comes all of these values that I try to obtain in my life; values that make up who I am. That's culture. Apart from being Māori or anything, or anyone else in the world. I am raised to be respectful to whatever is around me.

Atawhai said that his parents had a significant influence in raising him to be connected to and respectful of others. He also had vivid memories of going back to the marae where protocols and the values were made living. Now he taught his own children aspects of this culture, such as not eating until grandparents and adults had eaten, not crossing in front of grandparents when they were sitting, and not wasting or disrespecting food.

Atawhai said he believed he had a deep respect and was able to relate with people from all over the world because he had grown up with a Māori way of doing things and he also had European ancestry and was raised with Christian beliefs. He described how he spent his early years living on a whānau marae before moving to a small urban town. Learning to walk in the world of things Māori as well as the world of te ao Pākehā meant he had a natural understanding of what worked for Māori and he was able to fit into someone else's world and see where there were shared beliefs and commonalities. Atawhai pointed out, however, that he couldn't speak for all Māori because of the differences between the beliefs and practices of different iwi and hapū.

Atawhai stated that cultural responsiveness started with an attitude and understanding that involved caring for who the person was and being prepared to listen to the real meaning of what they were actually thinking. While the attitude was important, he believed a person could not be responsive unless they were performing some actions as well. "They are only theories or attitudes and values until you actually carry them out." Atawhai explained that his parents helped to develop his ability to carry out his natural gifts and talents by giving him responsibility. This continued through experiences of struggles and hardship in his life, such as when he took responsibility for building a house for his family when his children were born.

**Significant experiences.** Atawhai explained how at Teachers College he had known he wanted to help his own people and teach in schools where Māori were struggling, but he was steered away from that and instead placed in high decile

schools. He wasn't in his first teaching job for long before he thought, "No. I want to go help people" and so he decided to move to a small rural community eight hours from where he lived. Atawhai described the experience as a "rough road" that was a long way from his home and whānau. When it rained, they were often without power and the pass rate for students in the school was low. He got on really well with the young people, but he considered his responsiveness was his high standards and expectations, which led to success for the students. "I would go down to the river or wherever the boys were on Saturday. Sorry guys, back with me. Back to school and finish your work." Atawhai explained that through experiences such as this, as he had got older, he had learnt to go the extra mile and fight for the good of the kids.

I think it is more as you grown older, you start being humble. You worry less about yourself. Selfish, you think of number one first. I think you do that growing up, you think of yourself and you do things. As you get older, you take on responsibility and hardship and struggles. I have taken that more on board... I think in the context of education, students are at the centre of why we are here, not me.

**Professional factors.** Atawhai said that being culturally responsive was a learning process and that he personally didn't always respond positively. It was not that he didn't believe in being responsive, but there were tensions relating to human nature and context, such as time constraints or relationship issues that had influenced him. He gave an example of how he felt that he was often too busy and overloaded in his job to be able to listen properly to a student or understand the meaning of an email. Atawhai described how he learnt from his mistakes, engaged with people to apologise where needed, and then moved forward. "Sure, there are tensions in our work and I think with those tensions then comes the challenge for each individual in teaching to stand by what they believe in."

Atawhai believed that he had also been influenced by choosing to teach in mainstream education and that he would find operating in a kura kaupapa (Māori-language immersion school) setting too narrow. Through working in mainstream schools, Atawhai said he had learnt to think, talk, teach and mix with people from all over the world. He also explained that being in a school that had a number of Pasifika students and teachers had resulted in him learning about what cultural values and beliefs were important for Pasifika families and what they wanted for their students. This made him realise that he could not stand up and say what was best for Tongan and Samoan people

but instead needed to get feedback about what worked and didn't work for Pasifika students.

Atawhai said the term cultural responsiveness was one that had come onto the scene and become part of educational mandates, priorities and initiatives in Aotearoa New Zealand in recent years following the work of Russell Bishop. He explained that he was immediately attracted to the term as it articulated the frustration he had with teachers not being able to make a connection with learners. Atawhai described how the research had affirmed some of his beliefs and helped to introduce Māori kaupapa (strategy, vision, goals) to the staff.

**Leadership influences.** When asked about how he influenced culturally responsive practices among staff, Atawhai responded by first talking about the students and how they gained confidence or respect in teachers. He explained his response by saying, "I think in the context of education, students are at the centre of why we are here, not me." He went on to say that leadership was not about ego, being the authority and telling people what to do, or getting the honour and acknowledgement from student results. Instead, it was about helping students to succeed and become better. Atawhai said he believed that teachers and other leaders in the school were actually in a far better position than him to make a real difference in the school. Leadership was about being in a position to use the right minds and the right people to build a team and help everyone to be clear about what they wanted. He used the analogy of people in the same waka (Māori canoe) going in the same direction to explain the importance of leaders taking the people with them and knowing colleagues who had the skills to move the waka forward.

Atawhai thought first and foremost that it was important for leaders to help people to be who they are. He explained that the first step in influencing staff was role modelling cultural responsiveness himself in the way that he treated students, parents and teachers. Rather than him telling teachers what to do, his experience was that they learnt from sitting with him in meetings or watching him manage a situation such as a volatile relationship between a parent and teacher. "Those who sit in meetings with me, people know. They will come back and say, Atawhai, I just learnt so much. I think that is the one with role modelling." Atawhai believed that it was important for him to

teach and lead by being himself. “If I’ve been raised to be respectful and be connected, then I would be out of kilter if I didn’t lead respectfully.” He again explained that responsiveness meant putting attitudes and values into practice and that people responded when they knew a leader was prepared to get their hands dirty and “talk the talk, and walk the walk”.

Atawhai stated that a natural part of his leadership practice was building relationships and connections with people:

I believe it is important to be culturally connected to the people around you in the community. It means me being caring, and it means me going to build relationships, and it means me understanding who they are, where they come from, and so forth.

He believed that being culturally responsive in relationships firstly meant being open to staff and being prepared to listen. Atawhai explained that staff knew that he was equally comfortable sitting with a lady from India as he was with a Pacific Island or Pākehā teacher, and they came to talk to him if they had a problem because they knew that he would respect and care for them.

Atawhai also recounted that giving staff the opportunity to talk about what was important for them had influenced the development of cultural responsiveness throughout the school. He gave an example of when the school was initiating the He Kākano programme about raising Māori achievement and a teacher asked ‘What about Pasifika?’ Before proceeding any further with the introduction of the programme, Atawhai’s response was to allow her to talk to the staff about what things were important for Pasifika. He described how, through delegation and knowing when to lead and when to follow, he had realised that the rules of engagement had changed. He didn’t tell Pasifika teachers what to do but instead got feedback from them about what was best of Pasifika students based on their understanding and what they were doing. Atawhai explained:

I would always say to them, people here is the kaupapa that they are talking about that’s really effective for raising Māori student achievement. What I want you to do is have a look at it and tell me what parts of it can work for other ethnic groups as well. Have a look at it and tell me what parts work and what parts don’t work.

He went on to say that seeking advice and taking people on board to work together had taken longer, but the effects were that now Pasifika and Pākehā teachers were leading the programme to raise Māori student achievement, rather than him.

Atawhai cautioned that developing cultural responsiveness was a process, and leaders needed to be careful not to overdo it with staff. He gave the analogy of raising a baby. “You don’t feed the baby with meat. They can’t digest it. They have got to have milk.” Atawhai said that the school offered professional development, particularly around learning-focussed relationships. He explained he had arranged staff meetings that helped develop understanding of culture in order for teachers to be able to connect culturally with a student as well as have the teaching skills that would best support the student in their learning. He also designed the appraisal system to help teachers question whether their delivery of lessons and tasks in the school was appropriate and responsive to the needs of students. Atawhai explained the importance of contextualising learning for students and their parents by helping teachers to make connections between students’ families and what was happening in the classroom.

Atawhai believed that becoming culturally responsive was not just about having an understanding of other cultures, better teaching skills, or a quick-fix change in attitude. He described how, at its centre, it was about heart and caring:

You’ve got something you’ve got to grow... I think that is probably what it goes back to is your heart and how can you, do you have a heart? Do you have a heart to actually build that relationship?

To explain this further, Atawhai gave an example of a Pākehā teacher that he liked when he was younger who he felt had heart. He described the person as real, humble, respectful, caring and that they would never mock or put someone down. He went on to say that he believed everyone needed to make connections in life and how it is amazing when someone learns the values that make a person who they are and why they are the way they are. Atawhai said, “I think that’s being culturally responsive, is that they have got a leader who actually cares.” He explained that people had told him he had heart for the school and they came to him because he listened, he talked about the problems, and he always embraced them afterwards.

**Amanda**

**Personal development.** Amanda began by describing a life-long involvement with Māori and how she had always been around Māori families and had chosen to learn about and work with Māori in her education profession. In her first teaching role she worked in a low decile school where most of the kids were Māori, and at the time she had what she considered good relationships and practices with them. Amanda said she has always been involved in kapa haka (Māori performing arts).

In considering her development of cultural responsiveness, Amanda attributed being Pākehā and growing up in a small, predominately Māori community with only two Pākehā families, for giving her an awareness that she may not have had if she had grown up elsewhere. She was quick to point out that her brother and sister, who grew up in the same environment, do not have the same interest and involvement in Māori culture as she does. She believed that her chosen career of education had given her a different pathway than them and this had enabled her to have more insight and experience working with Māori children. Amanda said she did not believe her parents were a significant influence in developing cultural responsiveness. She described how, while they were well liked and fair, they often did things she would now say are racist. One thing that stood out for her was that as a child it always struck her as strange that their family was in a position of importance at community gatherings.

Amanda said the other influence in developing cultural responsiveness was her personal involvement raising her children, who strongly identified as Māori through their father's heritage. Although her husband didn't know anything about his own Māori upbringing until later, it was important to Amanda to bring her children up understanding their Māori culture. In their early primary schooling, she enrolled them to learn te reo and encouraged them to be involved in activities such as the manu kōrero (speech competition).

**Significant experiences.** When her eldest daughter began high school, Amanda had an eye-opening experience where she saw firsthand how Māori kids were marginalised and had to "leave their identity behind at the school gate". Amanda described how her family had moved from a small rural area to a larger city and she had intentionally searched for a school that would be receptive of her daughter as a

Māori learner and would not disrupt her access to te reo Māori. She couldn't find any apart from one where there was a Pākehā teacher who taught te reo. Upon starting the school, her daughter had been almost immediately placed in the top academic class and had come home devastated and in tears because she didn't fit in and was being called racist names. The only Māori in the class, she wasn't able to interact with her friends and was being called "kumara" (sweet potato) and "no milk" because of her dark skin and hair. Amanda described how she went down to the school to tell the principal that she didn't want her daughter in the class and was shocked when he gave her a lecture about being a poor parent for denying her child an amazing academic opportunity. When the principal was not prepared to listen to her concerns and acknowledge her daughter's Māori identity, Amanda became outraged. She stated:

I was absolutely furious. I was more than indignant. I just could not believe that he was not prepared, that by explaining to him why she didn't fit in, that it wasn't a Māori environment, that we were bringing her up to understand her Māori heritage, that I believed what she told me, that I was shocked by the name calling... Māori kids were just marginalised. I guess I saw it firsthand for the first time.

Amanda believed that prior to the experience with her daughter she had been aware of the same sort of thing happening at primary school but had not placed as much significance on it. The experience in the new school was a wake-up call. She described her response:

The more outraged that I got I started to think, do I do any of that stuff? I had to look at my own practice. I had to be aware that some of the things I did not like... I had this absolute conviction that I could do more and I would work differently.

Realising that the way she was working in her own classroom did not fit her predominately Māori students, Amanda began to change her practice. She also chose to enrol her other children in the school where she was working.

Amanda believed that this experience was the start of her speaking out and fighting against unjust and unfair treatment. She gave another example where, along with two other Pasifika teachers, she had been asked by the principal to start a "Poly club". At the first concert, instead of money going to the kids as was the case in Samoan, Tongan, and Cook Island performances, the principal had asked the Samoan teacher to get on the public address (PA) system and announce to the audience that they were

not allowed to do that and instead had to put the money in big receptacles for the school. The Pasifika teachers were mortified by this practice and one of them was in tears. Amanda, too, was horrified and agreed to go and talk to the principal with them to explain that it was culturally wrong. She recounted that the reaction she received was like a punch for her. The principal stormed into the meeting, threw his stuff on the table and said, right what is this meeting about? After the meeting it took a couple of years before he would talk to her again.

**Professional development.** Amanda described that the outrage and conviction for change that she felt from these experiences was something she had encountered in hundreds of situations in her professional career. “It is a battlefield and I think when you enter into the battle at whatever stage, you have to be prepared for the fallout.” She said it had been a fight for her, and often in speaking up she became unpopular and isolated herself. In her experience, part of the issue was that people were not aware of their prejudices and did not understand what she was talking about. “We have got this rosy picture of ourselves as a just and fair society where Māori get a reasonable good deal. That is what the impression is of us from overseas, and we are in some sort of bubble I think.” Amanda explained that the result of these experiences was an early seed of determination that caused her to question and develop culturally responsive practices had continued to grow into advocating for changes to the practices of a team of teachers, and then standing with the community to fight to change the structure of the school to better fit their young people.

Amanda described how, despite some changes, she believed that it had taken too long for society to raise awareness and consciousness, and three generations down the track her extended family were still experiencing the same thing as her daughter did. She gave examples of the limited opportunities for Māori to speak te reo in schools, with only 4% of Māori students enrolled in kura kaupapa, and the education system continuing to be predicated on Western and Pākehā assumptions of learning and knowledge. She explained that the Ministry of Education kept coming out with cultural competencies that were tick boxes, and Māori achievement was measured in terms of percentages, test results, and how poorly Māori kids compare to Pākehā. Amanda described her response:

As I have got older, I have got stroppier and grumpier and less patient about that... I have got no patience any longer so I will be more outspoken. I am a thorn in the Ministry of Education's side. I am a thorn in ERO's side, and I am a thorn in lots of principal colleagues as well. They roll their eyes and there I go again. I will not be silent.

Amanda said she had also intentionally sought out further learning and research so that she had credibility and fact on her side when she opposed practice. She explained:

The opportunities are always there, to listen and learn from others and to adapt our practice, if we open our hearts and minds to this. I had to make a conscious decision to do this and to read, research, ask, listen and become well informed in order to act.

She described how her investigation had given her understanding of how the education system is predicated on what Pākehā and Western society assume is learning and knowledge, and how these assumptions don't allow Māori students to be who they are in the school. Amanda's realisations led to her embark on her own personal journey to learn about and question her cultural identity and thinking.

**Leadership influences.** Amanda believed that the first step in influencing staff was actually developing personal awareness. She explained that leaders needed to be prepared to learn about themselves and work out what their own cultural identity meant for them, otherwise they could continue to believe that their cultural knowledge and thinking was the norm against which all other cultures were judged, and therefore fail to recognise Māori ways of knowing and learning. She stated:

You have to understand who you are before you can understand who anyone else is... if you know who you are, you receive that information differently. You are not going to be so arrogant that you put your own spin on that.

Amanda described how her own journey of learning about her family history and examining her thinking and motivations had been important in modelling ongoing professional development for staff.

Amanda said she gave teachers opportunities to become conscious of their own ways of thinking, and to learn about their own culture and journey of becoming culturally responsive. She gave an example of inviting staff to look at the dominant European thinking that had influenced their family and history, and then present counter stories they related to that challenged that thinking. Amanda had found that exploring cultural

identity could be a difficult exercise for Pākehā. It was hard for them to articulate what their culture was because it was all around them and European stories were often the dominant stories in society.

Amanda perceived that in order to know where to focus time and energy to influence staff or what strategy to use to help develop culturally responsive practices, it was important to firstly know where people were on their journey. She described how, in her experience, there were some people that may never change, and focussing on that group often led nowhere. Amanda explained that there were other people who genuinely wanted to move but were stuck because they were frightened of offending somebody or scared of making a change. She believed this middle group needed support but there was a fine line between pushing too hard, which left people feeling threatened and caused them to back off, and not pushing hard enough, which meant they didn't learn anything and were not nudged out of their comfort zone. She also explained that she had used the topology of James Banks to help staff understand what stage they were at in their cultural identity, and the further steps they could work towards. This included an exercise in a staff meeting where they all placed themselves on a continuum and then discussed their positioning together.

Amanda said she had found that she had to develop relationships with trust so people were willing to talk about their process openly, and she could know where a person was in their development. To illustrate her point, she gave an example of a Māori staff member who came to her during a staff exercise where they were recounting their cultural stories. The person had experienced a horrific upbringing and told Amanda that he did not want to write or tell his story to the rest of the staff. When she told him that he didn't have to, he responded by saying that he really wanted to be able to talk about his story and asked if he could just talk to her about it. Amanda explained that she believed that if a leader didn't have a relationship where staff trusted them or the leader was continuously hammering staff about what they hadn't done and what they didn't know, then it was hard to create the honesty that was required to make much progress.

Amanda also pointed out that what was needed to be created was an environment that was receptive to the culture and identity of each student and staff member, and this

needed to permeate all aspects of the school. If this was not in place then, like her daughter, some people potentially were not able to express their cultural identity within the school. She gave an example of how an appraisal system could be culturally insensitive for some Māori who had grown up learning “the kumara does not sing of its own sweetness” and therefore found it difficult to write about themselves or go and talk to the principal about their own prowess and abilities. She said:

You can't do cultural identity, you can't do 'being Māori' or 'as Māori' once a week. It has to be in every aspect of the school programme. It has to be imbedded in the budget, it has to be in the way you welcome visitors, it has to be in everything. That Samoan aspect has to be there for your Samoan kids and they have to be who they are all day, every day, and not have to step away from their identity.

Amanda explained that in order to understand what was culturally appropriate within the school and create an environment and practices that were culturally responsive, leaders needed to step out from their own attitudes and beliefs and be open to listening and learning from other people on staff and in the community. She explained that her practice as principal always included sharing leadership and, as a result, staff were real advocates for the way the school worked. Amanda said that instead of just looking for readings or cultural professional development, it had been important for their school to go out and find the key people in the school and community who could give them advice and professional development. She explained:

I think also that we can never underestimate how knowledgeable our Māori and Pasifika staff, students and families are about society and the way it works against them in education as well as in other areas of their lives.

Amanda believed developing cultural responsiveness required a depth of thinking and change that, in her experience, few people actually adopted. She had experienced how shifts in cultural responsiveness often began for people when they were “emotionally moved”. She gave an example where she had given a talk to a group of staff, and two Māori staff members were in tears. One came up and hugged her and kept saying “te ma mai, the hurt, the pain”. The other expressed that Amanda had just said everything that she hadn't been able to find the words for herself. Amanda explained that when the other staff saw this happen they were also moved and they too were quite upset. She believed that when people were more aware of the hurt and pain of their colleagues, this helped them to think and talk about it with each other. Amanda went on to say:

I think it is a heart thing. I mean, we can all do the head thing, we can do the learning, we can do the reading, we can make some changes; but you have to feel it. You have to be part of it. It has to move you. You have to do it for the right reasons. You have to do it because it is about kids.

Amanda pointed out that it is not enough for people to simply have an emotional response. She believed emotional connection and ideas needed to be translated into action otherwise people just retreated back to exactly the same things that they were doing in their classrooms previously. She recognised that putting ideas into practice could be difficult and this was where the leadership in the school was very important in knowing the next steps to help staff to make actual changes to their teaching.

Amanda explained that their school had done a lot over the years to attempt to ensure their teaching and learning was culturally responsive. This included changing the language of instruction, improving literacy and numeracy teaching, developing practices for Māori, and running numerous professional development programmes and courses. While the initiatives provided some progress for Māori and Pasifika students, Amanda felt it was not enough. She explained that professional courses often only touched the surface and didn't require people to do the depth of thinking and change that was actually needed. Amanda stated she now firmly believed that critical pedagogy was crucial to further success for students and needed to be central to school practice. "It is not culturally responsive, if it is not also critical." She explained that what had impacted the engagement and learning most at their school had been to help the teachers and students to develop a critical awareness and lens through which to view and act in the world. Amanda said that critical pedagogy gave teachers the ability to critique society and education systems in order to understand and make changes to the deeper meaning, root causes and barriers that keep students marginalised and disaffected. She explained that critical pedagogy was not just about critical thinking, but involved actually taking action and bringing about change.

Amanda stated that she modelled critical pedagogy in her own practice because she believed that, rather than telling teachers what they should do, school principals were influential in their roles by being willing and able to do the work themselves. She was also very intentional and specific in providing support and organising ongoing professional learning and development in this area for staff. This had ranged from her

taking sessions with staff, to bringing some of the world's top thinkers and researchers to the school. Amanda explained:

Critical pedagogy is about being in the struggle. You can't lead or teach critical pedagogy if you are not very well informed about that struggle. In our education system, that has to include knowing your own history and identity, knowing New Zealand's history – from a Māori perspective, understanding the impact of that history on our children and whānau.

Amanda believed that the greatest attribute of leadership was the ability to really listen to the community who were marginalised by the education system and “to have the courage to stand up and voice that solidarity from a position of respect and humility.”

### **Freya**

**Personal development.** Freya believed that her background helped create a sensitivity towards cultural responsiveness and being able to put herself in others' shoes. She described how she grew up in a small country community that had a significant Māori population. Her father was half Māori, half Australian, and her mother was European. Both of her parents were born in New Zealand and her father was well known in the area. At school, many of Freya's good friends were Māori.

Unlike two of her brothers, who have very olive skin like their father, Freya considered she was fairer and her features were more European than they were Māori. When asked about this she described that this difference had been difficult. Even though she grew up with practices such as tangi (funerals) on the marae and relatives who spoke fluent Māori, Freya had the sense that when it came to talking about things Māori, staff members felt she was not really a Māori. She explained that she understood some Māori but did not learn the language when she was young as it was her parents' view that English was the language that had to be spoken in order to get somewhere in life. She had regretted not learning more te reo as her father was a fluent speaker when he was young but lost a lot of his ability to speak the language later in his life.

Freya perceived that she had always had a view of equity, which had influenced her development of cultural responsiveness. “I don't know where I get this important self-equity. But it has always influenced how I think about things and my actions too, as well as my responses to other people.” Although she wasn't sure where this view came

from, Freya thought her parents were probably the most significant influence. They both had a strong sense of what was right and the decent thing to do, which was demonstrated in their behaviour and reaction to things. Freya considered that her family were fortunate and didn't have a hard life, but from an early age she noticed how equity affected other people. When she was young, she saw Māori girls who went to the local primary school and didn't have much money, and a significant Māori population at her secondary school that dropped out when they turned 15.

**Significant experiences.** Freya said that a wake-up call for her was working in a fish and chip shop upon coming home after time at university. She experienced shock and horror and was angry at the negative expectations and derogatory comments of some people who said she had done so well academically at school but was now just working at a fish and chip shop. Freya also explained her surprise at how she was treated by Māori women who came in from outlying districts:

Being so fair, they were the clients and I was the servant, and they just loved to order me round and be really rude. It was that inverted racist attitude. You know, here she is, she's White; I am going to sort her out.

Freya had never come across what she considered "inverted racism", and deep down it annoyed her that people were so insensitive and blind not to see it. She described this as 'hierarchal thinking' and gave an example of the historical dominance and power of White people who looked down on Black slaves in the United States. Freya said her response to this eye opening experience was to become solution focussed and to think about what she could do to improve situations where things were not equal.

As well as issues of race, Freya said she saw gender issues were a part of culture and that there were many similarities between the two. She described how in her early years of teaching she was unhappy to notice the quality of learning opportunities for girls was often poorer than for boys, and there were often quite entrenched sexist attitudes and imbalances of power and recognition that affected girls' education. In one instance, she had been talking to girls in her class and they had recounted how the boys were always rude to them and got most of the attention from teachers because they were so badly behaved. Freya said she was astonished and annoyed:

I thought gosh, if these girls are treated like that when they are just at school, think how low their self-esteem must be, and how can they stand up to that when they go out? No wonder some girls use anger and

violence to get what they want and others just retire into themselves and are always meek.

Freya responded by asking to record what the girls were saying and spoke about this at a staff meeting. She was surprised when the initial reaction from her colleagues was one of uproar and resentment, and nobody wanted to particularly speak to her for a while. She described that this was one of a number of similar experiences where she learnt that she needed to be brave enough to speak up, even in the face of quite traditional and conservative attitudes.

**Professional development.** Freya explained that she had only ever worked in low income schools that often had significant Māori and Pasifika populations, and this had influenced her development of cultural responsiveness by making her aware of the huge socio-economic challenges that those young children had to deal with. When she first came to her current school as the principal, she had noticed that many of the students, particularly Pasifika, were coming to school sick because their parents couldn't or wouldn't take them to the doctor. Seeing this changed her thinking and perception of her role as a leader from the person who was the CEO managing the budget and ensuring the school kept growing, to making it her mission to help those students get a better chance in life. Freya described that over the years of working in schools with Māori and Pasifika populations she had thought about and questioned their education and observed that when there were strong links to culture, learning often occurred more readily.

Freya said she learnt a lot by engaging with the work of Russell Bishop and Mere Berryman, as well as other authors. She explained that working with Te Kotahitanga had helped her gain a better understanding of the importance of good relationships in the classroom and realise how middle-class European education had been given prominence in teaching and learning. Freya explained:

You're culturally responsive when you go in and you recognise this is where you come from, but you are also recognising there is a wealth of knowledge that these students bring from where they come from as well. What can we do to share our understanding, and when we are looking at this topic, what will these kids bring to it?

Freya also felt that Te Kotahitanga had given her the opportunity to think and reflect on herself and had helped her identify and change negative theorising. She stated:

I think the fact that Te Kotahitanga came along and gave us the opportunity, if we were going to be genuine about it, accepting it, to really reflect and think okay, if we are going to do it there is no more brushing under the carpet... it really gave us a chance to look at ourselves in a much more honest fashion than perhaps we have done in the past.

Freya said she had also deepened her understanding and had a wider view of the issues some students faced by choosing readings, conferences, and courses related to what the school has been doing at the time. She explained:

If you don't understand the full influences of forces outside your school, then it can be quite limiting what you offer in your school for your students. I think that you can be, you can step out, you can be much braver and you can offer something that is much more intensive and meaningful for the students if you understand the influence from the outside world.

Freya described how attending an international course on cultural diversity reinforced what their school had been doing with Te Kotahitanga and made her want to push for a more significant shift for Māori and Pasifika students. She had reflected that her school had made inroads in the area of manakitanga (expressing generosity and care to others) and good relationships, but she realised that they needed more focus in the area of mana motuhake (insisting on certain learning and high expectations). As a result of the conference, she felt determined to put more 'grit' and 'backbone' into her leadership and influence on middle and senior management. She gave an example of realising that turning a blind eye to deficit thinking was just reinforcing behaviour and so the next time it happened in a meeting she spoke up and said it had to stop.

Freya explained that the experience also made her think that New Zealand had moved too far away from equity. She gave an example of how government policies, such as introducing charter and special character schools, were often bound up with money, and those decisions meant Pasifika and Māori kids from low income families were disadvantaged because of less funding and schooling options. As a consequence of this realisation, Freya said she had spoken up about this at a secondary school national meeting. She believed that people needed the courage to raise awareness and talk about these issues. "I do think that as a principal of a state school we have got a responsibility to speak up when we see something that we perceive goes against our principles."

**Leadership influences.** Freya believed that one of the first considerations in influencing staff to develop culturally responsive practices was to respect where a person had placed themselves and give them time to change. From years of experience on the job, she had learnt that not everyone was going to respond the way she wanted them to:

When I first was a teacher and sort of coming across these things of course I wanted instant change and all that sort of thing, but it is not like that. We are dealing with human nature and everyone is different.

Freya said that people could be at different levels in terms of how they took on new concepts or skills, and explained that leaders needed to accept that there were some teachers who might never change the way they were in the classroom. She cautioned that it was also important to be careful of people that took things on very early, as she has found they were the ones mostly likely to burn out or not stick with what had been introduced. Freya said her experience had shown that energy was better placed with the group in the middle as, by taking time with them, they could learn to recognise where their teaching was not suited for Māori or Pasifika students and how they could change their practices to be more inclusive of those students' cultures.

Freya explained that the process of Rongohia te Hau had also been significant in influencing cultural responsive practices and giving clarity about the different stages of teacher awareness and practice that existed in the school. She had worked with staff to identify the different levels they were at and track changes over time. Freya said she found it quite powerful personally to be in the team that went into classrooms to observe and give feedback to teachers. In the Te Kotahitanga programme she had always attended the professional learning development in order to understand what was happening in the school and show the staff that she was supporting the initiative. She considered one of her biggest roles with Te Kotahitanga was being a supportive and listening ear for the two facilitators by making sure they didn't lose their focus and that they were able to connect with the various people involved, both within and outside the school.

Freya explained that in order to get buy-in with new initiatives, it was important to give people choice and to provide opportunities to talk and discuss new programmes rather than using a top-down approach and telling people what to do. She believed that

if people felt their ideas were heard and respected then they were going to be much better at voicing their opinion. She stated:

I think when you have had a chance to internalise something, you have had a chance to talk about it and internalise it and think about it and reflect and wonder how you could do it better, you probably are going to end up producing something or doing it with flair. It will be done particularly well.

Freya explained that an important part of the development process in improving cultural responsiveness and creating power sharing at their school had been introducing co-construction meetings at senior and middle leader levels. Rather than the leader running the meeting and telling everyone what to think and do, she had given staff more opportunity to contribute their ideas and share in the decision making. This had been further extended by the senior management team deliberately teaching staff how to run co-construction meetings and then observing the teachers running a meeting and providing feedback about how they did. By going through this learning process in meetings, Freya believed teachers had taken co-construction into the classroom and involved students in co-creating the learning process. She noted:

It is not teacher dominated. It is power sharing between teacher and students. When you have got that operating you will get far better learning outcomes, when the student feels they have got as big a responsibility as the teacher has. When they don't feel any ownership, then why would they want to be involved?

Over the last few years, Freya has increasingly thought that one of the real strengths in improving learning for Māori and Pasifika students is in using assessment data and research evidence. She has introduced this idea to senior leaders and told them that it was not enough to be collecting data about students at the end of the year. Freya believed that data were very important as they gave evidence for strategies they were using and showed whether these had an impact on Māori and Pasifika achievement.

Freya believed for some people and schools, developing cultural responsiveness was too hard and they took it on at a superficial level rather than digging to get a deeper understanding of what it was all about. She explained that it had been important for her to take the time to get people to see that there was a deeper meaning behind what they are doing, and also to give staff the opportunity to think and reflect on themselves and their practices. She said that she had faced issues with 'negative theorising' where, without thinking and realising they were doing it, teachers would moan about students,

make excuses for themselves, and use reasons of truancy and students' family influences to explain poor achievement. Despite talking about negative theorising with staff, encouraging them to look for solutions, and getting faculty to share the things that they did to improve learning for their students, it had continued. Freya said she realised she needed to attend to negative theorising immediately by talking about it when it did happen. In doing this, she had seen how other staff felt they were legitimised and had the authority to do the same, and meetings had begun to change. In talking about the inequity and negative thinking that existed in the community, Freya said:

I mean hopefully it will change, gradually change and improve, but there is no denying that there are plenty of people out there that do think like that. Somehow you have got to try by your own actions and the way that you run your school and do things for your students, after all, a school is an opportunity to influence community thinking. I think it is our responsibility to try and turn that thinking around.

She explained that she believed it was the role of the principal to speak up when they recognised instances of inequity and power differences.

### **Summary**

This chapter has presented the participants' individual stories to demonstrate ways in which they have personally and professionally developed cultural responsiveness, and how they perceive they have influenced staff to develop culturally responsive practices that possibly meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. The next chapter compares and contrasts both the similarities and differences between the participants' accounts and relates the research findings to literature and other research in the field of culturally responsive leadership.

## CHAPTER FIVE – DISCUSSION

The following chapter provides a critical analysis and interpretation of the research findings, and relates them to relevant literature and other research in the field of cultural responsiveness and culturally responsive leadership. It includes a cross-case analysis that compares, contrasts and synthesises the individual participant findings, which can be found in more detail in the previous chapter. The chapter is set out according to the coding categories that have emerged from the participants' responses in regards the two research questions. As with the previous chapter, the discussion of the first question includes an evaluation of the personal and professional influences along with the participants' accounts of significant or critical experiences and how these relate to the process of becoming culturally responsive.

### **Personal Development**

#### **Connection to different cultures from living in a bicultural community.**

Within the context of their intrapersonal journeys, each of the participants identified how growing up in a bicultural community had influenced their development of cultural responsiveness. Loto and Atawhai described that they were immersed in their Pasifika and Māori cultures respectively and they had learnt to understand both their own cultural world as well as the European world. As a result of their upbringing, they felt they related to Māori and Pasifika students more easily and also respected people from different cultures. Amanda and Freya spoke a little differently than the other two participants, saying that they grew up in a small community with a significant population of Māori people. They explained that they had been raised speaking English and recounted how they had Māori friends throughout their schooling, which they felt helped create an awareness and sensitivity to other cultures. This perceived influence of growing up in a bicultural community is similar to other research studies, which found teachers identified that early experiences with people from different cultural backgrounds was a factor that affected their cultural responsiveness (Burton, 2015; Garman, 2004; Pohan, 1996; Smith et al., 1997). The perspectives of the four participants provide a further differentiation between the influence of having friends and involvement with another culture, compared to learning the language and customs of two cultures.

Loto and Atawhai expressed that their ability to understand, relate to and be respectful of someone else's world was a natural part of their thinking. This was demonstrated in Loto's comment where s/he said, "Culture is in me, in my thinking, in my psyche, in my person... I don't need to think culturally because I already do it all the time." These accounts link to literature about culture in which it has been suggested that the cultural patterns that someone learns and internalises in early life shape how they view and behave in the world (Banks, 2010; Wadham et al., 2007), and people who grow up in more than one culture can become capable of perceiving, connecting and acting in multiple systems (Gollnick & Chin, 2013). These findings from the accounts of the two participants who are Pasifika or Māori add possible understanding to previous studies reviewed by Sleeter (2001) and Ullman and Hecsh (2011) who found teachers from minority or indigenous cultures differed in their development of cultural responsiveness compared to teachers from the majority culture.

The nature of the influence of growing up in a bicultural community was questioned by Amanda who commented that her brother and sister were raised in the same community but did not have an interest and involvement in Māori culture like she did. This point highlights how making generalisations regarding culture can sometimes fail to recognise the complexity of the development and nature of individuals and groups (Lumby & Morrison, 2010). It also demonstrates the point made by Gollnick and Chin (2013) that, although Amanda and her siblings may have visibly appeared to be from the same culture, their development of cultural responsiveness also happened on a more intrinsic and less visible level.

**Connection to different cultures through family.** Having connections to different cultures through family was also seen to be an influence in developing cultural responsiveness by three of the participants. Atawhai and Freya described how having both Māori and European ancestry resulted in them experiencing different cultural practices and beliefs such as tangi and Christianity. Freya also went on to say she had found it difficult because, although her father was part Māori, she had not learnt the language, her features were more European than they were Māori, and within the school she sensed that staff members felt she was not really of Māori descent. Amanda described how her choice to learn more about working with Māori was

influenced by her marriage and raising children who strongly identified with their Māori heritage, which came from their father's ancestry.

As well as giving a more micro level example of how having connection with people from diverse cultures can affect the development of cultural responsiveness (Burton, 2015; Garman, 2004; Pohan, 1996; Smith et al., 1997), the participants' perspectives also show the influence of intermarriage, which can result in a blurring of cultural boundaries and people experiencing different beliefs and practices (Dimmock & Walker, 2005). Freya's account again shows the confusion that can exist between a person's outer appearance or biological heritage and the deeper and less visible cultural patterns that might be a part of them (Gollnick & Chin, 2013).

**Values learnt at an early age.** Three of the participants described that values learnt at an early age were at the centre of their culturally responsive leadership practices. Similarities in their beliefs and experiences of this factor were evident in each of their comments. Loto stated, "I had grown up with humility and respect... this is the backbone of any conversation that I have with the children and the teachers." Atawhai commented, "That's my culture, a culture of respect, and under that heading comes all of these values that I try to obtain in my life. Values that make up who I am." Freya said "self-equity... has always influenced how I think about things, and my actions too, as well as my responses to other people". The participants' accounts are reflective of the concept of culture as expressed through the analogy of an onion (Muna & Zennie, 2010) shown in Figure 1, and the idea that a person's core values, beliefs and attitudes influence the way they behave and respond to circumstances and people (Branson, 2007; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Larrivee, 2000).

The participants gave examples of how, as a result of learning respect, humility and equity at an early age, they wanted to make a difference, improve situations, and help students to succeed. Loto and Atawhai explained that they had learnt not just to understand the values, but also to put them into action and do something in order to help other people. These comments are reflective of the culturally responsive characteristic of having a desire and commitment to facilitate change (Gay, 2000), as well as the need stated in the literature for educators to be aligned to moral purpose and values in order to be able to respond in culturally responsive ways (Cooper et al.,

2011; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). The accounts of the three participants add to this theory by describing how, in their experience, these values were learnt at an early age in life.

**Parents and ancestors.** Three of the participants attributed a significant part of developing values and cultural responsiveness to the influence of their parents. This was demonstrated in Loto's and Atawhai's examples of their parents teaching them rules and protocols of their Pasifika and Māori cultures, such as respecting elders and food, not swearing, and boys and girls wearing appropriate clothing. Loto also explained how his/her parents had taught values of humility and respect by giving him/her experiences such as being made to run to school in the rain like the other students. In a similar vein, Freya stated that she believed she learnt a lot about equity through how her parents behaved and reacted in certain situations.

These findings identifying the influence of parents are aligned with the study of 12 aspiring principals by Gooden and O'Doherty (2015), which reported the leaders said their early family experiences had affected their awareness of other cultures and their understanding of race and privilege. The three participants' accounts also link to other authors who have described how cultural values and beliefs are learnt by being modelled and enacted in parents' behaviour (Gollnick & Chin, 2013) and through the expression of rituals, rules, procedures and protocols, known in Māori as *riteka* and *kawa* (Gray, 2012). This link to learning cultural values through factors such as rules, procedures and protocols is again connected to the concept of culture as expressed in Figure 1.

Loto and Atawhai recounted that they now pass on the values of respect, humility and caring to their own children. Atawhai explained this further, saying his ability to be culturally responsive had come from a connection to the values, protocols and *whakataukī* that had been passed through the generations of his ancestors, and he had made those values living in his own life and leadership practices. This perspective offers an extended time scale view of the influence of family in developing cultural responsiveness and is similar to theories presented by Gay (2010), Gollnick and Chinn (2013), Guthey and Jackson (2011), and Muna and Zennie (2010) who identified that the core values of a culture endure over time and remain relatively unchanged. In

contrast to the other participants and Gooden and O'Doherty's (2015) research, Amanda stated that her parents had not influenced her to take a strong interest in things Māori. She described how, despite the fact that they were well liked and fair to others, she felt that a lot of what they did would now be considered racist.

**Mauri, life force, spirit, God, and the church.** When considering how they developed cultural responsiveness, Atawhai and Loto described perspectives that were distinct compared to what the other participants recounted. Although Atawhai felt that his bicultural upbringing and his parents and whānau had influenced him, he explained that he believed his ability to connect and care for people originated from within, from talents that he had spiritually before he was born, and a relationship with what is called mauri, life force, and spirit. Atawahi's perspectives are aligned with the concept of tikaka, or tikanga Māori as explained by Barlow (1991), Gray (2012), and Mead (2003), and reflect an understanding of how the universal meaning or purpose of God is expressed through the interaction of elements known as wairua and mauri, which are manifested in a person's life (Gray, 2012).

Although Atawhai was the only participant who discussed his beliefs of spirit and God in relation to his development of cultural responsiveness, Loto also described that s/he experienced tension and pressures as result of the importance placed on the church in Pasifika culture. His/her further descriptions of including karakia in different languages in assemblies and meetings, and feeling called to serve the students by embracing the values of heart and caring in the school, also show understanding and influence of factors related to spirituality.

Atawhai's account of the influence of mauri, life force, spirit and God, and Loto's description of the influence of the church offer perspectives that are not apparent in other research by Burton (2015), Garman (2004), Gooden and O'Doherty (2015), Pohan (1996), and Smith et al. (1997), which have investigated the personal factors that affect cultural responsiveness. They reflect a central tenant of culturally responsive theory, which suggests that people from different cultures have different understandings and ways of knowing, and these need to be considered in all aspects of teaching and learning (Erikson, 2010; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). These findings show that the model of culture as an

union that has been referred to in the discussion in this section may not adequately reflect the views and experiences of each of the participants who are from different cultural backgrounds.

**Summary of personal development.** The four individual stories showed that the factors they perceived as influencing their development of cultural responsiveness tended to relate to early-life experiences. A summary of the coding categories that emerged from the findings are summarised in Table 1 below. The number of participants ( $N=$ ) that reported each factor is shown in the second column.

Table 1

*Personal Factors that Influence the Development of Cultural Responsiveness*

Personal Factors	$N=$
Connection to different cultures from living in a bicultural community	4
Connection to different cultures through family	3
Values learnt at an early age	3
Parents and ancestors	3
Mauri, life force, spirit, God, and the church	2
Personal experience of racism or discrimination	2

The findings are similar to previous research, which found that having early experiences with people from different cultures and the influence of family were perceived to be personal factors that affected the development of cultural responsiveness. These coding categories were not conclusive as there were contradictions among the four participants' accounts. Other factors identified in the relevant literature, including time spent travelling or living in another country (Anderson et al., 2006; Smith et al., 1997; Westrick & Yen, 2007), and the influence of teachers and schooling (Smith et al., 1997) were not clearly apparent in the four participants' accounts. The four participants did have stories of personal experiences of discrimination or racism (Burton, 2015; Smith et al., 1997) but these are outlined in the subsequent section on the significance of critical experiences. The participants' perspectives add further understanding to previous research by identifying that being taught values at an early age and the influence of mauri, life force, spirit, God, and the

church could also be personal factors that affect the development of cultural responsiveness for some people.

The discussion of the findings in relation to other literature and research in the field show that there is a connection between the cultural learning that the participants experienced and internalised when they were young, and their development of what they consider culturally responsive characteristics. Although there were common themes among the participants' stories, there were also clear distinctions between the accounts and perspectives. This point highlights that people from different cultures can have different values, beliefs and practices, which has implications for all aspects of teaching and learning, and there can be limitations in making generalisations about culturally responsive development that do not recognise the complexities of the people involved.

### **Professional Development**

**Professional learning and development programmes.** In describing their professional development of cultural responsiveness, three of the participants discussed the influence of being involved in a Ministry of Education programme or initiative that was focussed on the improvement of Māori and Pasifika achievement such as Te Kotahitanga (Bishop et al., 2009; Bishop & Berryman, 2010), He Kāhano (Ministry of Education, 2013a) and Kia Eke Panuku (Ministry of Education, 2015b). These findings in the Aotearoa New Zealand context are aligned to research studies in other countries reviewed by Cochran-Smith et al. (2015), Garman (2004), Sleeter (2001) and Smyth (2013), which found that professional training and courses benefited the development of cultural responsiveness among pre-service and practising teachers. The participants' explanations about how the Ministry of Education initiatives influenced them reflected some of the key characteristics of cultural responsiveness outlined in the literature. Loto described how being a part of an initiative had particularly given a structure for gaining understanding and awareness of the Māori culture (Gay, 2000; Nelson & Guerra, 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), learning how to consider different cultures in developing teaching and school practices (Gay, 2000; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012), and recognising and challenging deficit thinking (Bishop et al., 2009). Similarly, Freya said that she had become more aware of the influence of middle-class European education in teaching and learning (Gay, 2010,

Nieto, 2002), the importance of relationships (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2010; McAllister & Irvine, 2000) and the need to recognise the cultural wealth of students in the teaching process (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). She also explained that Te Kotahitanga had given her the opportunity to look at herself more honestly (Bishop et al., 2009; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Ford, 1999) and be able to identify and change negative theorising (Bishop et al., 2009). For Atawhai, the research of Russell Bishop helped to articulate and affirm some of his own beliefs and introduce Māori kaupapa to the staff (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Bishop et al., 2010).

In comparison to the other participants, Amanda noted that, although professional learning programmes had brought about some progress, she felt that they were often at a surface level and didn't bring about the depth of awareness and change that was needed to make a significant difference to Māori and Pasifika student learning. This comment is aligned to evidence of other research studies, which found that some teachers perceived professional training and courses had a limited, or no, effect in developing cultural responsiveness (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Dolby, 2012; Garman, 2004; Sleeter, 2001). It is also similar to the review of research by Cochran Smith et al. (2015), which described that teachers who attended professional courses were often able to understand the concepts of diversity better, but there was little evidence of deep-rooted shifts in their perspectives and beliefs.

**Reading, research and further study.** Two of the participants described how engaging in reading, conferences, research and further study had given them a deeper understanding of the wider issues and influences in regards to culturally responsive practices. Amanda and Freya pointed out that through further learning they realised more clearly how people's ingrained thinking and the assumptions of the importance of Western knowledge could be a significant barrier to learning for some students. This realisation influenced Amanda to embark on her own personal journey to learn about her cultural identity as well as gain further qualifications, which gave her credibility and allowed her to become more outspoken to her principal colleagues, the Ministry of Education, and the Education Review Office. Freya described how attending an international course influenced her to become more determined to bring about higher achievement for Māori and Pasifika students as well as to challenge negative theorising and issues of inequity in her own school and at a national level.

The participants' accounts of the influence of engaging in reading, conferences, research and further study highlight an area that has had little focus in previous research of professional development of cultural responsiveness. Their perspectives offer insight into what culturally responsive characteristics have been developed through these experiences. The participants engaged in reflection and critical analyses of their own and others' thinking and cultural identity (Bishop et al., 2009; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Gay, 2000), and they developed more commitment and ability to speak out and act against the challenges faced by some students through structural inequities and dominance of the majority culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995; May & Sleeter, 2010; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). These characteristics are reflective of the critical pedagogy and social justice focus that is encapsulated in the concept of cultural responsiveness (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016).

In comparison to the other participants' accounts, Loto commented that a lack of professional development available for leaders had been an influence in developing cultural responsiveness. S/he felt that there needed to be an accepted or agreed definition of what cultural responsiveness looked like and a focussed plan to provide support for principles to be able to be culturally responsive in their leadership.

**Day-to-day job and environment.** Each of the participants said there had been numerous situations as part of their day-to-day jobs and the environments they worked in that had provided opportunities to develop their understanding and ability to relate to people from other cultures. Loto, Atawhai and Freya explained that working in schools with significant Māori or Pasifika populations meant they had learnt about different cultural values, beliefs and practices, and what supported the learning needs of these students. Atawhai added that choosing to work in mainstream education rather than a kura kaupapa setting had resulted in him learning to teach and relate with people from all over the world. The participants' accounts of the influence of working in communities with diverse student populations further support the research discussed in the previous section, which found that personal development of cultural responsiveness was affected by having experiences with people from other cultures. The findings are also similar to the research reviewed by Sleeter (2001) and Garmon (2004), which reported that professional development that included being

immersed in a different culture or having an authentic cross-cultural experience had a significant impact on developing cultural responsiveness. The findings in this study show that, as well as professional courses, the day-to-day experiences of relating to people in the job can be rich sources for these experiences.

**Social, political and economic influences.** The participants' accounts were in line with literature in noting social, political and economic influences that challenged leaders to become and be culturally responsive (Blackmore, 2006; Gay, 2000; May & Sleeter, 2010). Like Blackmore (2006), Amanda described how the Ministry of Education's creation of cultural competencies and 'tick boxes', along with Westernised measurements of Māori success through literacy, numeracy and test results, made it difficult for leaders and teachers to be responsive to Māori culture and ways of knowing. Similarly, in line with May and Sleeter's (2010) arguments, Loto, Freya and Atawhai described experiencing the significant socio-economic challenges some Māori and Pasifika students faced through issues such as poverty, poor health and family violence. Each of the participants explained that, as a result of these challenges, they had become increasingly aware of these struggles and more motivated and vocal in attending to them in their schools and broader contexts. This included being involved in community boards and initiatives, raising issues with other schools and principals, and challenging the Ministry of Education.

The participants' accounts are in line with the need stated for culturally responsive educators to have social consciousness and develop critical and reflexive approaches that transform political, social and economic barriers to learning (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). They also demonstrate the cultural responsive characteristic described by Bishop et al. (2009) and Gay (2000) of showing caring for students that honours their culture and beliefs, and leads to a commitment to do anything to ensure they realise their potential.

**Summary of professional influences.** The four participants' accounts of their professional development were aligned with previous research showing that professional courses and programmes influenced the development of cultural responsiveness. In particular, three of the participants noted that participation in Ministry of Education government-funded programmes had resulted in the

development of characteristics similar to those outlined in culturally responsive literature. As with other research studies, the benefit and value of professional courses designed to develop cultural responsiveness were questioned by one participant who said they often didn't require the depth needed to make a change for Māori and Pasifika student learning.

Two participants gave a further perspective that reading, conferences, research and further study had resulted in deeper understanding of the wider issues relating to cultural responsiveness. These factors had led to characteristics of critical pedagogy, including reflection and critical analyses, and more commitment and skills to be able to respond to the limitations faced by some students. Another participant reported a perceived lack of professional development to support principals to be culturally responsive in their leadership and mentioned the need for opportunities to grow in this area.

The four participants also recounted that their school environment and day-to-day experiences of their job gave them opportunities to connect with and learn about people from Māori, Pasifika, and other worldwide cultures. These findings were similar to previous studies that found that professional development involving genuine experiences of being immersed in and relating to people from other cultures had an influence on the development of cultural responsiveness. The participants also noted how external social, political and economic factors had influenced their ability to be culturally responsive and cater to diverse students' needs and ways of knowing. As a result of these challenges, they reported becoming more aware of these limitations, motivated to help diverse students, and vocal in attending to these struggles in their schools and broader contexts. The following Table 2 presents the coding categories that emerged from the participants' accounts.

Table 2

*Professional Factors that Influence the Development of Cultural Responsiveness*

Professional Factors	N=
Professional learning and development programmes	4
Reading, research and further study	2
Day-to-day job and environment	4
Social, political and economic influences	4

These participants' descriptions of the influences of the day-to-day environment and social, political and economic factors showed some similarity to the culturally responsive characteristics outlined in the literature of having caring for students from culturally diverse backgrounds. This is further discussed in a deeper analysis of significant or critical experiences below.

**Significant Experiences**

Within the context of their intrapersonal journeys, the participants described significant or critical experiences that had influenced their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness. The processes they went through are discussed below. Each participant gave an example of beginning a job at a school where they had an experience that made them realise the challenging and negative conditions and norms that students from different cultural groups faced, both within and outside the school. These included examples of sexist attitudes and imbalances of power for girls compared to boys, poor living conditions and academic achievement for Māori families, tokenism and disrespect of Māori cultural practices in the school environment, and poor health conditions for Pasifika girls. Loto described an experience of questioning a student about a black eye and the student responding by telling how her dad beat up her mum, her uncle beat up her aunty, so it was okay that her boyfriend beat her up. Two of the participants also described more personal experiences of racism and discrimination. Freya recounted an experience when she worked at a fish and chip shop and Māori women treated her like a servant, ordered her around, and were rude to her. Similarly, Amanda described her experience of her daughter being marginalised and called racist names. The experiences recounted by the participants are similar to previous research by Burton (2015) and Smith et al

(1997), which found that teachers reported that personal experiences of discrimination or racism influenced their cultural responsiveness. They are also aligned with literature suggesting that having real-life experiences of the challenges other people face can result in increased understanding and connectedness with those people (Dolby, 2012; Henderson, 2013; McAllister & Irvine, 2002).

Three of the participants recounted that their reaction to their experience was to be initially shocked and to have strong emotions. Freya said she had a wake-up call and felt angry about how she was treated. Similarly, Loto recounted his/her sadness and being “quite taken aback” because s/he didn’t believe what the student was saying was right. Amanda expressed her outrage and disbelief when she saw “firsthand for the first time” that her daughter was being marginalised and not acknowledged in her Māori identity. The participants’ responses of a wake-up call, being taken aback, and seeing it firsthand for the first time suggest that through the significant experience they gained awareness of something that was previously unconscious (Branson, 2007) or they perceived the situation is a different way than they had previously (CampbellJones et al., 2010; Larrivee, 2000). Loto’s and Amanda’s comments also showed a connection between their emotional reactions and the situations that were not compatible with their values, beliefs, or what they thought was right.

Each of the participants described how after having a wake-up call and an emotional reaction, they felt that they wanted to make a difference and help students in these situations, and they consequently began to speak out and take on new roles in order to make a change. Atawhai, who had known earlier in his teacher training that he wanted to help his own people and work in schools where they were struggling, recounted that he decided to resign from his first teaching job and chose to fight for the achievement of Māori students in a small rural school. Similarly, Loto described how s/he became “the reluctant accidental principal” because s/he felt that in that role s/he was able to make the biggest impact on the students and the community. S/he said, “That gave me the courage because, honestly, I did not want to be a principal.” Amanda said she had an “absolute conviction” she could work differently, and she began to question and make changes to her own teaching practices to accommodate her predominately Māori students. The participants’ accounts of wanting to make a difference and help students who were in challenging situations are reflective of literature identifying the cultural

responsive characteristic of having caring for students that is sensitive and respectful to them as culturally located individuals, shows concern for their well-being, and leads to determination to ensure their achievement (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The participants' strong emotional reactions and acts of beginning to speak out and take on new roles in response to another person's struggle, is also similar to the concept of empathy as described by Dolby (2012), McAllister and Irvine (2002) and Noddings (2010). The participants showed that, rather than being emotionally distant, they were able to step into the shoes of the other person and have an emotional response to their experience. Like Dolby's (2012) and Noddings' (2010) descriptions of the quality of empathy, this led to the participants feeling motivated to put aside their own personal goals in order to meet the needs of the students. These findings of the participants' response to significant experiences are in line with previous research, which reported that teachers and researchers in the field of culturally responsive education found empathy was best developed through social interaction and contact (Dolby, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2002), and the opportunity to have "real-life experiences which allow heart level engagement in cultural richness" (Henderson, 2013, p. 13).

Ford (1999) made the point that when teachers and leaders are faced with change or issues of social justice, they can experience personal challenges such as fear and insecurity, or interpersonal interactions involving disagreement and discomfort that can make it difficult to make decisions in line with their values. In the participants' process of having a significant experience, stepping into something new, and initiating change, each of them described challenges where they had to confront themselves or the backlash from other people. These included facing and overcoming fears of visibility in order to take on leadership positions, living a long way from whānau with tough living conditions and long working hours, and experiencing loneliness. Both Amanda and Freya explained that in speaking out and advocating against what they perceived were injustices, the responses they received from others had been of uproar and people not speaking to them afterwards.

The participants reported that, although the significant experiences were defining points that spurred them to take action and actively work towards change for Māori and Pasifika students, developing cultural responsiveness was an ongoing process and

they had many similar situations they could recall. Three of the participants described how through their experiences their perceptions of leadership had changed and they had realised that the role was less about them and more about what they could facilitate for the students. These perspectives are in line with research about process-oriented models of developing cultural responsiveness reviewed by McAllister and Irvine (2000), which described how people move from a self-centred or ethnocentric state to increasing identification with wider and wider aspects of society.

**Summary of significant experiences.** The participants' accounts of significant experiences and moments of change were in line with previous research showing that having a personal experience of racism or discrimination, or a real-life experience of the challenges that other people face, can influence the development of cultural responsiveness. A summary of their processes is shown in the Figure 3. Although, the diagram encompasses each aspect of the described processes, it should be noted that the participants gave different descriptions of their experiences, emphasised some aspects more than others, and did not necessarily recount every part.

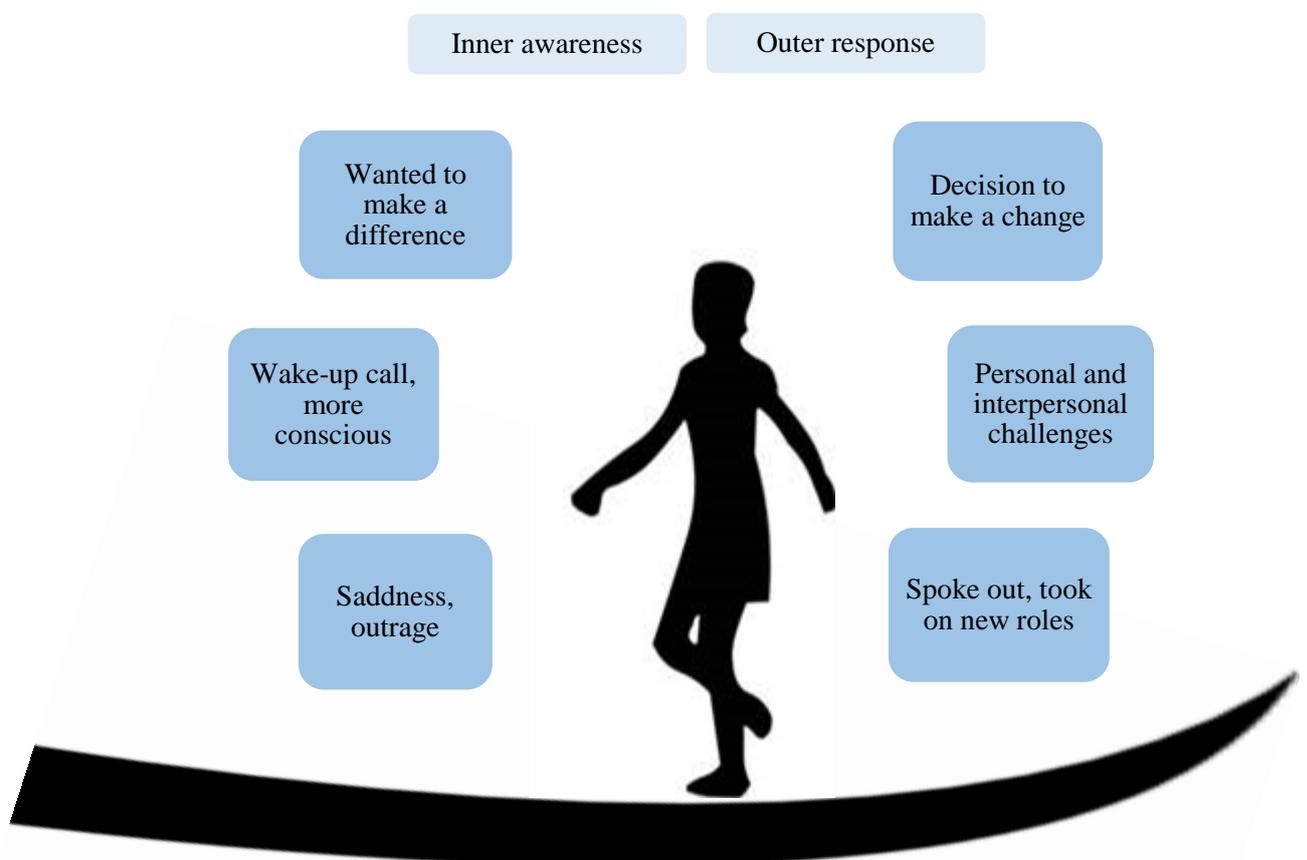


Figure 3: Processes resulting from participants' significant experiences

The deeper analysis of these experiences showed that some of the participants had strong emotional reactions and became more aware of the situation than they had been previously. This led to a desire to want to make a difference for people in a similar situation and a decision to step out and take on new roles to bring about change. The responses recounted in the participants' descriptions were similar to the characteristics of caring and empathy explained in culturally responsive literature.

The findings demonstrated that developing cultural responsiveness was an ongoing process and the participants had many similar experiences that had contributed to their learning. Through their experiences, the participants perceived that they had become increasingly less self-centred and had taken action to actively work towards bringing about change for Māori and Pasifika students. An analysis of the participants' accounts of how they have enacted this in their leadership practice is given in the next section below.

### **Leadership Influences**

**Role modelling.** In the context of their interpersonal relationships and influencing staff to develop culturally responsive practices, three of the participants said that they firstly role model cultural responsiveness in their leadership practice. Atawhai and Amanda said they believed it was important not to tell teachers what they should do, but rather that teachers responded to leaders who they saw were prepared to walk the walk and get involved in the work themselves. Amanda explained how she modelled critical pedagogy through her own continued learning and in her practices with staff and students. Loto and Atawhai described that through role modelling they enacted the values of caring, respect and humility in conversations with parents, students and teachers, and they always considered what was culturally sensitive or appropriate to each situation. Loto explained that influencing staff through role modelling helped them to embrace and embed the values in all they did, and this created an environment that allowed these values to grow in the children.

The participants' accounts of how they influence staff to develop culturally responsive practices through role modelling are similar to previous research by Madhlangobe and Stephen (2012), which found that a principal intentionally modelled cultural responsiveness to help teachers understand and include the cultures of others, and

Santamaría et al. (2014), which showed culturally responsive leaders led by example to resolve challenges and unmet needs. Loto's and Atawhai's descriptions of how they believed role modelling was enacting values is also aligned to the research by Ford (2012), which found that a principal believed demonstrating the values of caring and respect was important in building relationships. Loto's and Atawhai's accounts show the connection between their experiences of learning values at an early age, as discussed in the first section, and the perceived influence these lived values have in their leadership actions now. This again demonstrates the theory that cultural values, beliefs and behaviours that are formed early in life can shape how educators interpret and respond to students from different cultures.

The participants' accounts of the influence of role modelling were similar to the discussion in the previous sections of personal and professional development in showing that having an experience with another person was perceived to influence cultural responsiveness. In this instance, the three participants believed that giving staff an experience of another person enacting cultural responsiveness, and the underlying values, helped staff to develop this for themselves. This finding suggests a two-way process of culturally responsive development that can occur when people come into a relationship with one another. On the one hand, as described in the previous section, a person can have an inner reaction and make a decision to change the way they act as a result of experiencing the challenges that the other person faces. On the other hand, as highlighted in the participants' accounts above, a person can respond to an experience of having cultural responsiveness modelled or enacted by the other person. This process bears some resemblance to the concept of *ako*, which Bishop et al. (2010) described as an interactive dialogical relationship in which two or more people learn from, as well teach, each other. The participants' accounts show, however, that consideration needs to be given in this concept of relationships to the cultural patterns that both people learnt early in life, as these can influence how they view, interpret and respond to the other person.

**Continued learning through self-reflection.** The participants' accounts demonstrated how learning through experience and self-reflection were factors in influencing culturally responsive practices among staff. Atawhai explained that he didn't always respond positively and, in order to role model cultural responsiveness

and “stand by what he believed in”, he was reflective of the day-to-day challenges and open learning from his mistakes. Loto and Freya described that their involvement in Ministry of Education initiatives had given them the opportunity to understand and explore their negative theorising. As a result, they were able to help teachers be aware of how low expectations of Pasifika or Māori could affect the students learning. Amanda described her belief that, before they could understand other people, leaders needed to have conscious and intentional development of personal awareness. Similar to Gay (2010), Dimmock and Walker (2005), Gollnick and Chin (2013), and Nieto (2002) who discussed the concept of ethnocentrism, she explained that unless leaders interrogated their own thinking, they could believe their cultural way of life was normal for everyone and therefore fail to recognise Māori ways of knowing and learning. Amanda explained how she has taken time to learn about her own cultural identity so she was conscious of how this influenced her thinking and motivations.

The participants’ accounts are in line with authors in the field of culturally responsive leadership who have suggested that leaders need to develop personal awareness and critical reflection to understand how their values and beliefs influence the way they perceive and respond in their roles (Bishop et al., 2009; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Ford; 1999; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). The accounts in this study that demonstrated each of the participants enacting self-reflection in practice are different to previous research of culturally responsive leaders where there have been limited reports of this happening. Loto’s and Freya’s descriptions of the influence of Ministry of Education programmes are similar to research in Aotearoa New Zealand about He Kākano by Hynds et al. (2014), which reported secondary school leaders who had participated in this government initiative said their attitudes and perceptions had changes as a result of examining themselves and their values, beliefs, and relational positions towards Māori. This link to the participants in this study who have all participated in Ministry of Education programmes could explain why they have spoken about self-reflection when answering the interview questions.

**Developing personal awareness among staff.** It is suggested within some literature that culturally responsive leaders also need to support staff to be able to develop personal awareness and understand their values, beliefs and actions (Bishop et al., 2009; CampbellJones et al., 2010; Ford, 1999; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012).

Three of the participants in this study demonstrated this practice in providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on themselves and their practices, and gain awareness of their unconscious or deficit thinking. Loto and Freya stated that over the last few years they had increasingly had difficult conversations with staff if they showed deficit thinking, and they used data and research evidence to challenge and change teachers' practices. Freya further explained that she saw value in providing space for teachers to reflect, as it gave them time to question their practices and look at themselves in a more honest fashion. Amanda described how she often created specific activities with staff to help them learn about their own culture and journey of becoming culturally responsive. She gave an example of one meeting where she invited staff to look at the dominant European thinking that had influenced their early family upbringing and then present counter stories that they related to, which challenged that thinking.

The participants' accounts are similar to other culturally responsive leadership research in Aotearoa New Zealand primary schools, which found that leaders helped staff gain awareness of their practices and the underlying attitudes and assumptions that influenced them (Ford, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014), and a study in the United States that reported how a secondary school principal helped teachers to review their culturally responsive teaching behaviours and strategies (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012). Amanda's description of helping staff to learn about their own cultural journey shows a leadership strategy that is linked to the findings and research discussed in the first section, which showed the close connection between the participants' early cultural upbringing and their development of cultural responsiveness. The findings from the three participants' accounts suggest there were different aspects of personal awareness that the leaders helped staff to gain understanding of, and different ways in which they did this, ranging from challenging thinking, giving time for reflection, or guiding specific activities.

**Providing professional learning and development.** Each of the participants identified that providing professional learning and development for staff had been an important aspect of influencing cultural responsiveness. Loto gave examples of strategies that had been put in place in their school, such as a new-teacher cultural induction and Māori and Pasifika teachers talking to the staff about their cultures.

Similarly, Atawhai explained that he had arranged staff meetings focussed on developing understanding of culture in order to help teachers connect culturally with a student, as well as have the teaching skills to best support their learning. Amanda noted that she had invited some experts and researchers in the field of cultural responsiveness to speak to the staff.

Similar to the impact of government initiatives on their own development, two of the participants perceived that their role in leading the introduction and implementation of Ministry of Education programmes had helped influence staff in developing culturally responsive practices. Loto and Freya both reported how participating in initial meetings and training courses allowed them to have more understanding of what the school and teachers were doing and show support for the programmes. They also said they found it beneficial to be involved in observing and giving feedback to teachers about their culturally responsive practices as well as giving further training to other staff to be able to fulfil this role.

The participants' accounts are in line with previous research by Ford (2012), Madhlangobe and Stephen (2012), Santamaría et al. (2014), and Walker and Dimmock (2008), which found that school leaders engaged in promoting professional development of culturally responsive practices with their staff. The findings again support the research of Bishop et al. (2010) and Hynds et al. (2014) in highlighting the significant impact that Ministry of Education programmes are perceived to have had. They add understanding about the roles leaders have taken in introducing and implementing these programmes and how these roles have been perceived to influence staff.

**Knowing the stage of staff development.** In order to know how to best influence staff to develop culturally responsive practices, three of the participants explained how it was important for leaders to know where staff were on their journey, and what was needed to help them to take the next step. Amanda stated that leaders needed to be cautious of giving the right level of support and challenge to staff. Too much pushing might cause a person to withdraw, but not enough might mean people didn't move out of their comfort zones. Similarly, Atawhai used the analogy of a nourishing baby, "You don't feed the baby with meat. They can't digest it. They have

got to have milk”. Freya and Amanda both explained their understanding of how different groups of people adapt to change and said they also used models associated with Rongohia te Hau (Berryman, 2013) and the work of James Banks (2012), respectively, which provided developmental levels of cultural understanding and identity. Their explanations showed similarities to the findings of DeJaeghere and Yongling Zhang (2008), Hansuvadha and Slater (2012), and McAllister and Irvine (2000) of how working with models with staff helped to give everyone clarity around the different stages of teacher awareness and practice that existed in the school, and what skills needed to be further developed in order to move to the next level.

The participants’ accounts of the importance of knowing where staff were in their process of developing cultural responsiveness and what was needed to help them take the next step, are a finding that has not been previously reported in other studies that were reviewed in this research. While models can provide effective support and strategies in the design of culturally responsive professional development, as McAllister and Irvine (2000) noted, there needs to be caution around oversimplifying complex processes or creating a generalised view of development that does not reflect the experiences of teachers from different cultures. This critique needs to also be considered when looking at the summary of the participants’ process that was presented in Figure 3.

**Connecting staff with deeper meaning, values and heart.** The participants’ accounts showed that, while it was good to help staff learn about different cultures and the skills needed to teach diverse students, they also believed that helping to grow heart and connection to deeper meaning and values was an important part of their leadership practice. This was shown by Freya, who described how she had supported some teachers who were afraid of moving beyond a superficial level of understanding, by helping them to see the deeper meaning or importance of what they were doing. Similarly, Amanda said she often experienced that shifts in cultural responsiveness began for people when they were “emotionally moved”, and she gave an example of giving a talk that helped staff to experience their own hurt and pain or to witness it in others and, consequently, be more motivated to make a change. She described her understanding further by saying “I think it is a heart thing. I mean, we can all do the head thing, we can do the learning, we can do the reading, we can make some changes.

But you have to feel it.” This perspective was similar to Atawhai who believed that developing cultural responsiveness came back to growing heart and caring. His example of a Pākehā teacher gave an understanding of his concept of heart. He said the person was real and humble, he respected and cared for everyone, and he was open to learning the values that made a person who they were. Atawhai said staff had told him he had heart for the school and this had influenced how they responded to him. Loto also talked about heart and caring saying they were being lost in the Pacific Island people due to a focus on money and status. Loto believed teachers and students needed to be taught to embrace values such as caring, respect and humility so they made good decisions. In order to do this, Loto explained that educators couldn’t impose those values or wave their finger and say show respect, but they had to role model them and create a school environment so that they grew in the children.

The participants’ accounts of how they influenced staff to develop cultural responsiveness by connecting with deeper meaning, heart, or values is similar to the research of Argyris and Schön (1974) and Branson (2007), which found sustained change came about by helping people develop their inner values and beliefs rather than trying to change their outer behaviour. The accounts further support the findings of the participants’ significant experiences discussed in the previous section, which highlighted the culturally responsive characteristics of caring (Bishop et al., 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994) and empathy (Dolby, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Noddings, 2010). As with the participants’ own experiences, Amanda described that when teachers had an experience of their own or another person’s struggle, they had an emotional reaction and became motivated to make a change (Dolby, 2012; Henderson, 2013; McAllister & Irvine, 2002). Similarly, Freya and Loto described how when they helped staff to connect with deeper meaning or values, this helped them to overcome fears and limitations to becoming more culturally responsive (CampbellJones et al., 2010; Ford, 1999; Gay, 2010). These connections between the participants’ accounts of helping staff, and their own process of the significant experience provide further understanding of the inner process and qualities that are associated with developing cultural responsiveness.

**Building relationships.** Each of the participants’ described the importance they placed on deep levels of relationships in their personal life, as well as their

professional leadership practice. Their accounts were consistent with previous research in the field of culturally responsive leadership that identified the influence of relationships in developing culturally responsive practices among staff (Bishop et al., 2010; Ford, 2012; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014). As with characteristics reported in previous research studies, Atawhai and Loto commented that being respectful, caring and accessible (Ford, 2012; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014) meant that staff felt comfortable to talk to them about problems or ask about culturally appropriate ways to respond to parents and students. Freya and Atawhai commented that they listened and were open to the ideas and beliefs that each staff member contributed (Ford, 2012; Robertson & Miller, 2007; Santamaría et al., 2014). They each gave examples of how giving staff the opportunity to talk and reflect about culture meant staff were able to internalise culturally responsive processes and were more engaged as a result. Amanda recounted how developing trust (Ford, 2012; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría et al., 2014) meant staff were more willing to talk openly about their process, which helped them to explore their stories and cultural identity more deeply. The influence of relationships in helping staff to be more engaged, open, and able to internalise culturally responsive practices is also similar to research studies reviewed by Timperley et al. (2007), which found positive interpersonal dynamics between leaders and followers were particularly important in situations where teachers were fearful or resistant due to a situation of change or increased interdependence.

**Connecting with community.** Each of the participants described the importance of the connection between the school and the community in developing school-wide culturally responsive practices. However, three participants spoke more specifically about how this aspect of their leadership practice influenced development for staff. Atawhai and Loto noted that they role modelled cultural responsiveness for teachers in meetings with parents where there were issues, such as volatile relationships or disagreements. Loto described that s/he worked with teachers to help them understand the cultural practices and appropriate ways to communicate with families who were from a range of different cultures. S/he also gave an example of how s/he has sought advice from parent representatives when s/he is unsure of how to correct cultural practices to resolve an issue. Similarly, Amanda explained that in order to understand what was culturally appropriate and create an environment and practices

that were culturally responsive, it had been important for their school to go out and find the key people in the community who could give the staff advice and professional development.

The participant's accounts are consistent with international studies by Walker and Dimmock (2008) and Madhlangobe and Stephen (2012), and with other research conducted in Aotearoa New Zealand primary schools by Billot et al. (2007), Ford (2012), and Santamaría (2014), which found that culturally responsive leaders facilitated and created connections between the staff and the community. The findings provide a further differentiation between teaching and role modelling how to connect with parents in culturally responsive ways, compared to helping teachers to access and listen to the community about what is culturally important and appropriate from their perspective.

**Giving opportunity for staff to be involved, power sharing.** Atawhai, Amanda and Freya explained that it was important to give people choice and the opportunity to be involved in the development of culturally responsive programmes and initiatives. Freya described the concept of co-construction and said she had found that using this in meetings and training teachers to do the same had resulted in those skills being transferred into working with students in the classroom. She explained how, as with the relationship between teacher and students, it was important that there was power sharing among staff so everyone felt that they had responsibility and ownership of culturally responsive programmes. Amanda also stated that she needed to be open to listen and learn from others, and the sharing of leadership roles among staff meant they were advocates for the cultural initiatives in the school. Similarly, Atawhai said he had changed the way he engaged with staff about culturally responsive programmes by respecting their voice and knowing when to lead and when to follow. He used the analogy of a waka to explain the importance of everyone moving together in the same direction and knowing colleagues who had the skills to move the waka forward.

These participants' accounts are similar to the research of Santamaría et al. (2014) who found that culturally responsive leaders used consensus as a strategy for decision making, and Ford (2012), Madhlangobe and Stephen (2012), and Walker and

Dimmock (2008), which noted that culturally responsive principals created inclusive management structures that gave staff opportunity for shared ownership and responsibility. These findings are reflective of the need stated by Bishop et al. (2009) for power sharing and collaborative relationships within the classroom. The participants' accounts give some understanding of how this concept is transferred to the context of leadership and staff relations, and how leaders could possibly change historical, social, and political power imbalances and inequities among staff.

Through having inclusion and power sharing with staff in the process of developing culturally responsive teaching and programmes, Freya, Amanda and Atawhai reported that the staff had increasingly taken ownership and leadership of culturally responsive initiatives in the school. This finding suggests this leadership practice helped staff to develop more commitment and ability to be able to be responsible for bringing about change for culturally diverse students.

**Developing critical pedagogy.** As was noted in the earlier section that discussed the professional development of cultural responsiveness, each participant personally demonstrated characteristics of critical pedagogy through their determination and action to speak out and bring about change for culturally diverse students, both within their school and their wider communities. Amanda went further than the other participants in articulating her strong belief that critical pedagogy needed to be at the core of school practice. She explained that their school had done a lot for culturally diverse students over the years including changing the language of instruction, improving literacy and numeracy learning, and developing teaching practices for Māori. While these strategies had helped Māori and Pasifika students, the factor that had made the biggest difference for their learning had been helping teachers and students to develop the ability to understand the deeper meaning and root causes in the systems of education and society, and empowering them to make changes to the barriers that keep Māori and Pasifika students marginalised and disaffected. Amanda described that she modelled critical pedagogy in her leadership practice and provided ongoing support and training for teachers to learn about and embed this throughout all aspects of teaching practices and school procedures.

Although authors such as Johnson (2014), Santamaría and Santamaría (2016), and Villegas and Lucas (2002) have described how culturally responsive leaders develop critical consciousness and pedagogy among staff, the findings from this research were similar to previous studies in showing that there were limited examples of this being enacted in practice by the participants. While some of the participants did not talk specifically about critical pedagogy, it could be argued that their accounts of developing staff awareness of negative thinking and enabling power sharing were possible examples of this. The findings in this study offer some initial understanding of how this characteristic of cultural responsiveness could be more consciously and fully developed among staff and students in a school.

**Creating culturally responsive environments.** Two of the participants described the importance of creating environments that supported staff and students to be able to express themselves and become culturally responsive. Loto explained how in order to help students and teachers enact the values of caring, respect and humility, s/he felt it was important to build an environment where everyone felt the school was a family, and the values were embraced in all aspects of teaching and learning, whether it be in the classroom or out in the playground. Amanda said the school needed to be a place that was receptive to the culture and identity of each student and staff member so they were able to express and be themselves. She stated, “You can’t do ‘being Māori’ or ‘as Māori’ once a week” and explained that she believed cultural responsiveness had to be embedded in every aspect of the school programme. The two participants’ perspectives are similar to previous research that found culturally responsive leaders fostered an environment that allowed staff, students and parents to become responsive to others (Billot et al., 2007; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Walker & Dimmock, 2008). They are also reflective of the claim by Gay (2000) and Nieto (2002) that cultural responsiveness is pervasive and needs to permeate each aspect of the school, including the physical environment, the policy and procedures, the curriculum, and the relationships among teachers, students and the community.

**Summary of leadership influences.** The discussion of the participants’ accounts of how they influence staff to develop culturally responsive practices showed that there were a number of similarities as well as some differences compared to

previous research of culturally responsive leadership practices in primary schools, and compared to international contexts. These are summarised in Table 3 on the next page.

As with previous studies, some of the participants reported that role modelling was an important leadership practice in influencing staff to develop culturally responsive practices. Their accounts demonstrated a two-way process that can occur when people came into a relationship. In one instance, a person can have a real-life experience of someone enacting cultural responsiveness, and in the other, there can be an experience of the other person's challenges. In order to be able to enact cultural responsiveness in their leadership practice, the participants described that they engaged in continued learning through practices such as learning from mistakes, examining their own thinking and motivations, or intentionally exploring their cultural identity. The findings showed that some participants gave opportunities for teachers to reflect on their own journey of developing cultural responsiveness and gain awareness of their unconscious or deficit thinking in order to understand how these influenced their teaching practice.

The participants' perspectives were aligned with previous research in noting that providing professional development and learning for staff was a leadership practice that influenced culturally responsive practices. In particular, the significance of initiating and implementing Ministry of Education programmes was discussed by two participants. There were also accounts of inviting staff and parents to offer professional development about culture as well as inviting other experts and researchers into the school. The participants believed that, while it was important to help teachers gain awareness about culture and the teaching skills needed to cater for diverse students, an important part of their leadership practice was helping staff to develop connection to deeper meaning and values such as caring and heart. Similar to the participants' own experiences, the findings showed that helping teachers to feel the emotions of their own or a colleague's struggles, or modelling values and heart with them, influenced the staff's development of these characteristics.

Table 3

*Leadership Practices that Influence Staff to Develop Culturally Responsive Practices*

	<i>N</i> =	Primary school principal, NZ (Ford, 2012)	Primary school principal, NZ (Santamaria et al., 2014)	High school leader, USA (Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012)	Five principals, England (Walker & Dimmock, 2008)	Meta-analysis of leadership studies (Robinson et al., 2009)
Role modelling	3	√	√	√		√
Continued learning through self-reflection	4	√			√	√
Developing personal awareness among staff	3	√	√	√		√
Providing professional learning and development	4	√	√	√	√	√
Knowing the stage of staff development	3					
Connecting staff with deeper meaning, values and heart	4	√		√	√	
Building relationship	4	√	√	√	√	√
Connecting with community	3	√	√	√	√	√
Giving opportunity for staff to be involved, power sharing	3	√	√	√	√	√
Developing critical pedagogy	1	√	√	√	√	
Creating culturally responsive environments	2	√	√		√	

The participants' accounts were consistent with other research in highlighting the importance of culturally responsive leaders developing relationships with staff and the school community. Like other studies, giving opportunities to be involved in decision making and power sharing was perceived by some participants to influence staff to become advocates for the education of culturally diverse students in the school and be able to act as leaders of change in furthering initiatives. The perspectives of three of the participants added new understanding to previous research in the field in

describing the importance of knowing where staff were on their journey of developing cultural responsiveness and how to help them to move to the next step. Two of the participants described how using process-oriented models had supported this process.

Each of the participants demonstrated the culturally responsive characteristics of having the will and capacity to facilitate change for culturally diverse students, however only one participant directly spoke of the need to support staff to be able to engage in critical pedagogy and make this central to school practices. The accounts of two of the participants were similar to culturally responsive literature in explaining the importance of embedding cultural responsiveness in all aspects of the teaching and learning programme as well as the wider school procedures.

The comparison of the participants' accounts to previous studies also highlighted similarities and differences between the identified practices of culturally responsive leaders compared to characteristics of leaders noted by Robinson et al. (2009). Some of the coding categories that emerged from this research were aligned with Robinson et al.'s (2009) dimensions and associated knowledge, skills and dispositions of promoting and participating in teacher learning and development, creating educationally powerful connections, engaging in constructive problem talk, and ensuring an orderly and supportive environment. The findings of this study also identified different characteristics of leadership, including connecting staff with heart and deeper values, knowing the stages of staff's culturally responsive development, enacting and developing critical pedagogy, and creating an environment in which cultural responsiveness permeated all practices. These comparisons support research that has identified common leadership practices that influence teacher development (Robinson et al., 2009; Seashore Louis et al., 2010), and also are aligned to literature stating the need for educational leadership that is responsive to, and grounded in, the cultures of the particular schools and communities in which it is situated (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Madhlangobe & Stephen, 2012; Santamaría & Santamaría, 2016). These findings offer ideas for leaders as to how they might develop cultural responsiveness within themselves and with staff in order to best support the learning of culturally diverse students. Recommendations that have become apparent from this study, as well as limitations that need to be considered and ideas for further research, are discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to research culturally responsive leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools in order to add to understanding of how leaders in this context support education for culturally and linguistically diverse students, particularly Māori and Pasifika. The study included four leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds and used comparative case study research and semi-structured interview methods to explore their experience of developing and practising cultural responsiveness within themselves and with their colleagues. The research was guided by two overarching questions:

1. How do secondary school leaders account for their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness?
2. How do secondary school leaders perceive they influence staff to improve school-wide culturally responsive practices that possibly meet the needs of diverse and underachieving students?

The stories and accounts of Loto, Atawhai, Amanda and Freya have been retold in the findings chapter. It is my hope that through the interview process, the analysis and interpretation, and the retelling of their stories, these people have had the opportunity to gain more understanding of their journey of becoming and being culturally responsive in their leadership practice. Their individual stories will resonate with secondary school leaders, as well as other educators, and help them to understand their own process and how they might further develop culturally responsive leadership for themselves. As the participants noted, however, their accounts are unique to them and they do not speak for other Māori, Pasifika, or European people.

In analysing, comparing and synthesising the accounts of the four participants, there were coding categories that showed similarities and differences of perspectives and experiences. Some of these were aligned with previous literature and studies, while others offer new understandings. Readers are encouraged to trial the findings to test their validity in their own practice and context. This chapter discusses the research questions in response to the main coding categories and offers a model for the reader that summarises some of the understandings that have emerged. It concludes by describing possible limitations of the study and giving suggestions for further research.

**Implications for Future Practice.**

With regard to the first research question, the study showed that the secondary school leaders recounted a journey of developing cultural responsiveness that began early in life and has continued till the present point in their leadership practice. The personal factors identified by the participants, as summarised in Table 4, showed a close link between their own cultural upbringing, which had been influenced by current as well as previous generations of people, and the development of characteristics they considered to be culturally responsive. These findings show educators and leaders could find value in personally engaging and helping staff to explore their own cultural identity in order to understand the underlying factors that have contributed to their development of cultural responsiveness and how these can influence the way they think, behave and relate in their practice now.

While there were similarities in the participants' accounts of personal development, there were also clear distinctions, such as the reported influence of growing up in both Māori/Pasifika and European cultures, and a connection to mauri, wairua and God, as explained in tikanga Māori. The participants' distinct perspectives show it is important for leaders to consider the uniqueness of each staff member's journey and to acknowledge and include their different cultural experiences and beliefs within their leadership practices. This concept is represented in the model, as shown in Figure 4, in the contrasting sets of circles, which symbolise two different perspectives of culture that emerged from the literature and findings in this study. This model may help educators to understand how a person's cultural background can consciously or unconsciously influence how they develop cultural responsiveness, however it is important to note the risk of generalising and simplifying what the research has revealed is a very complex process.

The investigation of the participants' personal development of cultural responsiveness also found their accounts were predominately of experiences that they had at a young age. This finding raises the question of how parents and early educators can support children to develop the values and skills that characterise cultural responsiveness. Although this was not the focus of this study, the participants' accounts of their leadership practices within schools offer some ideas that could aid further investigation in this area.

Table 4

*Development and Practice of Cultural Responsiveness*

<p><b>Personal factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to different cultures from living in a bicultural community</li> <li>• Connection to different cultures through family</li> <li>• Parents and ancestors</li> <li>• Values learnt at an early age</li> <li>• Mauri, life force, spirit, God, and the church</li> <li>• Personal experience of racism or discrimination</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leadership practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role modelling</li> <li>• Continued learning through self-reflection</li> <li>• Developing personal awareness among staff</li> <li>• Providing professional learning and development</li> <li>• Knowing the stage of staff development</li> <li>• Connecting staff with deeper meaning, values and heart</li> <li>• Building relationships</li> <li>• Connecting with community</li> <li>• Giving opportunity for staff to be involved, power sharing</li> <li>• Developing critical pedagogy</li> <li>• Creating culturally responsive environments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Professional factors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional learning and development programmes</li> <li>• Reading, research and further study</li> <li>• Day-to-day job and environment</li> <li>• Social, political and economic influences</li> </ul>	

The coding categories that emerged from the participants’ accounts of their professional development of cultural responsiveness were in line with other research in identifying the effect of professional programmes and courses, but differed in also emphasising the influence of further research and study, and the experiences of the day-to-day job and its social, political and economic challenges. These findings, as summarised in Table 4 above, provide understanding for leaders of how they could develop cultural responsiveness within professional contexts. The study highlighted the value of leaders and teachers being involved in Ministry of Education programmes such as Te Kotahitanga, He Kākano and Kia Eke Panuku to develop understanding of different cultures, learn culturally appropriate teaching practices, and recognise and

challenge deficit thinking. While these and other programmes have been found to help develop cultural responsiveness, the findings suggest the importance of leaders questioning whether professional courses enable the depth of thinking and change that will make an actual difference to Māori and Pasifika student learning. The study also highlighted a need for initiatives with a particular focus on supporting leaders to be culturally responsive, and opportunities to be involved in further reading, research and study. Focus given to this area can result in deeper understanding of wider issues for diverse students, reflection and critical analyses of thinking and cultural identity, and more commitment and skills to be able to respond and bring about change.

A reoccurring coding category that emerged from the research was the influence of relating to people from different cultures and having experiences of the social, political and economic challenges they faced. The study offered a more in-depth investigation and understanding of how significant experiences that included these factors, or personal experiences of racism or discrimination, led to participants demonstrating culturally responsive characteristics of caring, empathy, and a desire to take action for culturally diverse students. The processes that the participants described are summarised in the boxes in Figure 4 on the next page. The model shows that when a shift in cultural responsiveness occurs, there is both an inner process that can include an emotional reaction, a change in awareness, and a decision to change, and also an outer response that can result in the person speaking out, taking on new roles, or facing interpersonal challenges with others. The possible implications of this model for leaders were highlighted in the participants accounts, where they described how they supported teachers to not only gain awareness of other cultures and appropriate teaching skills to meet their needs, but also by helping them to connect inwardly with emotions, heart, and deeper meaning and values.

The study showed that, in the participants' case, a change in their inner process and outer response happened through experiencing firsthand, or hearing and witnessing, the challenges that other people faced. As well as this, some of the participants reported that providing an experience of cultural responsiveness and values being role modelled could also help staff to embrace these characteristics for themselves. The significance of relationships in developing cultural responsiveness is represented in Figure 4 in two people meeting each other and the subsequent inner and outer

processes that can result. The model shows that the way that each person becomes aware of and responds to the other person in a relationship can be influenced by their cultural values, perspectives and practices.

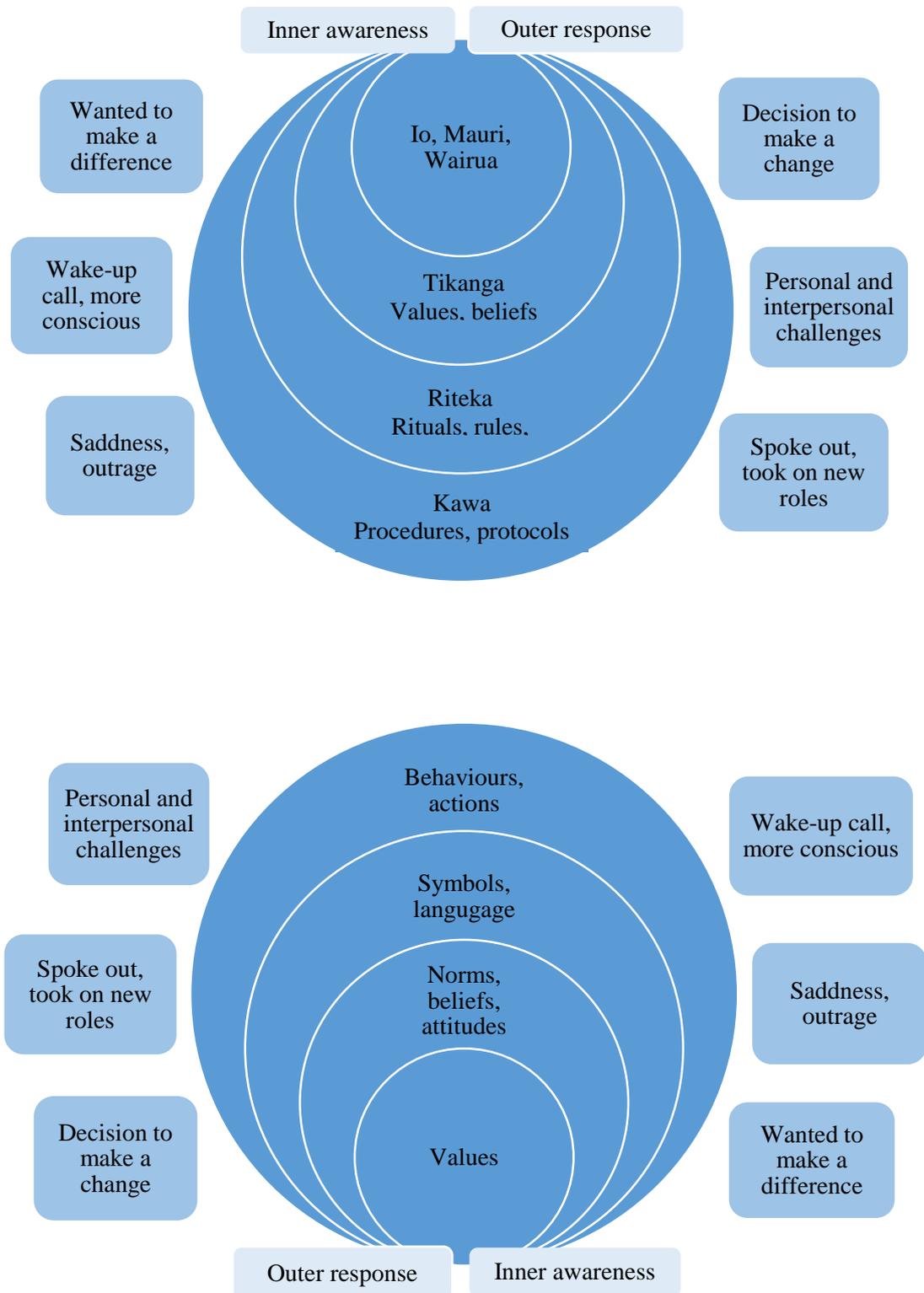


Figure 4: Becoming and being culturally responsive. Adapted from concepts presented by Gray (2012) and Muna and Zennie (2010), and the findings of this study.

With regards to the second research question, the findings of this study give educators a range of leadership practices that could support staff to develop cultural responsiveness and better meet the needs of culturally diverse students, particularly Māori and Pasifika. The participants' accounts of the influence of relationships show the value of leaders creating opportunities where they, along with staff, can model culturally responsive practices as well as honestly connect and listen to each other's stories. As identified in this research, along with a number of other studies of culturally responsive leadership, it is important that leaders consider how relationships can be respectful, caring, open, and built on mutual trust. Specific to this study, a unique perspective was the importance of leaders also knowing where staff were on their journey of developing cultural responsiveness and how to help them to move to the next step. In light of these findings, it is recommended that leaders consider gaining more understanding of the processes of becoming culturally responsive and the potential barriers and challenges that can cause fear or resistant among staff. The models discussed in this thesis, along with the one presented in this conclusion, will offer a starting point for this inquiry.

The study showed that the relationship between a person's inner processes and their outer responses and actions could be explored and further understood if leaders gave themselves and staff the opportunity to engage in continued learning through reflection and developing personal awareness. The participants' accounts offer possible strategies that leaders could use, such as providing set time for reflection, developing understanding and exploration of unconscious and negative thinking, and creating specific activities in staff meetings for learning about their own culture and family upbringing.

The study also highlighted the value of the participants initiating, implementing and being involved in professional development programmes that have a specific focus on cultural responsiveness. Leadership practices, such as providing support for new teachers in a cultural induction, training staff to run co-construction meetings, and observing and providing feedback to teachers about their classroom practices, are some examples of how leaders could help staff to gain more awareness of students' cultures and develop teaching strategies to cater for their needs. The study also identified that staff, students and parents, as well as other experts and researchers in

the field, can be invaluable in giving advice and speaking about specific aspects of culture.

The analysis of the participants' stories also showed that they were influential in their schools and communities in challenging the cultural norms, speaking out against what they considered were injustices, and transforming the social, political and economic factors that were barriers to students' learning. There were limited accounts in this study, as well as other research, of how these culturally responsive characteristics were intentionally developed with staff. This identified gap warrants further investigation, and suggests the need for leaders to consider how critical pedagogy might be included in staff development and school practices. The participants' accounts offer some initial ideas, such as developing critical thinking, providing ongoing training and support for teachers to embed critical pedagogy in their teaching, and enabling power sharing and leadership opportunities so staff can be actively involved in bringing about change for culturally diverse students.

The study found that relationships and external challenges in the day-to-day job and environment were factors that influenced the leaders in developing cultural responsiveness. This shows that cultural responsiveness is not something that simply happens on a course or in a staff meeting, but is also experienced throughout a person's journey when they encounter another person or situation. The findings highlight the importance of embedding cultural responsiveness in all aspects of teaching, leading and the school environment so that staff and students have the opportunity at any stage to learn about themselves and each other, and enact cultural responsiveness in that moment. The participants' accounts offer ideas of how leaders can create culturally responsive environments, including reviewing how practices such as the appraisal system reflect the cultural beliefs and values of staff, role modelling cultural responsiveness in their leadership practices, and helping staff and students to embrace values in everything they do.

This research project has investigated the development and practice of culturally responsive leadership by four leaders from secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. The findings and model presented in this thesis may support other educators

in understanding and moving forward in their own process. I give a brief account next of my experience of engaging with cultural responsiveness in conducting this study.

### **Personal Journey of Culturally Responsive Research**

In embarking on this research project, I set out to explore and practice of cultural responsiveness throughout the research process. I had many experiences with the people involved where I gained insights into the ideas presented in this thesis and I wanted to share one from each of these that I feel encapsulates some of my journey.

My first interview was with Loto. Upon arriving, I felt very out of place being in a school that had predominately Māori and Pasifika students and teachers. I was struck by the police standing in the office and Loto's explanations of the social issues and poverty that affected the students. My response to being out of my comfort zone was to feel scared, and I was initially hesitant to say much about myself. As I have reflected on this, it has made me think about the concept of culture shock and the finding in the study that showed the influence of relating to a person from another culture. For me, the experience, which was quite different to what I was used to, helped me to gain a little more awareness and sensitivity to what it is like for some Pacific Island people living in Aotearoa New Zealand.

An occasion arose in the research where I felt ashamed at the way I had responded with a participant. When I first met with Freya, I had assumed that she was European, and it was not until she told me about her Māori ancestry that I realised I had been mistaken. This surprised and unsettled me about how easy it was for me to judge a person by their outer appearance. As a result, in subsequent interviews I was more conscientious of not jumping to conclusions and I took time to inquire further about the person's story.

When I met with Atawhai, he began by introducing himself and talking about the different aspects that he connected to, such as God, the land and his ancestors. I was quite comfortable with this conversation because I had experienced this with people before, however when it came time for me to talk about myself I felt very awkward. I did not know how to express where I had come from and the things that held deeper meaning for me. After giving a few facts about myself, I was left feeling disconnected

and that I did not really give him a chance to get to know me. I linked this experience with the concept of the different layers of culture as expressed in the concentric circles in the model, and I perceived the need for me to find a way to communicate the deeper aspects, such as values and spirituality, in future meetings. The experience also caused me to question whether there are the concepts and language within my culture for expressing these aspects, and if there is a real understanding and respect for Māori perspectives.

In my interview with Amanda, I had an experience similar to that described in the participants' significant experiences. When she told the stories about her daughter and other instances of discrimination, I couldn't believe those things were happening in this country. I was saddened and angry that people were misunderstood and not able to freely express themselves. As Amanda spoke further about the ways in which she enacted cultural responsiveness in her practices, I felt inspired and a strengthened resolve to give my best effort in the research so that it might bring awareness and understanding to this topic.

Towards the end of my thesis, my supervisor, who is from a different ethnic background than my own, asked me if I got ideas for my writing during the night. When I reflected on our meeting and his question later, I realised that the moments throughout the year where I had gained the most insight and enjoyment had been when I was having conversations with other people. When I thought about this more deeply in relation to the findings of the research, I was able to see how I had changed in the way I perceived and responded to him. Initially, I was often resistant and dismissive of his way of seeing things and particularly the emphasises he placed on a critical approach for indigenous peoples. As the year progressed, however, I noticed that I had more understanding of his viewpoints and I took time to consider his ideas.

As I have written these few paragraphs, I have realised that, while I have described specific aspects in relation to one person, these were reflected many times over with each of participants. My experience of practising culturally responsive research has been that, through the challenges and experiences, I have continued to develop deeper layers of understanding and intimacy, and an increased caring for the welfare of people from diverse cultures. It is my hope that others reading this research might have gained

the same. For those educators who are considering the findings of this study in their own journey and contexts, it is important to consider the limitations of the research, which are described below.

### **Limitations of the Research**

There are a number of limitations that have resulted from the research design and process that are important to consider. Firstly, the study has focussed on the concept of culture, and particularly race and ethnicity. This may have distorted or hidden the complexity of the individuals' processes of development, and limited investigation of other aspects of culture such as gender issues. As an example, it was very difficult in the analysis to know whether an identified factor, such as the influence of family was the result of a learnt cultural belief about the importance of family, or may have instead related to a social or psychological development of the participant.

The study has been conducted using comparative case study research, which investigates each individual case as well as makes comparisons between the cases. In an attempt to make comparisons and form themes, it is possible that not enough time and space was given to the analysis of each individual participant, and their unique perspectives and beliefs may not have been accurately represented in the discussion. On the other hand, the large amount of data and different accounts that have been presented could have resulted in limitations in the ability to draw succinct conclusions.

A further limitation could exist because the research is based on the accounts and perceptions of the participants, some of which relate to memories of experiences that they had when they were quite young. The possibility within human nature to have response tendencies, unconscious self-deception, or social desirability could mean that the participants shared only certain information or said something different to what happened in practice. The nature of the study, which focussed on interviews of participants' perspectives as the sole form of data collection, also meant there was not the ability to validate their accounts with comparison or triangulation to other sources of data.

The study has also been conducted through my perspective, which is predominately Aotearoa New Zealand European. While I have attempted to engage in culturally

responsive practices, my cultural background will have influenced what participants did and did not speak about in the interview process, and my subjective judgements and bias will have affected what information has been collected and presented. There is the chance that I may not have understood some of the cultural values and beliefs of the participants, and therefore the way that I have interpreted their accounts does not reflect the meaning they intended. There is also the possibility that I could have favoured certain information and themes that came from certain participants rather than others.

A further limitation that became apparent through the research process is that, apart from the emerging body of research from a kaupapa Māori perspective, there was very little writing about culturally responsive leadership from other cultural worldviews to think about and compare the findings with. This was particularly evident in the lack of literature that focussed on culturally responsive leadership from a Pasifika perspective. The fact that the participants' accounts have been analysed against predominately Western-influenced literature and research could mean that aspects of their particular ways of knowing and understanding may not have been apparent through the process.

Finally, readers considering the transferability of these findings to their own practice and schools need to remember that this research is limited due to the size of the sample and the specific contexts in which the participants live and work. The study includes four participants who have grown up in very different cultural backgrounds and environments, and work in urban schools that have significant populations of diverse students. Their perspectives and experiences of developing and enacting culturally responsive leadership may be quite different to someone else who has had a different upbringing or works in a different context. Taking these limitations and the findings of this study into consideration, the following section offers some suggestions for further research.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

The purpose of this study was to research culturally responsive leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools in order to add to understanding of how leaders developed and enacted cultural responsiveness within themselves and with staff. Due

to limited previous studies that have investigated the personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness for secondary school leaders, further research is needed in this area to add understanding to the findings that have emerged from this study. This could include exploring what particular aspects within each of the coding categories influence leaders, and what culturally responsive characteristics are learnt through the experience. Research is particularly needed that investigates this topic through other cultural worldviews and methodologies.

The field of culturally responsive leadership would benefit from longer term studies of the process of developing caring, empathy and heart, and what specific strategies or experiences can be used in schools and with staff to help them to develop these characteristics. The study showed that some participants recounted personal experiences of racism or discrimination were linked to these qualities, therefore research in this area might give more insight into how these are formed. As the research findings showed, it would be important to use a methodology that emphasises building relationships with trust so that participants feel safe to share their stories.

The study highlighted the influence of mauri, life force, spirit, God, and the church for some participants, and also identified there was little discussion of this within literature and previous research about cultural responsiveness. Further research in this area is needed to enable leaders to have understanding of these factors, which may influence staff from different cultural groups, and to allow educators to be able to bring this aspect of their cultural identity to their development and practice.

This findings found that the experiences of the day-to-day job, and further reading, research and study, influenced the leaders in their development of cultural responsiveness. These coding categories are broad and could include any number of factors within them influencing the development of cultural responsiveness. More specific research is needed to investigate these areas in depth. As noted in the conclusion, the study also identified a gap between the leaders' practices of characteristics associated with critical pedagogy, and the development of these with staff. It is suggested that research is needed to provide further understanding in this area of how leaders can develop this aspect of cultural responsiveness with staff.

The findings that emerged from the participants' accounts of culturally responsive leadership practices had many similarities to studies from other countries and within Aotearoa New Zealand primary schools. Further research is needed to explore whether these practices are transferable to different contexts, such as rural environments, schools that have varying amounts of diversity in their student populations, or other levels of leadership such as teachers or middle management. A significant gap exists in the understanding of the reciprocal process of the relationship between leaders and staff. Research is needed that investigates how teachers perceive the practices and actions of leaders influence them in developing culturally responsive practices, particularly in the area of role modelling. The accounts of the four participants offer some practical ideas of how each of the coding categories are implemented, however further understanding of specific practices and activities would support leaders in this area.

Finally, I would like to finish these suggestions for further research, and this thesis, on a personal level. This study has shown me that cultural responsiveness can be developed and enacted through relating to people, and experiencing, witnessing and hearing their triumphs and struggles. This understanding encourages, and challenges, me to further my development by engaging more deeply with people from other cultures and actively responding to situations where I feel I can be of help. In its' essence, I feel that culturally responsive leadership involves having heart and caring for oneself and for others, and it is this endeavour that I believe further steps can be taken. I look forward to where this journey might lead.

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**APPENDIX A – Glossary**

This appendix provides a simple translation for those readers that are not familiar with te reo Māori (Māori language) utilised throughout this thesis. It is important to point out there is te hononutaka o te reo rakatira (the depth to the Māori language) that is not encapsulated in these descriptions. Readers are encouraged to research these words/phrases further to deepen their understanding of a Māori perspective around this topic.

awa	river
Atua	Gods/Goddesses
hapū	sub tribe
Io	the source or creator
iwi	tribe
ka hikitia	to step up, to lift up, or to lengthen ones' stride
kanohi ki te kanohi	face-to-face
kapa haka	Māori performing arts
karakia	prayer
kaupapa	strategy, vision, goals
kawa	procedures, protocols and etiquettes
kia eke panuku	a journey towards success that is both dynamic and continuous, building from one's current location to where one aspires to be
kōhanga reo	early childhood language nests
kumara	sweet potato
kura kaupapa	Māori-language immersion school
manakitanga	expressing generosity and care to others
mana motuhake	insisting on certain learning and high expectations
manu kōrero	speech competition

marae	traditional meeting house
mātauranga	Māori knowledge, philosophy, wisdom, and truth
mauri	physical pure elemental essence
Pākehā	white-skinned immigrants, and white skinned people who live in Aotearoa New Zealand
riteka	rituals, rules, laws, and institutions
rongohia te hau	listening to the winds of change
tangi	funeral
he kākano	the seed sown to begin life
te kotahitanga	unity of purpose
te reo	Māori language
tikanga/tikaka	Māori culture, values, customs and beliefs
tūpuna	ancestors
wairua	spiritual pure elemental essence
waka	Māori canoe
wānanga	schools of learning
whakawhanaungatanga	the process of identifying, maintaining, or forming past, present, and future relationships
whānau	family
whanaungatanga	the quality of relationships that are established
whakataukī	proverbs

**APPENDIX B – Aotearoa New Zealand school rolls by ethnic group**

Year	Number of enrollment by ethnic group							Total
	European / Pākehā	Māori	Pasifika	Asian	MELAA	Other	International fee paying	
1996	462,825	137,598	48,955	33,432		8,444	5,081	696,335
1997	467,610	140,729	51,153	37,152		9,389	5,815	711,848
1998	473,761	144,403	53,139	41,920		6,281	5,075	724,579
1999	473,037	144,718	54,550	42,821		6,799	5,373	727,298
2000	468,002	146,913	56,389	42,367		8,556	7,462	729,689
2001	462,311	149,473	58,402	43,653		9,167	10,801	733,807
2002	459,563	152,554	60,312	49,283		10,772	15,462	747,910
2003	455,834	157,262	62,703	56,024		12,312	17,574	761,709
2004	453,473	160,732	64,121	58,737		13,048	14,543	764,654
2005	448,218	162,534	66,088	60,358		14,223	11,369	762,790
2006	443,348	162,384	68,059	61,855		15,382	9,717	760,745
2007	436,669	164,013	69,888	62,865		16,135	10,278	759,878
2008	428,706	165,425	71,322	65,583		17,156	9,902	758,094
2009	424,242	166,998	73,081	68,784		18,225	9,529	760,859
2010	420,903	170,069	74,466	71,056		18,244	9,661	764,398
2011	415,684	171,811	74,848	72,335		18,136	9,868	762,682
2012	411,040	173,011	75,000	73,745	13,500	4,728	8,936	759,960
2013	408,523	175,456	74,825	75,899	13,457	4,949	9,291	762,400
2014	406,730	178,753	75,198	78,809	13,692	4,641	9,435	767,258

Prior to 2012 Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African (MELAA) students were included with 'Other' ethnic group

Source: (Ministry of Education, 2016)

**APPENDIX C – Participant information sheet*****Project Title -Culturally Responsive Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand Secondary Schools***

24 July 2015

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Hello,

Ko Hikurangi te maunga  
 Ko Maraetaha te awa  
 Ko Brampton, me Symouth te waka  
 Ko Ngati Pākehā te iwi  
 Ko Nicholas Williams ahau  
 No reira, tena koutou katou

I am a student completing a Master of Educational Leadership at Auckland University of Technology. I have an interest in ‘culture’ and how cultural practices can be enacted within educational leadership to improve education for all students in our country. I would like to invite you to be involved in my study about culturally responsive leadership within Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools. Your participation is entirely voluntary and, if you do chose to participate, you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the data collection. The information sheet below outlines the details of the study. Please take the time to read through it and consider whether you would like to participate in all or part of the study. I am more than happy to talk to you further or answer any questions you have.

Kind regards,

Nicholas

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of the research is to work with four to five principals/school leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds to explore their experience of developing and practising cultural responsiveness within themselves and with their colleagues.

The research will seek to investigate the principals’ individual accounts of their personal and professional journey of developing cultural responsiveness and the factors that have influenced this process. It will also explore how they perceive cultural responsiveness is enacted in their leadership role with colleagues in their schools, and the influence that this has on improving education for diverse and underachieving students.

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

You are being invited to participate in this study because you have been identified as demonstrating culturally responsive practices in your leadership role and you have an interest in inclusion, educational success for all students, and building relationships and community. This information was

identified from the internet, your school's previous Education Review Office report and your school website.

What will happen in this research?

If you choose to participate, the research will begin with an informal interview to enable us to meet each other, talk about the study and, together, plan the next interview. During this time we will discuss your understanding of 'culture', 'cultural responsiveness', and 'leadership'. You will be invited to take time before the next interview to complete a written reflection on your journey of developing cultural responsiveness and the factors that have influenced this process, and send this to me four days before the interview.

In a second semi-structured interview there will be an opportunity to talk about your experiences, as well as answer questions to investigate your personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness further. You would also be asked about your interpersonal experience of practising cultural responsiveness in your role of leading colleagues in your school.

The semi-structured interview will be digitally recorded and transcribed. Information from the conversations will be analysed to attempt to build a complete picture of each participant's development of cultural responsiveness (within-case analysis), as well as look at correlating similarities and differences among all the participants involved (across-case analysis). Every effort will be made to maintain the integrity and wholeness of each individual's story, as well as look for the connections between them.

Transcriptions and initial findings will be available for you to check after the individual interviews. The findings will be written up in a Master of Educational Leadership thesis and potentially used for journal publications and conference presentations. A copy of the final report will be gifted to you.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There could be some possible discomfort and risks to the study that are important in considering whether to participate. You will be invited to recall experiences in your life that could be of a personal or sensitive nature, and which can sometimes be uncomfortable or can trigger painful memories.

At a more subtle level it is likely that interpretations among participants and researchers will differ. This could lead to discomfort in the interviews when sharing ideas different than others, and possible misrepresentation of information in the findings.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

Every effort will be taken to ensure confidentiality in the recording, analysis and reporting of findings. I will use pseudonyms and/or codes for participants and schools so that they are not specifically identifiable. All recordings, transcriptions and consent forms will be stored separately and securely for six years and then destroyed.

Throughout the data gathering process answering questions will be entirely voluntary and you would have the opportunity to stop the interview process or withdraw from the study at any time. Opportunity will be given to check the semi-structured interview transcript and make changes or withdraw information up to two weeks after receiving it. After each interview I will be available for follow-up support. Counselling support is available through AUT at no cost should it be needed.

Every effort will be made to accurately interpret the stories and conversations, and to create findings that reflect what each of the participants contributes to the understanding of the topic.

What are the benefits?

The study will provide participants and the researcher the opportunity to reflect on their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness. This may provide new understandings and potentially lead to changes in their leadership practice.

The findings will perhaps provide other leaders and teachers increased understanding of their own personal and professional journey as they work towards improving their culturally responsive practices.

On a larger scale the research could contribute to emerging understanding of how leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds develop cultural responsiveness, and how cultural responsiveness is enacted in leadership practice. This could contribute to ideas for development programmes for leaders and how to improve school-wide culturally responsive practices that meet the needs of diverse and underachieving students.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The research is estimated to take the following time:

- Initial meeting 30 minutes
- Reflective exercise 1 hour
- Individual interview 1 hour

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please feel free to consider the invitation and respond within the week.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate please contact me via phone or email, and sign the attached consent form.

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

If you have any concerns regarding the nature of this project please notify my project supervisor or secondary supervisor: Andrés Santamaría, [asantama@aut.ac.nz](mailto:asantama@aut.ac.nz), (09) 921 9999 ext. 6753; Howard Youngs, [howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz](mailto:howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz), (09) 921 9999 ext. 9633. If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research please notify the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz), (09) 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor if you have any further questions about the study.

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Andrés Santamaría, [asantama@aut.ac.nz](mailto:asantama@aut.ac.nz), (09) 921 9999 ext. 6753

Howard Youngs, [howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz](mailto:howard.youngs@aut.ac.nz), (09) 921 9999 ext. 9633

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 8 July, 2015, AUTEK  
Reference number 15/224**

**APPENDIX D – Consent form**



***Project title:*** *Culturally Responsive Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand Secondary Schools*

***Project Supervisor:*** *Andrés Santamaría*

***Secondary Supervisor:*** *Howard Youngs*

***Researcher:*** *Nicholas Williams*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 24 July 2015
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the individual interviews and that they will also be digitally recorded and transcribed.
- I understand that in preparation for the semi-structured interview I will be asked to complete a written reflection and send this to the researcher four days before the interview.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information from the individual interviews including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I understand that the data will be used for a Masters thesis and could be used for research publications and conference presentations.
- I agree to take part in the individual interviews: Yes  No
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes  No

Participant’s signature: .....

Participant’s name: .....

Date:.....

Participant’s Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....  
 .....

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 8 July, 2015***

***AUTEC Reference number 15/224***

**APPENDIX E – Interview questions*****Culturally responsive leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand secondary schools.****Project supervisor: Andrés Santamaría**Secondary supervisor: Howard Youngs**Researcher: Nicholas Williams***Research Questions:**

The two overall guiding questions of the research are:

- How do secondary school leaders account for their personal and professional development of cultural responsiveness?
- How do secondary school leaders perceive they influence staff to improve school-wide culturally responsive practices that meet the needs of Māori, Pasifika, and other students from culturally diverse backgrounds?

**Interview Questions:**

Please reflect on your understanding of culturally responsive leadership.

1. What does 'culture' mean to you?
2. What does 'cultural responsiveness' mean to you?
3. What does 'leadership' mean to you?

Please reflect on how you have developed cultural responsiveness in your life.

4. What have been the influences that have shaped and formed your development of cultural responsiveness?
  - a) What have been the personal influences?
  - b) What have been the professional influences?
5. What have been the limitations and opportunities that have contributed to your development of cultural responsiveness? How did you overcome any limitations?

Please reflect on a significant or critical incident that you perceive was important in your development of cultural responsiveness.

6. What was the incident and what was your experience of the significant or critical incident?
7. What effect did the experience have on your attitudes, values and beliefs?

Please reflect on how your development of cultural responsiveness has shaped your behaviour and actions in leading staff in your school.

8. How do you influence staff to improve school-wide culturally responsive practices that meet the needs of Māori and Pasifika, and other students from culturally diverse backgrounds? Please give examples.

**APPENDIX F – Coding analysis**

This appendix provides an example of the analysis of an interview transcript using the process of examining and comparing the text in relation to categories or codes.

<p><b>In your role here at the school as the principal, can you talk a little bit about how you influence staff in terms of cultural responsiveness.</b></p> <p>I think I alluded to the fact that when we have new staff we have an orientation programme that we run, and we have Māori teachers and our Pasifika teachers give a presentation about culture. That is meant to introduce them to this community, because we are Māori and Pasifika. We use opportunities in the school that we can to promote the young people’s culture. We don’t need to go to some event to promote their culture because in the life of the school normally we use opportunities to do that. I think I said, we do karakia and languages, and in the classroom we use our Pacific Island teachers to go and guest speak about culture. If they are doing a topic about culture then the Samoan teacher speaks to the class about whatever it is, or the Māori teacher. Opportunities like that arise. I have an open door for people if teachers have questions or queries about things cultural, and people do. They often come and say, is it appropriate to go to somebody’s house? If I say yes, they might say, what’s the appropriate way to do it?</p> <p><b>People will come to you and ask for advice?</b></p> <p>We encourage them to do the same with all the other Pacific teachers in the school, and they do ask, they do ask for translations of things sometimes. In particular in dealing with the home, they look for advice in that.</p> <p><b>Do you find that there are people on the staff with varying degrees of cultural responsiveness?</b></p> <p>Most definitely, well it is not that they are not culturally responsive, I think it’s they just don’t know. So then, it is my job to make them more aware that their teaching in their classroom needs to consider that these are Māori and Pacific children. But there’s a danger there because the expectation of a teacher is the all important thing in the classroom and if the teacher thinks, oh these are Māori and Pacific children and they are the tail of NZ achievement, they might think, oh I need to dumb down my lesson. There is all of that that needs to be discussed and ensured that teacher expectations are not linked to the fact that they think they are teaching in a Māori and Pacific school.</p> <p><b>A big part of it is awareness, helping to build awareness.</b></p> <p>Using those moments that come up. It is not necessarily a formal approach, it’s making use of those opportunities for you to teach something cultural. We have actually got to model it ourselves, use it when the time comes, those all-important learning moments when it comes in the classroom or in the playground. We have to utilise those moments, model it ourselves because that is how it is going to happen. You actually have got to create the school environment so that it grows in the children. You know, it is not something that you push onto them. You’ve actually got to provide the environment that allows those values to become the children, and that can only happen if all the teachers embrace our values in everything that they do with their teaching and learning in the classrooms. That has to be the backbone of everything that they do. That is the only way that we are going to embed it into our school and our students is like that.</p>	<p>New staff cultural orientation</p> <p>Cultural awareness + understanding</p> <p>Open door Talk about appropriate communication with parents</p> <p>Encourage staff to ask other teachers questions</p> <p>Develop awareness of teaching Māori + Pasifika students</p> <p>Discuss teacher’s expectations</p> <p>Use teachable moments</p> <p>Modelling</p> <p>Provide culturally responsive environments</p> <p>Help teachers to embrace values</p>
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**Coded Categories**

This page shows a segment of the coded categories and sub-categories for a participant, as generated through NVivo, a computer-assisted data-analysis software.

