Relationship Formation in International Business Alliances: The Case of Māori Values

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PEPEHA / INTRODUCTION OF SELF AND ANCESTORS

Mai i Maketu ki Tongariro, Ko Te Arawa te waka	Our canoe reaches from Maketu and Tongariro, Te Arawa
Ko Tamatekapua te tangata i runga ra	Tamatekapua is the captain on board of Te Arawa
Ko Ngongotaha te maunga	Ngongotahā is the mountain
Ko Utuhina te awa	Utuhina is the river
Ko Rotorua nui a Kahumatamomoe te Moana	Rotoruanuiakahumatamomoe is the lake
Ko Parateahoata te kohea te marae	Paratehoata Te Kōhea is the marae
Ko Tunohopu te whare tupuna	Tūnohopū is the ancestral house
Ngati Whakaue, Ngati Pikiao, Ngati Tahinga wetehi o ōku hapū	Ngāti Whakāue, Ngāti Pikiao, and Ngāti Tāhinga are some of the sub-tribes I descend from
Ko Te Arawa te iwi	Te Arawa is the tribe
Ko Tāua Haere Huka te tupuna	Tāua Haere Huka is the ancestor,
ka puta mai	who begat
Ko Rakitu Puhou Haere Huka	Rakitu Puhou Haere Huka,
ka puta mai	who begat
Ko Ani Te Paerakau	Ani Te Paerākau Te Paerākau
ka moe a Te Paerakau ki tona hoatane tuarua,	married her second husband
Ko Te Whiti Rerekau no Taranaki a	Te Whiti Rerekau of Taranaki,
ka puta mai a Merepeka Puhou Kameta	they begat Merepeka Pūhou Kāmeta
i Whakawhangai mai ai a Merepeka ki te hoatane tuatoru o Te Paerakau, Ko Poihipi Kameta no Ngati Pikiao	Merepeka was raised by Te Paerākau's third husband Poihipi Kāmeta of Ngati Pikiao
ka moe a Merepeka Puhou ki a Thomas Angus Nukutaurua Mckinnon no Ngati Pikiao ano hoki	Merepeka Pūhous married Thomas Angus Nukutaurua Mckinnon of Ngati Pikiao
ka puta mai	They begat
Ko Aniwaihoroa Paerakau Mckinnon, i whānau mai ai i Rotoiti	Aniwaihōroa Paerākau Mckinnon, born in Rotoiti,
Ko Tenei toku māmā	this is my mother
Ka moe a Aniwaihoroa ki a Raymond Jones, he Pākehā no tawahi, no Weera i peretania	Aniwaihōroa married Raymond Jones, A foreigner from Wales, in Britain
Tokoiwa nga tamariki ka puta mai a raua tokomaha ano hoki nga tamariki whangai, heoi ano tekau ma rua nga tamariki katoa o ratou	They had nine children, lots of foster children also, so really there was 12 of us,
ka puta mai o Gareth Jones	They (Aniwaihōroa and Raymond) begat Gareth Jones
Ko Gareth Jones tōku ingoa	Gareth Jones is my name
Ko Julia Jones nō Ngāti Hine me Kuki Airani,	Julia Jones from Ngāti Hine and the Cook Islands,
tōku wahine matua	is my wife.
E ono ngā tamāhine ā māua	We have six daughters
E ono ngā hunaonga ā māua	We have four sons-in-law,
E rima ngā mokopuna ā māua	We have five grandchildren.
Ko tēnei tōku whakapapa.	This is my genealogy.
Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa, ka nui te mihi atu I raro I te korowai o te Rangimarie.	*Greeting to you all, many greetings under the cloak of peace.*
Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā anō tatou katoa.	*Therefore, I humbly greet you thrice times.*

NGĀ MIHI / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ko te mana i ahau no ōku tūpuna nō tuawhakarere

My strength comes from my ancestors from long ago

(Brougham et al., 2012)

I want to in the first instance mihi to my supervisors, Simon Mowatt and Pare Keiha. They have been patient, exceptionally understanding, frustrated with myself on many occasions, but always encouraging and have supported the struggle of this mahi. To them I cannot say thank you enough.

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Mauri ora!

HE WHAKARĀPOPOTO / ABSTRACT

Māori businesses participating in international business rely on internationalisation to seek larger markets and knowledge but generally suffer from resource shortages and lack firm-specific advantages, making alliances an important way to overcome these disadvantages. The rationale for this study is seated in the importance of understanding how Māori values help mitigate some of the challenges experienced in the formation of international business alliances. The study asks:

- What are the attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances from the perspective of Māori businesses?
- What is the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances?

The methodology adopted a critical realism research philosophy to bridge micro- and firm-level perspectives, allowing for generalisations to be drawn from the small numbers of participants in qualitative research, and the inclusion of prior theory. This is supported with a Kaupapa Māori study design and conduct. There are nine case studies with firms in the process of alliance formation, the data gathered from semi-structured interviews as pūrākau (storytelling) with key decision-makers.

The study identified two overarching core principles in relationship formation: Tikanga (customary system of values and practices) and Whakawhirinaki (trust). Five additional supporting principles were identified in the thematic analysis: Whānau and Whakapapa (family, genealogy and the why of things, kupu whakataki); Whanaungatanga and Whakawhanaungatanga (the relationship and the process of establishing the relationship); Tūhono and Kotahitanga (alignment and unity, togetherness); Mātauranga (learning and knowledge); and Kanohi ki te Kanohi (face to face).

Implications of this research are the key principles of partnership suitability, the processes in the alliance formation which impact the success of the relationship, and important perspectives on network alliances. These perspectives expand on key processes at the centre of these networks and emphasises Māori business values which may inform processes in international business with alternative ways of redressing high failure rates in international business alliances by focusing on people and processes equally. The study proposes an International Tikanga Business Alliance framework which could improve partner selection, communications, align values, objectives, participation from alliance partner executives and improve resilience through challenging periods. The study suggests policy and practice implications.

NGĀ KUPU MĀORI / GLOSSARY

Although te reo Māori encapsulates a language that is metaphoric in nature, with words having multiple meanings, the following glossary provides a list of the terms and their general meanings used throughout this thesis as defined by the author's knowledge and Moorfield (2024) in *Te Aka Māori Dictionary*.

Aotearoa	New Zealand
Haka	Fierce dance
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Hongi	Sharing breath by pressing noses and foreheads together
He whakarāpopoto	Abstract/summary
Hui	Gathering/meeting
Hūmārie	Peaceful/beautiful/pleasant
Iwi	Tribe
Kai	Food/refreshments
Kaitiaki	Custodian
Kaitiakitanga	Stewardship
Karakia	Prayer/incantation
Kaupapa	Philosophy
Kawa	Protocol or etiquette
Kōrero	Speech, narrative, story, news, account, discussion, conversation, discourse, statement, information
Māori	Indigenous person of Aotearoa/New Zealand
Mana	Power and authority, prestige, honour, respect
Manaaki	Show respect, generosity, and care for others
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, kindness, respect of others
Mātauranga	Knowledge
Mauri	Life force, essence
Mihimihi	Greet/thank
Moemoeā	Dreams/aspirations
Moteatea	Chants

Noa	Safe and free from restriction
Oriori	Lullabies
Pākehā	NZ European
Pepeha	Tribal motto
Pono	Truth
Pōwhiri	Welcome ceremony at a meeting place
Pūrākau	Myth/story/ancient legend/narrative
Rangatahi	Youth
Rangatiratanga	Leadership
Raru	Difficulties/problems
Taonga	Treasure
Tapu	Sanctity
Te Reo	Language
Tika	Correct
Tikanga	Right way of doing
Tino rangatiratanga	Sovereignty, self-determination, governance, autonomy, and independence
Tīpuna	Ancestors
Tirohanga	Perspective
Titiro	To look
Tohu Māori	Symbols of Māori culture
Tuhanga	Descendant
Turangawaewae	Family connections
Utu	Reciprocity, honour
Waiata	Songs
Wairua	Spirituality
Wairuatanga	Spirituality
Whakapapa	Genealogy
Whakarongo	Listening
Whakataukī	Proverbs
Whakawhanaungatanga	Establishing relationships

Whānau	Family
Whanaungatanga	Relationships
Whenua	Land

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), 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.

Date: 12.03.2024

CHAPTER 1 / HE KUPU WHAKATAKI / INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO MIHIMIHI

Mihimihi refers to the introductory speeches Aotearoa (New Zealand) Māori make at the beginning of a gathering or meeting after pōwhiri (welcome ceremonies at a meeting place) are completed. The purpose of a mihimihi is to establish links with other people present. It involves individuals sharing their whakapapa (genealogy, ancestral ties) and other information considered relevant to that context, audience, and purpose. It is a key element of relationship building for Māori as it sets the tone and initiates purpose or intent in the communication process. As part of the process, some people include pepeha – well-known set verses that describe their whakapapa links to a particular hapū or iwi. My introduction is not meant to be comprehensive; rather, it is a brief snapshot of my background. Please refer to the pepeha provided at the beginning of this thesis. In the context of this study, the mihimihi provides an important link to the research themes that are discussed in subsequent chapters. It is also a distinctive Māori practice or way of introduction and quite often results in people making connections, as it relates to important values around acknowledging family or the past "whakapapa" and not the typical greeting when formally meeting for the first time.

I recall an experience which impressed upon myself the importance of this type of introduction when travelling with a delegation of Te Arawa ariki in business to Austria in 2016. The intent of this delegation was to work together, potentially to establish a partnership or alliance with a notable Austrian wood laminating company and to have them invest or set up a plant in the Rotorua region. This Austrian company was a family-based business which had been in existence for more than 250 years. We were hosted at the family estate in our very first introductory meeting. At the time of the introduction in Austria they presented first and outlined a rich history of business spanning 250 years while experiencing several world wars, regional conflicts, challenges to the monarchy, political and economic upheavals, and their story of how they got to where they were. It was impressive and certainly to be respected and acknowledged. As a delegation we were in awe of their respective achievements and the standing they had in the world as one of the pre-eminent timber laminating companies. Following the introduction of the Austrian firm, it was our turn to introduce ourselves. Each member of the team gave a mihimihi to an audience of about 12 people and as each of us finished, we all sang waiata. There were seven of us, including two Pākehā who worked for the local council in Rotorua. The Austrian introduction took 40 minutes, our introduction took 90 minutes. The response from the Austrians was brilliant. Our introduction was accepted and, according to the Austrians, was 'quite remarkable.' The Austrians indicated that we shared similar family values and that our cultural

beliefs and value systems mirrored their family values and the way their business was set up. They were pleasantly surprised that we shared many similarities and at the same time noted that we were more communal in some respects compared to who they were, as they shared communal values within their own communities, but not to the extent that we had presented in our introductions. The introductions talked about families, those who had served in the Second World War and the Great War, a love for hunting, rugby, food, song, and country. Many of these mihimihi, if not all, resonated with our hosts. We shared love of the land, environment, family, hunting; stories were shared of their tīpuna who had served in wars past, and the knowledge that we were opponents at different points in these world wars helped to develop a relationship, and a respect for and understanding of each other. The length of our introductions went over time, as we were allocated 30 minutes in the programme and lunch was waiting for us. However, the Austrians did not mind and realised the time was necessary.

This is a Kaupapa Māori approach, where time is given without necessarily meaning to be 'on time', as we will take as much time as needed to say what needs to be said. We noted that, after the mihimihi and waiata, our hosts were hugging us and happily doing hongi with our group. The indication that this process of introductions was truly appreciated through mihimihi was for them to break out into a traditional Austrian song which was unplanned for and to the delight of our group. The tone had been set and the relationship had begun with positive undertones. The next four days in Austria, then three days in the United Kingdom at their London office were an incredibly positive experience. This experience involving mihimihi highlighted a particularly important aspect of the way Māori begin to establish a relationship, one that has always helped to start relationships positively.

The mihimihi, as explained, is about people – who the person is, what their perspective is and where they are coming from. It is deeply personal and reveals values adhered to by the person giving the mihimihi. It also presents a world view, which is their context, as it is for Māori. This is quite different from more conventional forms of introduction which are impersonal and solely focused on a transactional relationship. The mihimihi is very much relational in approach and intended to find commonalities, foster understanding and encourage mutual respect. For this purpose, I have commenced with an introduction about the importance of mihimihi, and the following is my mihimihi.

1.2 MIHIMIHI

My name is Gareth Jones, and I was born in Aotearoa. My father was from Wales, United Kingdom, and my mother is part-Māori/Scottish/Irish of Aotearoa birth and descent. My Māori tribal roots hail from Te Arawa, Tainui and Taranaki regions of Aotearoa. My DNA origins are

49% Wales, New Zealand Māori 24%, Ireland 16%, Scotland 6%, Hawaii 4%, and Norway 1%. I have always considered myself a New Zealander first and foremost, influenced by my cultural background and upbringing; however, this affiliation is held with the knowledge that I am Māori and hold Māori world views or perspectives.

Ko Maru kai atu, ko Maru kai mai, ko ngohengohe

Maru who ate abroad, and at home was agreeable. Maru who fed those who entertained him was an agreeable and light-hearted fellow.

Kai ana mai koe he atua; noho ana ahau he tangata

You are eating there like a god; I am sitting here as a man.

In my experience, hospitality and respect are important aspects of building relationships. The meaning of hospitality behind the proverbs above is not taken lightly by Māori and whether a relationship will go forward or not, hospitality must always be given, and this supports the concept of respect. This principle is something that was taught to me by my Māori heritage, and I will refer to these Māori values and those of the interviewees throughout this study.

I have been fortunate to have travelled for work to more than 70 countries throughout my career and during this time have engaged with many cultures. I have worked extensively in the Middle East and North Africa, Africa, China, Central and South America, Southeast Asia, North America, Europe and Australasia. I have been exposed to the different ways or customs of doing business, the types of hospitality and the processes which are common to these countries and cultures in terms of how they conduct business. The forming of relationships has been sometimes similar in some parts of the world, while in others it is quite different. Some of these types of relationship-building experiences are transactional, while others are quite relational. In some relationships, hospitality is a very important part of forming the relationship, taking precedence over any discussions which are transactional, and this is a necessary and important stage of the total relationship development. This type of hospitality takes on many appearances such as being picked up at airports, transported to hotels, transported from hotels to places of work and being dined by hosts throughout the whole duration of the trip. Some of these trips may include activities sponsored by the hosts to visit sites such as the Great Wall of China, riding camels around the Pyramids of Giza, visiting Victoria Falls, sitting in a gondola in the canals of Venice and visiting mosques, temples, churches, and great opera houses. Other more personal and intimate experiences of hospitality are those where I am invited into family homes or extended family gatherings for meals and meeting family members, including small communities in some remote locations.

Another aspect of hospitality is gift giving. In one experience I presented a Māori pounamu mere, and unexpectedly I received a jade dragon in return. In another instance I presented a Māori carved miniature waka and in return I was given the company stationary kit with pen, pad and satchel with company logo on the items. One company offered an all-expenses-paid trip to the Maldives for a vacation for two which I declined and expressed my sincere gratitude for. In other situations, I would transport myself from airport to hotel, then hotel to place of work and the hospitality was a cup of tea, coffee or water during a meeting and there was little need for anything else but to get to the transactional part of the relationship. The introductions may be brief and cursory "hello" with a little bit of background, "welcome to our place of business, how was your flight and let's get right into the business." Some companies would give me the full company tour and others might refer me to a brochure or website. The levels of introduction or welcome at companies could differ greatly. On some occasions what transpires in these initial meetings, in sharing food and getting to know each other, becomes a crucial indicator of things to come as the alliance partners determine whether they align with you or the company you may represent.

Māori were experienced traders and welcomed commerce with its associated trading opportunities. New Zealanders in general have always needed to forge international business relationships, perhaps because of the popular ethos in Aotearoa (New Zealand) to 'give things a go', combined with our geographical isolation.

This study is motivated by personal beliefs and values, the 'give-things-a-go' attitude. In my practice of being a manager involved in forming international business alliances, I have often reflected on how Māori initially excelled as traders, and on my personal experiences, and wondered whether Māori culture and its orientation to people and values could be a competitive advantage in new international business alliances. If so, I asked myself, would the international business literature on alliances through internationalisation be adequate to examine this question, being principally derived from western positivist foundations based largely on transactional theoretical frameworks rooted in economics. It is my intent to address these questions and consider how important values are for Māori in the development of relationship formation in international business alliances.

Mate atu he tete kura, whakaete mai he tete kura.
A fern frond dies, but another frond rises to take its place.

1.3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The early history of Māori engagement in international trade and business, and the development of the Māori economy, is a complex and contested history. Although a full review of this history is beyond the scope of this study, an overview of some of the key developments is important in providing context for this research. The initial interactions in early colonial Aotearoa between Māori and Europeans were largely with missionaries and traders (Petrie, 2006). Māori successfully self-initiated trade internationalisation from 1800 to 1840 (Petrie, 2006); it is generally accepted that Māori are entrepreneurial in outlook and that, in the early 1800s, prior to colonisation, Māori successfully built relationships with trusted partners, developing industries such as commercial whaling for positive economic gain and developing highly efficient supply chains for delivery of their products. Collective communities, tribes, local family, and extended family groups supported these supply chains. Initially these products were based on the needs of visiting whaler ships, the delivery of potatoes, pigs, fish; this extended rapidly to flour milling and trans-Tasman trade with New South Wales in flax and timber where Māori were business owners and operators, pursuing deliberate strategies in line with customary practices in the period (Easton, 2020; Petrie, 2006). In particular, between 1769 and 1850, Māori chiefs harnessed tribal ownership – with the communal pooling of resources by different tribal groups – to create commercial advantage in capital-intensive industries, vigorously pursued the acquisition of new technologies, and supported robust trade networks across the Pacific islands and Australia, particularly with New South Wales traders (Henry & Poyser, 2024; Mika, 2014; Monin, 1995; Petrie, 2006), and had even penetrated as far as the Americas and Europe by the mid-1800s (Petrie, 2006). As the export trade moved from flax for rope to kauri gum used for varnish and other commodities, Māori increasingly owned shipping. The importance of establishing effective trade relationships and security were important to Māori as depicted in a letter in 1831 to King William IV (as cited by Keane, 2012). Harris and O'Malley (2017) supported Petrie's claim that He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni (the Declaration of Independence of 1835) is best understood as a document to designed secure economic sovereignty (trade) as political sovereignty, with the former preceding the latter; the intention was always for Māori to have economic independence.

In the period when Māori were the dominant economic group within Aotearoa, the settlers and Europeans were developing trusting reciprocal trade relationships with Māori (Petrie, 2006). Engagement in trade also had other motives; Henry and Poyser (2024) emphasised the importance of not only building financial capital but mana and spiritual capital within trade relations in the so-called "golden period" to 1850, and that the expectation of reciprocity in a gift-based society, where something was given and in return something was expected, remained persistent (Easton, 2020). Cultural identity and belief in values systems shaped the way Māori made economic decisions, for example the principles of rāhui were introduced to protect natural and environmental resources (Whaanga & Wehi, 2017). This practice set prohibitions and restrictions which in effect protected food sources that needed to be replenished, such as shell-fish beds and reserving forests for birdlife for future use and future generations. Māori also sought after partnerships and intermarriage with Pākehā (non-Māori/Europeans) and quite often pragmatically brought Pākehā into tribal and family groups to enhance the mana of the tribe or family (Ashton, 2015) and or to develop economic networks (Puckey, 2011; Wanhalla, 2013). This helped to facilitate trade and communications, and the importation of technologies and knowledge, while also building strong relationships with potential trading partners (O'Malley, 2013). It also escalated the introduction of the musket with devastating impact upon early Māori communities, while at the same time having the impact of driving capacity-building for trade (Crosby, 2020).

The importance of noting these activities is to indicate that Māori were traditionally entrepreneurial and network orientated, and that trade was an important aspect of the socio-economic structures of Māoridom. The history of Māori trading in early colonial Aotearoa is a story of success, and is something which participants to this study acknowledged, felt a connection to and drew inspiration from.

Although the musket wars disrupted trade, commerce and sustainable economic stability for some iwi, other iwi prospered during this period (Crosby, 2020). However, from 1840 the seeds of change had been sown and other systemic factors gradually began to erode Māori economic success. As the cash economy developed, opportunities for Māori began to contract, and the negative impacts of colonisation, such as conflicts over land rights, grew and led to the New Zealand Wars 1840 represented a watershed as the Treaty of Waitangi, or Te Tiriti o Waitangi, set relations between Māori and the colonist on a new track, leading to long-term negative impacts on the Māori economy which effectively impoverished Māori until processes around restitution began more than a century later (Tau & Rout, 2018). British migrants were arriving in Aotearoa in increasing numbers towards the end of the 1830s, and they were primarily focused on settling or acquiring land. The behaviour of some of these settlers and whalers were unfavourable, Māori were also weary of the internal wars amongst themselves, and other colonial powers were

showing interest in the annexation of Aotearoa. Te Tiriti o Waitangi was seen by many as being remedy to settlers acquiring land in an orderly way, as a way to address the lawlessness in the far North, and as a device which could secure the interests of the British Government, and its subjects, while protecting Māori and supporting commercial opportunities (Winter & Jones, 2017). The Treaty is an agreement, in Māori and English, that was made between the British Crown and 540 Māori rangatira. While the Māori version of the Treaty was signed by Māori, there is still significant disagreement about the interpretation and what Māori were signing.

The Treaty is a statement made between British and Māori to live and govern with each other in Aotearoa. It would form the basis of an agreement which would be taken to Māori chiefs right across Aotearoa to validate and support. Three articles form the content of this document. In the English version, Māori cede the sovereignty of Aotearoa to Britain; Māori give the Crown an exclusive right to buy lands they wish to sell, and, in return, are guaranteed full rights of ownership of their lands, forests, fisheries and other possessions; and Māori are given the rights and privileges of British subjects.

However, while the Treaty in Māori was deemed to convey the meaning of the English version, but there are important differences as understood by Māori at the time. Significantly, the word 'sovereignty' was translated as 'kawanatanga', Māori believed they were giving up government over their lands but retaining the right to manage their own affairs. The English version guaranteed 'undisturbed possession' of all their 'properties', but the Māori version guaranteed 'tino rangatiratanga' over 'taonga'. Difference in concepts such as land ownership were fundamental: whilst the Crown saw land as a commodity, the Māori concept of mana whenua held land as a communal resource that could be gifted but never sold (Keenan, 2009).

The Māori perspective on the Treaty was almost completely different from what was written in the English language document, and those who represented the Crown had a very different understanding from Māori. Because of the value of oratory, the explanations were more important than what was written down. Calman et al. (2018) wrote about the te ao Māori view in comparison to a western approach that is highly contractual and transactional. The power of the spoken word or oratory for Māori, who did not write or have a written language, is important in the context that many Māori rangatira (leaders) trusted the spoken words of those who presented the Treaty, as opposed to reading and understanding the words the Treaty contained (Pere, 1991).

The supposed protection afforded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi to protect both Māori and Pākehā was an illusion. Even before the signing of the Treaty, a path of dishonouring commitments to Māori had begun in land purchases and breaches of the Treaty would follow immediately after its signing. The phenomena of colonisation would have such a negative impact upon Māori that they would last for decades and are still felt 184 years later. Broken promises, confiscations and a

determined government designed to undermine Māori became a feature of the first governments after settlement. These indiscretions, and the elevation of Pākehā interests and institutions, only served to create an angst between Māori and Crown which lingers today. The marginalisation of Māori impacted their contribution to the economy. In areas such as Northland the effects were slower to be seen, but in many regions across Aotearoa it was rapid and had a devastating impact upon communities in terms of their economic and social prosperity (Puckey, 2011.)

The resurgence of the Māori economy has to a certain extent been made possible by the renewed focus on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Claims associated with the Te Tiriti o Waitangi have given impetus to some iwi in terms of financial and economic capability. This economic capability has translated into a significant contribution to the overall Māori economy (Fletcher, 2022).

Post-Treaty settlements eventuating from historical claims seeking recompense for these deprivations via the Waitangi Tribunal have assisted the Māori to re-establish a Māori economy (Taylor, 2014). Investments in primary industries served as an initial bedrock for the post-settlement growth of the Māori economy, but at the time of writing this thesis once again the Māori economy is a significant part of the overall economy of Aotearoa. According to the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (2023), He Kai Kei Aku Ringa: Māori-Crown Economic Growth Partnership,, between 2013 to 2018 the Māori economy grew faster than the New Zealand economy; 37% in real growth, compared to national growth in GDP of 20%. The Māori economy is important for the overall growth of Aotearoa and a vibrant Māori economy contributes to Māori well-being while also strengthening the economy of Aotearoa (Husted & Sinkovics, 2021). These are significant facts in terms of the overall economic impact on Aotearoa and the future. The Māori population is younger than the overall Aotearoa population and will impact Aotearoa's working age population in the future. By 2043 people who identify with Māori ethnicity are projected to represent 21% of Aotearoa's population (Stats NZ, 2022).

It is difficult, however, to attribute the growth to international business solely, or quantify this aspect of the Māori economy; however, the size of the Māori economy has been growing rapidly. The initial appraisal by Business and Economic Research Limited in 2013 was $42.6b, which grew to $50b in 2017, and $68.7b in 2018 (BERL, 2021, p. 14). In another report, Chapman Tripp's (2021) *Te Ao Māori – Trend and Insights*, the value is stated to be over $60b and overall growth is 60% over a five year period. Consultants TDB (2023) have produced a report based on iwi growth which indicates that growth is still at reasonable levels despite the pandemic years, with the note that Māori iwi entities have largely relied on property growth and portfolio investments over the last decade. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) surmised that the Māori economy, such as iwi entities, Māori businesses and entrepreneurs will reach $100b by 2030 (New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, n.d.).. Based on the recent rate of growth, this will be

exceeded, indicating there is direct growth in international business for the Māori economy (New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, n.d.). A breakdown of the strength of the Māori economy includes:

- $39.1b held by the 9,880 firms owned by Māori employers,
- $8.6b in the businesses of 18,600 self-employed Māori, and
- $21b in trusts, corporations, and other Māori structures ($14b in the natural resources sector) (BERL, 2021, p. 14).

Māori businesses are seeking to engage with non-Māori companies more often, and there are innovative ways being employed to develop firms or organisations (Clydesdale, 2007; Frederick, 2004; Schoefisch, 2015; TAO, 2016). The New Zealand Government actively promotes the development of international business for Māori and recognises this kaupapa (agenda, plan, purpose) as an important aspect of all trade within Aotearoa (Tirikatene, 2021). These are relevant points when we consider the growth within this sector. The discussion of Māori values as they relate to how Māori work in international business has been increasingly a subject of policy and management interest (Foley, 2010).

It is crucial to note the importance of the Māori economy to Aotearoa as a whole – it is not just Māori who benefit, it is all. Reserve Bank Assistant Governor Chris Hawkesby (2021) emphasised the importance of the Māori economy to all New Zealanders:

> With Māori values becoming an increasingly integral part of Aotearoa New Zealand's society, the future of our economy is Māori, and it is bright…
>
> When I say that the future is Māori, I'm not just talking about Māori people, Māori businesses, or Māori jobs. Perhaps one of the most powerful ways in which Māori will shape the future of Aotearoa New Zealand is through Māori values.

Hawkesby (2021) outlined the importance of values such as manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, and whanaungatanga, which he acknowledges as shaping Māori economic relationships for generations; these values are increasingly being reflected in business. Māori values are at the centre of how Māori businesses and entities conduct international business and all business (Kapa-Kingi, 2022). While the firm has an identity, the decision-makers of Māori firms are very much influenced by their respective belief systems, attitudes to the world they reside in, a te ao Māori perspective which considers whakapapa, kaitiaki and other key values (Henry & Poyser, 2024). There are connections to behavioural approaches when Māori values are considered, and economic theories are distantly removed from the psyche of Māori conducting business because of the absence of these value systems which are intimately intertwined in how Māori view the relationships they develop.

The New Zealand Productivity Commission (2021) in its report *Insight from Māori Frontier Firms* made this statement:

> The Māori economy exhibits many of the characteristics needed for firms to innovate, grow and support improved wellbeing. Figures from Stats NZ show that employment in Māori authorities and SMEs has been growing faster than in the wider economy. Māori authorities and SMEs are more likely to export and have higher rates of innovation and R&D, than other New Zealand firms. (p. 5)

It is worth considering the opportunity for all firms within Aotearoa to learn from Māori entities internationalising and the unique ways of building relationships and developing alliances.

The rationale for this study is therefore seated in the importance of the Māori economy to both Māori and to New Zealand. New Zealand firms rely heavily on internationalisation to seek larger markets and knowledge, but are relatively small, and suffer from resource shortages and a lack the firm-specific advantages which often underpin full foreign direct investment (FDI) forms of overseas market entry. These issues are felt particularly by Māori firms, which can employ alliances to internationalise to overcome the issues that are typical to many globally smaller-sized firms such as resource shortages, capability, capacity and the inexperience of being relative novices in new-market entry. As an example, the size of the Māori entities internationalising, in an environment where they would be deemed to be small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), is important when we consider barriers to entry in internationalisation, as they relate to the firms' capabilities in terms of resources. How do alliances mitigate these challenges and, when we consider internationalisation, do Māori values in relationship formation help assist the international business alliance, while mitigating some of these challenges?

Māori are experiencing significant growth in the fishing, forestry, agricultural, food and beverage industries, tourism, and are utilising rich cultural branding values-based messaging (Rout et al., 2022). Culture is an important part of the growth of Māori business internationally as is seen in the elevation of branding and positioning which is often orientated towards utilising Māori culture. The use of language, tukutuku patterns, design, pūrākau and the rich whakapapa connections which are a big part of how Māori tell their stories is becoming more prominent. The cultural influences in branding and positioning impact firm-level performance significantly in international business, according to Mika and Ross (2019).

According to Haar et al. (2021), there are strong indications that Māori firms are performing with some level of success and have reasonable strategic frameworks in place in most cases. These strategic frameworks are frequently underpinned by Māori values and processes. In relation to this study, there is existing evidence that culture, specifically Māori values embedded in ways of doing or work, is intrinsic to the way Māori businesses build international alliances. Prior research

has suggested that Māori values in international business alliances may be intrinsic to how Māori navigate in developing relationships of trust while they internationalise.

Understanding how Māori build relationships of trust based on Māori values through international business alliances could be invaluable for both Māori and non-Māori engaging in international business activities. Māori entities within the Māori economy are influenced by values systems which are a unique feature of how they act and do business (Manganda et al., 2023). These value systems, when applied in relationship development, may help to mitigate deficiencies in organisations building international business alliances, for example scarcity of resources, size, capability and capacity. Notably, Māori entities doing business internationally offer valuable lessons for other New Zealand companies internationalising, as some argue Māori are eschewing a purely short-term focus on financial performance and shareholder returns for long-term value creation, sustainability and legacy objectives (Mill & Millin, 2021). Māori businesses working in international business alliances are influenced by their cultural disposition and these beliefs, ideals, world views and attitudes are embedded in the way they do business, build relationships and guide decision-making (Mika & Ross, 2019).

The discipline of international business has moved from an initial macro-economic focus on international trade towards a firm-level of analysis attempting to understand modes of market entry and the strategies of multinational enterprises (MNEs). As simple forms of internationalisation such as FDI have given way to increasingly complex networks of international production, characterised by Dunning (1995) as alliance capitalism, building relationships has become an important focus of current research. Therefore, the focus of this research shifts towards the micro-understanding of the motives and processes of internationalisation and the development of competencies in relationship formation by managers and decision-makers for Māori businesses. This study of the development of competencies in the context of relationship formation exhibits how Māori business values are focal in working with non-Māori in an international ventures and Māori would ascribe that by applying these values as a level of success in building relationships in alliances.

The study reviews the complex interdisciplinary literature that has sought to shed light on alliances. Studies have shown the importance of cultural fit, such as in doing business with Chinese, and how FDI is positively related to the cultural fit of the target country and organisation (Buckley et al., 2007); and research streams are beginning to find links between national, organisational and other cultural values with competitive advantage. Research has explored how tacit competencies can be considered assets in the internationalisation process, incorporating concepts such as culture and human and relational capital (Barney et al., 2001). Whilst traditional international business theories are important in explaining alliance types, motives and advantages,

and have increasingly moved towards including a broader set of assumptions, the study examines other fields which explore a wider set of issues.

Casson (2019) indicated that current international business alliance theories are impacted by emerging economies and technology, but these considerations are devoid of any discussion around other world views which may be culturally based. A criticism is that many of the assumptions of international business alliance theories, which are derived from western positivist foundations based on economic theoretical frameworks, understandably do not consider other frameworks, such as world views which are collective in nature and have a focus on sustainability and generations to come (Henry & Poyser, 2024). Recent studies have considered relational perspectives which are non-western, in comparison to western economic theories of internationalisation, and clearly indicate that there is an opportunity to further examine the differences in world views (Kostrykina et al., 2021). The rationale for this research is to clearly present the importance of Māori world views.

There is evidence to suggest that cultural values assist Māori businesses as they internationalise in China (Tonumaipe'a, 2018). Tonumaipe'a found that Māori values supported a network approach to internationalisation in China and the social capital which formed because of values-based relationships. Additionally, there is research exploring the realm of Indigenous spirituality and how values espoused by Māori and other Indigenous societies should be considered in business engagement which permeate through organisations (Harris et al., 2016; Spiller & Wolfgramm, 2015; Spiller et al., 2011). There is definite value in considering the perspectives of Māori from a cross-cultural perspective within the realms of international business theory such as resource-based views, entry mode and strategic alliances. In the context of alliances in international business, SMEs generally have resource limitations. These limitations come in the form of funding, customer reach, higher costs, resilience in times of trial, low bargaining power, a lack of well-trained personnel or staff, and limitations to technology (Sen & Haq, 2010). Ismail et al. (2014) suggested that alliances, relationship development and overall relational strategies help to offset the limitations experienced by SMEs. This is important for Māori businesses which are internationalising in the context of this study, as decisions or strategies by these entities help to mitigate resource limitations through alliance development. Freeman (2006) went on to say that it is a key aspect of how SMEs should craft their actions and develop their respective strategies to improve firm-level performance by establishing strong relational networks and alliances. The SME nature of Māori businesses building alliances in international business relationships supports the premise that relationships built on their respective values and principles are important. It is worth noting at this point what a Māori business or firm looks like in international business. Most Māori businesses are generally small, lack significant resources, may have little experience, and would be defined as more entrepreneurial (Kamalnath, 2021). Haar et

al. (2021) also identified a key aspect of what a Māori enterprise looks like and the difference in human capital and how culture is at the base of everything that is done for a Māori.

Notably, there is business research which supports the premise that Māori principles are a distinct advantage in building relationships internationally. This is found in BERL's (2018) *Making Sense of the Numbers: Precis – Māori Exports, Current and Potential Trade with Pacific Alliance Countries* report, quoted below:

> prevalent in all of the export businesses was the story or narrative about a product is equally as important as the product. It was also apparent that the principles of kaitiakitanga (custodianship or guardianship of resources), pono (integrity), auahatanga (innovation) and whanaungatanga (relationships), are relevant in the international marketplace, and consumers want to know how a company applies principles of sustainability and guardianship in their daily operations. All of the Māori-owned businesses interviewed stated that Māori values make a difference in the success of their business, and their unique story of being a Māori business makes a big difference in the international marketplace. From the interviews it was clear that values and culture are a strength in establishing and maintaining relationships globally, and there was a strong focus on giving back, social development emphasis and whānau/hapū workforce development. (BERL, 2018, p. 15)

The present study certainly affirms the position presented by the BERL report but takes it further in understanding the process applied by Māori businesses in international business alliances, asking what the processes are, and what would a framework look like to embed the benefits of Māori values in international business alliances.

It is also important to understand other important drivers which impact the internationalisation decisions of Māori businesses or firms in international business alliances. Henry and Poyser (2024) have suggested that traditional financial theoretical concepts are incompatible with Indigenous financial concepts. Thus, in the context of this study, there are clear differences and impacts in internationalisation theories which are strongly economically and transactionally based. Research has argued that Māori are culturally nuanced and guided by value systems which help inform them about the way they conduct themselves socially, environmentally, and economically (Ransfield & Reichenberger, 2021).

Hawkesby and Truang (2021) noted the clear evidence in the rise of the importance of incorporating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into investment decisions, these factors having shifted from a niche to standard practice over the past 10 years in capital markets. There is also a propensity among younger generations to adopt these principles, as Hawkesby and Truang (2021, Ki te Ao Mārama section) stated: "Firms which can effectively

generate a virtuous circle of economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, financial inclusion, and cultural diversity are being rewarded for their efforts."

These values are partly acknowledged and leveraged by policymakers. At present, organisations like NZTE use diplomacy to influence and support Māori doing business internationally as well as promoting all business in Aotearoa. As Mika et al. (2019) suggested, Māori influencers in international business rely strongly upon culture and value systems to present narratives which are beneficial to building business and, consequently, this type of approach sits outside of internationalisation theories in terms of process.

Petrie (2006) indicated that Māori were fluid in developing relationships and did not follow staged approaches, the early networked approaches born of alliances and opportunism being characteristic of Māori success in Aotearoa's early settler history. Māori businesses are generally still entrepreneurial by nature, ranking highly on entrepreneur rankings (Kawharu & Tapsell, 2019) and the study examines the international and ethnic entrepreneurship literature for insights. Whilst entrepreneurship studies often examine how individuals create value, it is important to note that Māori theories of value and success are skewed towards collective well-being as opposed to individualistic self-interest, according to Mika et al. (2022). In addition, the economy of mana is important. The exchange of gifts is of value and the practice of gift exchange has significant meaning to Māori. Henare (2018) enlightened to gift exchange or the principle of exchange theory, explaining that exchange theory and gift exchange are propositions whereby the concept of the gift economy is animated by 'hau' or 'the spirit of the gift' and the exchange is part of a fundamental social system. This gift exchange is conducive to and part of an economic system for Māori where the effect of the spirit of the gift creates an indissoluble bond between persons engaged in the exchange. Furthermore, acknowledging whakapapa and whanaungatanga are key values for Māori. Easton (2020) suggested that this gift-based economic perspective was based on important value systems which meant Māori were very successful in trading prior to colonial and settler domination. Māori would present their whakapapa or family ancestry which would tell the recipient about where they came from. It also implied where they belonged to, and their associated rights, which in turn led to obligations. These rights and obligations were established through whanaungatanga and being able to recite whakapapa was an important way to communicate what rights one may have to the land, mountains, rivers, oceans, forests, kumara patches and so on (Williams, 2017). The importance of this was it was less about ownership and more about kinship or relationship. The idea of owning property, mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests was foreign – this was a Pākehā construct (Henry & Poyser, 2024). These values were and are a part of building relationships for Māori and differ from the economics-based theories which have stemmed from western thinking and scholars and still underpin theories of international business. This study reviews theory where appropriate and seeks to understand Māori alliance

formation in its own terms, and both critique and develop our knowledge of how alliances formation processes.

The study identifies nine Māori businesses which are engaged in international business alliances. The examination of how values specific to Māori contribute to successful relationship formation are at the centre of this kaupapa. While research has been conducted into Māori values (Folker, 2014; Henare, 2001; Marsden, 2003; Patterson, 1992; Ransfield, & Reichenberger, 2021; Ruwhiu & Wolfgramm, 2006; Shirres, 1997; Spiller et al., 2011), entrepreneurship (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Henry, 2007, 2011, 2012; Howard, 2002), there is scope to link these subject areas for further analysis. As discussed earlier, Petrie (2006), in *Chiefs of Industry*, clearly identifies the success of Māori internationalisation in the early colonial years, and if Māori value systems played an integral part in that early success, then they are just as relevant now.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study examines the development of relationship formation in international business alliances and the specific case of Māori business values. The study asks:

- What are the attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances from the perspective of Māori businesses?
- What is the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances?

This research focuses on relationship formation in international business alliances from a Māori values perspective. This study examines how Māori businesses develop international business alliances and the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances. These questions have emerged from the growth of Māori businesses in international business alliances and the contribution which Māori businesses and entities are making to the economy of Aotearoa. The way that business is conducted by Māori organisations in international business alliances is important because of the potential to understand how values impact firm-level performance in international business.

1.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter has established that Māori have had a long engagement with international business and trade, and that they utilised community structures, networks, and relationships to further not only short-term commercial and financial objectives, but longer-term intergenerational and other social goals. In the post-Treaty period, the resurgent Māori economy has become a fast-growing and vital part of the New Zealand economy and source of export

earnings, but many of the firms suffer the problems of newly internationalising and SME firms. To overcome these limitations, many firms are seeking international alliances. Firms are also seeking the benefits of alliances such as access to knowledge, complementary assets, markets, enhanced innovation, flexibility and speed. However, the literature stresses the problems inherent in alliances and their high failure rate. Success is enhanced by alliance formation processes focused on partners' alignment, relational assets, and the development of trust. These issues still need further research from the micro-perspective of managerial decision-making. It therefore becomes important for New Zealand businesses and policymakers to better understand how to support internationalisation through networks and alliances, and to investigate whether the long-term values guiding Māori international business are being used, if at all, or whether they are potentially sources of advantage, as some scholars have speculated (Mika, 2014.) To this end, two research questions were posed. The next chapter reviews the literature in more detail.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF THESIS

The thesis is set out in six chapters and these are summarised below:

Chapter 1 / He Kupu Whakataki / Introduction

This chapter has provided the research rationale, an overarching research question, and the contribution and significance of the present study. The chapter reviews key theories in relationship formation and international business that may be relevent to the overall kaupapa of this study.

Chapter 2 / Arotake Tuhinga / Literature Review

This chapter provides an analysis of current literature relating to the processes of internationalisation and competencies as they relate to alliance relationship formation. In doing so, the literature review draws from several disciplines that examine the internationalisation through networks and alliances. The aim of this review is to critique, discuss, argue, and synthesise relevant literature.

Chapter 3 / Hoahoa Rangahau / Research Design

This chapter presents the philosophical assumptions, including the paradigm, methodologies, and methods, which provide the groundwork for this study. As part of these philosophical assumptions, Kaupapa Māori research, with its associated world view, has informed the methodology.

Chapter 4 / Kitenga / Findings

This chapter presents the data from nine case-studies. The findings have been derived from a kōrero perspective in which a narrative is distinctly guided by Kaupapa Māori principles. These

principles include karakia, manaaki, whakapapa and the taonga and mātauranga. It is from this world view that the participants give their perspectives in their respective voices, through which the themes of this study are discussed. The findings were analysed using thematic analysis which identified key themes, which were conceptualised as two overarching principles and five supporting principles. These themes are presented alongside representative evidence from the data.

Chapter 5 / Whakawhitinga Kōrero / Discussion

This chapter discusses the main themes of the interviews conducted from the prior chapter. The key themes, conceptualised as principles, are evaluated and analysed against the literature presented on internationalisation and relationship formation from a Māori values perspective, in seeking to develop, critique and amend a new theory. A process framework of International Tikanga Business Alliance is proposed.

Chapter 6 / Kupu Whakamutunga / Conclusion

A summary is provided which identifies the key findings and limitations of the research. The contributions to theory, policy and managerial practice are reviewed. Recommendations are presented and opportunites for future research are discussed.

CHAPTER 2 / AROTAKE TUHINGA / LITERATURE REVIEW

Ka to he ra, ka rere he ra.

A sun sets, a day is born. No sooner is one day over than another begins.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores existing literature on the internationalisation of the firm with a focus on alliances, starting within the discipline of international business and broadening out to encompass related fields that have explored this area, such as international and ethnic entrepreneurship. In addition, the chapter also reviews literature on Māori values in the context of business relationships and the internationalisation process.

2.2 INTERNATIONALISATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Ka mahi te momo tino tangata - Well done, offspring of a worthy man.

International business as a research field originated in the early twentieth century, at first drawing largely on economics to focus on international trade (Knight & Liesch, 2016). This expanded rapidly to examine the actions of firms, especially in relation to export activities, FDI, technology, and the management of transnational corporations, still largely drawing on economic models and frameworks (Casson, 2016). Theories were transactional by nature (Dunning, 1980). John Dunning laid the foundations for firm-level internationalisation theories with a resilient analytical framework which explicitly or implicitly underlies much of the international business scholarship. Internalisation theory has devolved into several 'streams', each of which originates from particular epistemic communities while providing a base framework for those more broadly interested in its application to real-world challenges (Narula et al., 2019). Narula et al. (2019) have suggested that transaction cost considerations, as espoused by Dunning, have been extended in the bundling and recombination of assets across diverse contexts, the theoretical challenges of (bounded) rationality and the increasing disconnect between ownership, control and responsibility, including cultural considerations. The importance of Dunning's work, however, cannot be understated as these recent developments point to new research frontiers for scholars

looking to apply or advance internalisation theory, particularly around economic models, and methods (Casson, 2016).

In considering these recent developments, it is important to understand the basis of these theories and how they relate to how Māori build relationships outside of firm-level cost considerations. The internationalisation of the firm is the process in which an organisation engages in the international marketplace and in its gradual involvement within the international global market (Johanson & Vahlne, 1990). Perspectives from several extant theories present different contexts around the development of internationalisation research, as follows:

1) The economic perspective, where theories of the MNE and FDI approaches are determined by the costs involved for foreign market entry; generally, these studies aim to explain the international production of MNEs (Dunning, 1980, 1993).
2) The behavioural perspective, which embraces internationalisation process theories, where internationalisation is an incremental process and there is an interplay between learning and commitment (e.g., Cavusgil, 1980; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977).
3) The relational perspective, which aligns with the current research topic and sits within network theory, where internationalisation is a process of initiating, developing and sustaining relationships to establish a position in a foreign market network. This may also apply to cross-cultural relationship building in any setting (e.g., Johanson & Mattsson, 1988).
4) The entrepreneurial perspective on born global firms, also known as international entrepreneurship theory (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 1996; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994).

The economic and behavioural approaches are discussed in the following sections, 2.2.1–2.2.10, to give some historical context to the current research, while the relational perspective is also analysed in its current form as it relates to relationship formation.

The relational perspective is important in the context of this research as it relates to Māori entities building international business alliances, where Māori values are very much relationship-orientated and culturally rooted (Mika & Ross, 2019). This approach connects values to relationship development and how an alliance is developed when we consider Indigenous entrepreneurship (Manganda et al., 2023). Furthermore, for Māori entities which are relatively new to international markets and internationalisation, utilising international business alliances can help to enable the firm to gain resources and market power, and leverage competencies (Mika et al., 2022). Thus, smaller firms, or firms which are internationalising for the first time, may accomplish certain goals in a short time and experience success in international markets through effectively managing these international business alliances from a relational perspective (Jalali,

2023; Nyamrunda & Freeman, 2021.) It is alliances and networks that are important from a relational perspective and, in the context of this study and in the field of international business, these disciplines have more recently developed from the traditional economic approaches to the scholarship of internationalisation (Bolivar et al., 2023; Choi et al., 2022; Hendrikse et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2021).

2.2.1 The Economic Approach to Internationalisation

This research considers how Māori entities develop international business alliances while applying Māori values. Additionally, the research considers economic approaches in internationalisation because of the initial focus on the nature of the company or firm. The roots of an economic approach in internationalisation come from mainstream economics, as Dunning (1980) has maintained, and internationalisation's focal points have traditionally been at industry level to firm level (Andersson, 2000). The assumption that firms are quasi-rational in their choice of investments is at its core, along with the idea that the key decision-makers have access to perfect information when rational decisions are made and that they will choose the most favourable solutions (Andersson, 2000; Buckley et al., 2007).

The two fundamental aspects of international production in this approach are the ownership of assets employed in production activities in different countries, and the location pattern of such activities (Benito & Gripsrud, 1992). The economic approach is inorganic or lacks responsiveness, i.e., a firm's foreign expansion is examined as a series of static choices, where individual investment decisions are treated as discrete phenomena, dictated by efficiency considerations and relative cost and benefits (Benito & Gripsrud, 1992; Clark et al., 1997). The mechanical and restrictive nature of this approach is reflected when we consider the cost and benefits of specific investment opportunities regarding the economic and competitive constraints operating in a market, where there is little room for managerial discretion (Buckley et al., 2007). Notably, it is argued that various decision-makers can make different strategic decisions in the same situation, and this is not acknowledged in the economic approach (Andersson, 2000). The hierarchy of the decision for choice of location for foreign investment is a deliberate decision, it is efficiency-led and made with the primary goal of profitability (Buckley et al., 2007); however, it may relate to secondary goals, such as asset seeking or protection (Buckley et al., 2007).

Economic theories have followed a rational course based on risk minimisation and profit maximisation; thus, a company will choose the location for its investment that minimises total cost, and offers ease of entry and technology equity, which are important regarding how location, costs, the issue of developed nation versus emerging nation, and investment work together (Nishiyama & Yamaguchi, 2013). Elements such as labour cost differentials, transportation costs,

the existence of tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as government policy, are important determinants of location choice (Benito & Gripsrud, 1992).

Notably, the dynamic human experience factor is treated as a cost component in the market, because it is seen as more cost consuming to control foreign operations when the company has little experience in the market. The importance of experience cannot be underestimated and acts as a determinant of location decisions concerning FDIs (Benito & Gripsrud, 1992).

These theories treated firms as "black boxes" in a static environment. It was this lack of realism that prompted Raymond Vernon to look more closely at the dominant comparative-cost-advantage theory by emphasising the role of product innovation, the effects of scale economies and the role of uncertainty in influencing trade patterns across national borders (Melin, 1992). Vernon's (1966, 2004) international product life cycle model, IPLC model (also known as the model of sequential decision-making) also influenced the emerging empirical literature on international marketing and multinational expansion (Buckley & Ghauri, 2004). The theory proposed an incremental internationalisation path based on a systematic and predictable sequence (Kwon & Hu, 1995; Sikorsky & Menkhoff, 2000) where the form of entry into foreign markets depends on the life stage of the traded products (Galán & González-Benito, 2001). The model holds that companies go through incremental stages from export to FDI (Melin, 1992; Sakarya et al., 2007) where products typically pass through the phase of introduction, growth, and maturity (Almor et al., 2006). This approach led to research further attempting to explain why and how firms internationalise.

2.2.2 The Transaction Cost Approach

As we establish the whakapapa or history of internalisation theory, we see the transaction cost approach began to offer insights about the mode of internationalisation. Drawing on pioneering work, this field developed to examine internationalisation mode choices developed from Williamson's (1975) seminal work in the domain of transaction cost economics (TCE). TCE suggests there are conditions under which it is more efficient for a firm to create an internal market rather than enter foreign ones and the conditions under which they operate are the transaction costs of foreign activities. Coase (1937) maintained that in a perfect market, transactions are carried out free of transaction costs because: (1) information is freely available, (2) decision-making is rational, (3) there are always alternative suppliers and buyers, and (4) specific transactions have no carry-over effects between two parties from one period to the next. The transaction cost approach tries to explain the institutional form of those transactions (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988) and the approach assumes that an MNE has developed a firm-specific advantage in its home market. Most commonly this is represented in the form of internally developed

intangible assets, primarily some form of know-how, that give the firm some superior production, product, marketing and/or management knowledge.

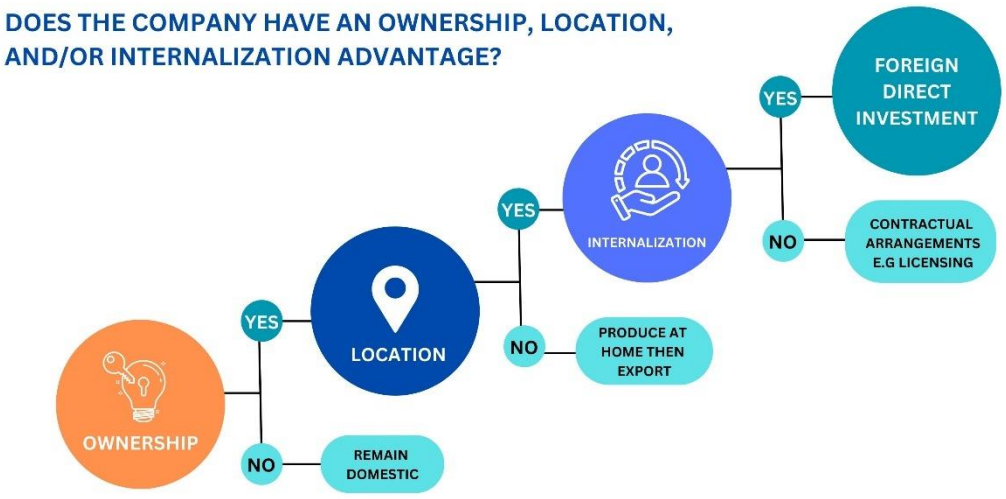
There is a high level of transaction cost which results in a preference for internalising the transaction (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988; Madhok, 1997). Foreign markets will be supplied by exports, licensed sales, or some other form of international activity (Anastassopoulos & Traill, 1998). Under internalisation there are associated administrative and risk-taking costs, and these costs will be lower the less different the foreign market is from the home market. In effect this approach predicts that international expansion will start in nearby markets (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988) and, accordingly, the transaction cost approach prompts firms to choose the organisational form and location for which overall transaction costs are minimised (Coviello & Martin, 1999). Finally, the characteristics of a transaction are analysed, and the efficient management of transactions is viewed to be at the heart of the firm's competitiveness (Madhok, 1997). Transaction costs theory (TCT) is relatively important in the context of this study because of its relevance to the study of MNEs, their entry mode choices and location selection. From a TCE perspective, alliances are problematic – at best considered a 'hybrid' form of organisation. Internalisation theory, as developed in a parallel research stream by Buckley and Casson (1976), also found hybrid approaches problematic. The overt economic determinism of this approach also stimulated research aimed at examining the social conditions and managerial considerations in internationalisation (Granovetter, 1985) and the benefits of cooperative forms of organisation (Gulati, 1998, 1990).

2.2.3 Dunning's Eclectic Theory

John H. Dunning examined market entry modes with a focus on the MNE and its behaviour, and put forward the concept of the eclectic paradigm of international production in 1976. Dunning's objective was to offer a holistic framework by which it was possible to identify and evaluate the significance of the factors influencing both the initial act of foreign production by enterprises and the growth of this production (Dunning, 1988). In this Dunning drew heavily on TCE and internationalisation theory, but the eclectic nature of this model is reflected by way in which it integrates distinct explanatory approaches from different theories into one single framework (Ekeledo & Sivakumar, 1998; Glückler, 2006). This seminal work and subsequent research (Dunning, 1977, 2004) set out a systemic explanation of the foreign activities of enterprises in terms of their ability to internalise markets to their advantages. The firm-specific advantage emphasis would sprout and take root in the MNE's need for some advantages to compensate for the costs of foreignness (Buckley & Ghauri, 2004; Buckley et al., 1992). At the core of this theory was the premise that the firm's decisions to enter a foreign market and the choice of entry type depend on a combination of three advantages that are necessary conditions for entry into foreign

markets (Dunning, 1988). These advantages are ownership-specific advantages (O-advantage), location-specific advantages (L-advantages) and internalisation-specific advantages (I-advantage), as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Eclectic Paradigm



In the first place, a firm must have a specific ownership advantage, where an organisation has access to tangible and intangible assets that foreign competitors do not possess or do not have in the same measure (Ekeledo & Sivakumar, 1998; Mtigwe, 2006).

The O-advantage neutralises the general "liability of foreignness" that comes from operating at a distance as well as compensating for the familiar superior competitive position of rival domestic firms in the target market (Benido & Gripsrud, 1992). There are several benefits to O-advantages in the assets and skills that the firm possesses, such as firm size, multinational experience, and ability to develop and market a differentiated product (Ekeledo & Sivakumar, 1998). Experience and knowledge are key aspects of O-advantages in that increased knowledge of a foreign country reduces both the cost and the uncertainty of operating in a foreign market, while experience creates increased market knowledge and uncertainty reduction, therefore experience is considered an O-advantage (Benido & Gripsrud, 1992). This is a significant point as it supports the future development of alliances and relational assets in the context of this study when we begin to consider the importance of alliances and relationship development for Māori entities internationalising.

Secondly, the firm must have location specific advantages which reflect the advantages that a firm gains by placing its production, or part thereof, in foreign locations (Mtigwe, 2006). Part of

this process is for the firm to identify and evaluate the suitability of the target market with respect to its fit with the firm's strategy (Ekeledo & Sivakumar, 1998; Glückler, 2006).

Finally, there are internalisation advantages which refer to the benefits of retaining assets and skills within the firm. I-advantages accrue to firm from the internal use of its O-advantages rather than renting them out to external parties in the form of licensing agreements or franchising; this can provide the firm with advantage over rivals (Mtigwe, 2006). In congruence with the theory, internalisation is an alternative organisational strategy to reduce transaction costs and imperfections of markets and transportation costs (Glückler, 2006). Because of this, firms must assess whether the O-advantage can best be realised through internalisation (I-advantage), or through the external cooperative or market transaction (Glückler, 2006). This theory became the dominant theory in international business, but increasingly attracted criticism as the environment and the strategies of MNEs changed, such as the increasing use of alliances by firms and the importance of technology. Dunning himself reviewed the theory several times to update it. Significantly, Dunning (1998) accepted that the rapid growth of strategic asset-seeking FDI, which is geared less to exploiting existing O-specific advantages than to acquiring them from other firms. Additionally, in Dunning's view, the location preferences of firms have also changed and MNEs are increasingly seeking locations which offer the best economic and institutional facilities for their core competencies to be efficiently utilised. Dunning moved toward trying to explain the increasing patterns of cooperative structures in international business as "alliance capitalism" (Buckley & Dunning, 1994; Dunning, 1995).

2.2.4 RBV and Competitive Advantage

Before examining "alliance capitalism" in more detail, it is worth looking more closely at the research in strategic management which underpinned much of the understanding of firm competencies and firm-specific assets, particularly the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm. This has been described as a managerial framework to help determine strategic resources which may provide a competitive advantage to the firm, and that the exploitation of these resources can lead to a sustainable competitive advantage, borrowing the term derived from Porter's (1985) research. A key aspect of the RBV is that a firm's competitive advantage is a function of a set of firm-specific resources and capabilities that are unique, valuable, and/or rare, , where there may be no commonly available substitutes (Barney, 1991). As a firm's resource endowments may be unevenly distributed or not easily transferred, a competitive advantage may be exploited. For example, informal institutional constraints which include values and norms may have an influence on the actions of employees, managers, partners, and clients (North, 1990). Research has explored

how tacit competencies can be considered assets in the internationalisation process, incorporating concepts such as culture and human and relational capital (Barney et al., 2001).

Whilst a critique of the RBV was that it is also static and has an overly economic focus on the level of the firm, scholars began to ask how it could be applied to alliances and consider whether organisational culture could be considered a source of competitive advantage (Barney, 1986.) A particular criticism was that the firm was isolated from its environment, at a time that scholars in strategy could see the business environment was undergoing rapid change, as the same criticism was being levelled at OLI theory.

A research stream addressed these criticisms by extending the insights of the RBV to the dynamic capability perspective developed by David Teece et al. (1997). The dynamic capability perspective espouses three dynamic capabilities as necessary for an organisation to deal with new challenges: (1) the ability of employees to learn quickly and to build new strategic assets; (2) the integration of these new strategic assets, including capability, technology, and customer feedback, into company processes; and (3) the transformation or reuse of existing assets which have depreciated. This approach gives more importance and agency to knowledge and managers, and the use of alliance and acquisition to bring new strategic assets into the firm from external sources sets. More emphasis was also placed on the co-specialisation of assets, human resources, and the intellectual property of a company (Douma & Schreuder, 1992). There is also a relationship between human resource thinking or theories of employee motivation and the RBV which explains the reasons for performance and motivation (De Saa Perez & Falcón, 2004).

Surprisingly, it has been suggested that people in change or transformation environments are likely to respond positively to innovation, sustainability, and improvement; however, this does not mean that it is not traumatic to the individual or groups of people (Brown & Lambert, 2013). The importance of people-related competencies gives weight to the concept that people, their values, culture and work ethic are the edge required in competitive advantage. For example, Youndt et al. (1996) commented that “In fact, numerous researchers have recently noted that people may be the ultimate source of sustained advantage since traditional sources related to market, financial capital, and scale economies have been weakened by globalisation and other economic changes” (p. 839).

2.2.5 Alliance Capitalism

The characteristics of successful alliances reflect certain engagement patterns in how firms interact, and these interactions include how organisations move within their own environments where suppliers, customers and competitors are part of the networks within alliances. A firm that is part of an alliance may have at its disposal the ability to impose a degree of control in a

relationship that is deemed legitimate by both parties, and a firm may rely upon its collective capacity to persuade, coerce, accommodate, and collaborate for beneficial outcomes to the alliance. Dunning (1995) has described this type of behaviour as alliance capitalism, where alliances may involve a variety of different partners and, importantly, where one partner may influence another based on their ability to elucidate a way forward which is beneficial to both parties. These alliances are strategic in nature.

Strategic alliances are agreements between two or more independent companies to cooperate in the production, development, or scale of goods and services or other business objectives. For example, in a strategic alliance, company A and company B combine their respective resources, capabilities, and core competencies to generate mutual interests in designing, producing selling, marketing, or distributing goods or services.

There is an emphasis on successful strategic alliances and how they have become increasingly relevant as the internationalisation of the firm continues to expand. The characteristics of these alliances reflect certain engagement patterns in how firms interact. These interactions will include how organisations move within their own environments where suppliers, customers and competitors are part of the networks within alliances. These alliances may be more mature or formingand, additionally, there are numerous academic definitions of strategic alliances. Gulati (1998a) has defined a strategic alliance as "a purposive relationship between two or more independent firms that involves the exchange, sharing, or co-development of resources or capabilities to achieve mutually relevant benefits" (p. 619). Ireland et al. (2002) suggested that strategic alliances are "cooperative arrangements between two or more firms to improve their competitive position and performance by sharing resources" (p. 413), while Wittmann et al. (2009) pinpointed strategic alliances as "collaborative efforts between two or more firms in which the firms pool their resources in an effort to achieve mutually compatible goals that they could not achieve easily alone" (p. 743). However, although there are numerous definitions, the commonalities in definition remain the same in that the strategic alliance is about two or more parties who cooperate and share resources with the express purpose of improving performance via learning, knowledge sharing, risk mitigation and generally creating opportunities to build competitiveness.

Unsurprisingly, a firm which is part of an alliance may have at its disposal the ability to impose a degree of control in a relationship that is deemed legitimate by both parties. A firm may rely upon its collective capacity to persuade, coerce, accommodate, and collaborate for beneficial outcomes to the alliance. This dynamic should be noted as Dunning (1999) has described this type of behaviour as alliance capitalism where alliances may involve a variety of different partners.

An aspect of this relationship is where a partner may influence another based on its ability to elucidate a way forward which is beneficial to both parties. Dagnino & Padula, (2002) succinctly pointed out that:

> *they can occur between functional departments and/or subsidiaries within the same firm, between firms and their competitors, between complementary firms such as suppliers, customers, subcontractors and distributors, between private firms and public institutions such as universities and regional and national governments, between different kinds of public institution, or between firms and other stakeholders and interest groups which operate within market-based systems of accumulation such as consumers, trades unions and environmentalists. (p. 2)*

It is the combined concept of leveraging capabilities and capacity that earmarks the traditional strategic alliance approach. This characteristic of the alliance in terms of networks is reflected in the interaction which often involve a combination of two or more of the entities listed in the quote above combining to achieve some type of advantage or positive outcome. They can leverage their combined capabilities or capacities. It is important to note in the context of this study that alliances may vary in terms of their formality and governance structures and could appear to be informal rather than contractual.

Notwithstanding these observations, strategic alliances can have different structures based on the type of relationship between partnering companies or firms in the alliance (Kale & Singh, 2009). They can be divided into contractual agreements which can be further broken down in terms of traditional contracts and non-traditional contractual partnerships where these could take the form of joint R&D ventures, joint marketing, joint manufacturing, and arrangements to access mutually complementary assets or skills and standard setting. One can also add in equity arrangements, which can be sub-divided into no creation of new firms and the creation of separate entities. Furthermore, there is the capability to subdivide into minority equity investment and equity swaps in terms of no creation of new firms. Kale and Singh (2009) have indicated that this contrasts with the creation of separate entities, which can be divided into joint ventures, 50-50 joint ventures and unequal ventures. This new understanding and acceptance of a plurality of entry modes and organisational forms stimulated research in several related disciplines, which are examined in turn. However, the final contribution of Dunning from this perspective was to try to integrate the competencies required for successful alliances into O factors as types of "relational capital", again using the eclectic nature of his approach to draw on research which had gained ground since his initial OLI theory.

2.2.6 Relational Capital

Scholars in corporate strategy have been theorising that organisations comprise a body of knowledge. The transition from the industrial age to the information age highlighted knowledge was becoming a key driver of the competitive success of firms and an understanding that this knowledge must be managed effectively by people and organisations to ensure that the valuable capacities created are maintained (Bohn, 1994). Zack (1999) suggested that the ability to create knowledge, and to continue learning from it, is a competitive advantage mainly because the innovative knowledge which evolves today will be core knowledge tomorrow. In theorising this, Zack said that knowledge is not the only intangible resource and asset of interest to organisations – it is a form of intellectual capital, which includes those intangible assets of an organisation that are not recorded in financial statements, but which may constitute 80% of the market value of the organisation (Zack, 1999). The intellectual capital alluded to includes the following: human capital; the knowledge and skills of individuals; structural capital, such as the property of the organisation; processes; information in a database; and, finally, relational capital which represents the relationships that an organisation has with its clients/customers and the environment (Day, 2000; Saint-Onge, 1996; Stewart, 1997).

Research into intellectual capital appears to be relatively recent in that it began in the mid-1990s when researchers tried to investigate and explain its various aspects (Alcaniz et al., 2011). In an initial classification provided by Edvinsson (1997), intellectual capital was defined as being of two types: human and structural capital. Edvinsson (1997) explained customer capital and any relationships with the customers built over time are sub-categories of structural capital. However, customer capital was renamed relational capital by authors such as Bontis (2002) and Cañibano et al. (2002) on the basis that it should include not only an organisation's relationships with its customers but also with any other third parties that are engaged with the firm. In other words, relational capital includes both business to business (B2B) and business to customer (B2C) relations and is defined as knowledge embedded in the value chain of the organisation, or the knowledge identified in the relationships of the firm with its suppliers, clients, and entities outside the firm (Bontis, 2002).

The perspective on relational capital as espoused by Dunning (1997) has led to its definition as the sum of the actual and potential knowledge and resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). There has been some variance in the definitions given by researchers in that there are differentiations between the structural and relational dimensions of a social network (Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998). From the concept of the inter-organisational realm (Kale et al., 2000, p. 218), relational capital is determined as the level of mutual trust, respect and friendship that arises

out of close interactions between alliance partners. Thus, relational capital focuses on trust and close interactions and takes on the form of multifold co-operations with partners in inter-organisational relationships (Griffith & Harvey, 2004; Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998).

Trust is apparent when one party has confidence in another party's reliability and integrity (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Importantly, Granovetter (1985) has suggested that economic actions and benefits are embedded in social relationships, and close relational interactions are the channels for information, knowledge, and resource flows (Tsai & Ghoshal, 1998). It is worth noting that relational capital has been recognised as an important aspect of the success and outcomes of an international joint venture and it is the intangible assets of relationships that may be as important as tangible resources which are allocated to this type of endeavour (Thuy, & Quang, 2005).

These essentially economic approaches to understanding international business proposed theories examining patterns and modes of internationalisation and entry modes they embraced developments from the literature, they acknowledged emerging research from other domains which was also interested in the increasing use of alliances and understanding market entry.

2.2.7 The Behavioral Approach to Internationalisation

Organisational theory is the base from which the process approach has evolved; it is also referred to as the behavioural approach of internationalisation. It is a movement from an economic standpoint to a behavioural standpoint where the economic person has now been replaced by the behavioural person (Andersen, 1993; Andersson, 2000). Dunning (1997) revised the eclectic approach to acknowledge the importance of the behavioural context as it related to alliances and relational assets. Earlier theories focused on a nation or a firm whereas later theories and models from the behavioural approach treated individual learning and top managers as important aspects in understanding a firm's international behaviour (Andersson, 2000). Further research considered the experiences of family-owned businesses which internationalise and the strong link to a behavioural approach in internationalisation (Leppäaho & Jack, 2021). This contrasts with the MNEs which have more resources and capacity to enter markets. The Māori organisations working internationally and developing alliances would tend to be like an SME or a family-owned business with constraints in resources.

There is significant importance attached international experience, which has an impact on the direction of internationalisation since, from a behavioural approach perspective, the role of organisational knowledge in the internationalisation process has been elevated (Clercq et al., 2005). As discussed, the internationalisation process is viewed as a sequence of activities by

which companies acquire experience and knowledge about external markets through the gradual commitment of resources and learning by doing (Seifert & Machado-da-Silva, 2007). The shift from being an entity to a decision-maker is a stark contrast, in that the decision-maker's knowledge of foreign markets, and the perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes born out of this knowledge, or lack of it, take on an important emphasis (Erramilli & Rao, 1990). Several models have attempted to use the behavioural approach in explaining the internationalisation process of firms. Some of the best known are Aharoni's Decision-Making Model, the Uppsala Model and relational perspectives, and each of these is considered in the context of this study.

2.2.8 Aharoni's Decision-Making Model

As the research on MNEs extended itself, some of the earlier research from the likes of Yair Aharoni (1966, 2004) would be expanded to address the decision processes of MNEs (Boddewyn, 1983; Li et al., 2004; Westerman, 2006). Aharoni deviated from classic economic rationality and instead applied the behavioural theory of the firm to FDI research (Li et al., 2004). Aharoni (1966, 2004) argued that the purpose behind delving into the behavioural approach was to identify the reasons behind foreign investment and how a company manages this activity. Again, this research was still directed at firm level and did little to address decision-making at the micro-level. As Aharoni maintained this firm level focus, he looked at the environmental and organisational factors influencing the decision-making process within the firm (Sykianakis & Bellas, 2005) and proposed that foreign investment decisions were characterised by complex social processes that were influenced by social relationships, both within and outside the firm. Rich descriptions of individual and organisational behaviour over time were highlighted and showed the crucial effects of perception and uncertainty (Buckley & Ghauri, 2004).

The processes and results of decision-making stem from a chain of events, incomplete information, the activities of different persons and a combination of motivating forces. It is fair to say that the impact of any one of these forces depends on the social system it encounters and on various feelings, social and organisational structures, on previous events in the company's history and on other problem areas facing the company at the time this force is encountered (Aharoni, 1966, 2004). Aharoni maintained that these approaches, while firm-level orientated, elevated the importance of the individual's behaviour within the organisation and, in the context of this study, that work shows social processes are important when we consider how Māori build relationships of trust based on value systems.

2.2.9 The Uppsala Model

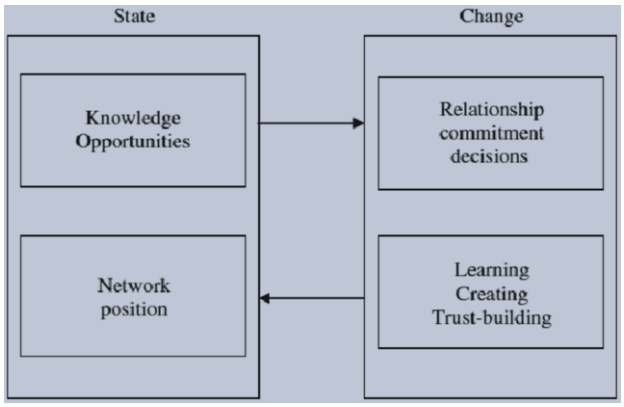
The Uppsala Model is one of the most important and most influential models in the field of internationalisation. The model is a natural progression from the work of Aharoni and,

consequently, themes within the model were drawn from this decision-making model. The main themes are the nature of a firm's behaviour with regard to different foreign establishment sequences related to markets and entry modes. The model states that it is incremental learning at the firm level which is the main factor explaining a firm's international behaviour and decision-making process (Andersson, 2000; Collinson & Houlden, 2005). Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) found that, when internationalising, the firm progresses through a distinct and rigid pattern of steps and the flow of information between the firm and the market is crucial in the internationalisation process, where they put heavy emphasis on the concept of "psychic distance", which is the cultural distance between spatially separated units of the firm. The article byy Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) served as the basis of the research that has been encapsulated in what we know today as the Uppsala Model of the internationalisation process (Buckley & Ghauri, 2004).

Because of the gradual nature of acquiring knowledge, international expansion takes place incrementally (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003). Johanson and Vahlne (2006) emphasised that this model has often been misunderstood, and the Uppsala Model is not "the establishment chain" showing progression from ad hoc exports to the establishment of manufacturing subsidiaries (i.e., "stage" models). More important is that the acquisition of personal experience comes via the separation of objective knowledge from experiential knowledge, and this is a standout feature of the Uppsala Model. The importance of this theory in internationalisation is that the Uppsala Model therefore underscores the critical role of information acquisition in the incremental progression of the firm along the internationalisation path, leading to reduced levels of uncertainty regarding foreign markets and operations (Leonidou & Katsikeas, 1996). The model's primary message is on learning and commitment building and on the interplay between knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments.

These more recent revisions to the Uppsala Model, with a focus on the commitment decision based on the learning relationship, creating trust, continue to move the focus away from firm-level to the importance of decision-makers. This is important in terms of the focus of this study with the decision-makers within Māori businesses being at the forefront of how Māori businesses decide to enter markets, including the way they engage in markets and, specifically for Māori, how culture plays a significant part in how they may conduct themselves (Staniland et al., 2021). The emphasis begins to move to the importance of alliances and networks, particularly when we consider Māori entities moving into international business while building international alliances.

Figure 2. The Uppsala Model – Networks, Alliances & Relationships



2.2.10 A Relational Perspective

The relational perspective has evolved from the Uppsala school and partly from inter-organisational theory originating from theories in sociology. These relational perspectives become important when considering the idea that Māori firms view relationally orientated alliances as important in their internationalisation choices (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2018). According to relationship perspectives, two or more connected business relationships are then regarded as forming a business network (Emerson, 1981). Johanson and Vahlne (2009) indicated that the business environment should be viewed as a web of alliances, relationships, and networks. The concept of outsidership, in relation to the relevant network, more than psychic distance, would be the root of uncertainty. Off-setting some of these challenges are principles of trust-building and knowledge creation, the latter recognising the fact that new knowledge is developed in relationships and that relationship building is key to success in internationalisation. The importance of insidership in relevant network(s) in internationalisation versus liability of outsidership is a key concept of relationship formation and success. Relationships offer potential for learning and for building trust and commitment, both of which are preconditions for internationalisation and cultural understanding (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009).

The "innovation-related internationalisation models" (I-Models) encompassed several studies (Lim et al., 1991; Reid, 1981). Anderson (1981) would label them I-Models in contrast to U-models, as they viewed export as an innovation of the firm. U-Models primarily concentrate on firm-level analysis, neglecting the role of individual decision-makers and the impact of cultural values on the process. The overall premise of the theories associated with these models is that the firm goes through a series of innovations and the primary focus is on how these export developments impact the SME (Clark et al., 1997; Leonidou & Katsikeas, 1996). Both the U-Models and I-Models have been criticised for the staged approach, which is too "deterministic" and of little value (Koed & Servais 1997; Reid, 1983). At the heart of this criticism is the view that the conventional internationalisation 'stage' theories do not sufficiently explain the

internationalisation of the firm, especially those firms which internationalise rapidly, or 'born global firms' (Knight & Cavusgil, 1996).

The network approach thus takes on some significance to the firm in relationship development because it advocates descriptions of the surrounding network of the firm (Björkman & Forsgren, 2000). Johanson and Mattsson (1993) suggested that the strength of the network approach is that it explains the development process rather than the existence of the international firm. Significantly, the changing focus of theory has moved from firm level to networks/alliances which moved the level of analysis towards managers.

There is some empirical support (Ford, 2002) for the development process, but there are also some limitations. As an example, it has been criticised for being too descriptive including holistic and thus limited in its usefulness in understanding the internationalisation pattern of firms (Björkman & Forsgren, 2000). Once again it is also seen as focused on larger and manufacturing firms. The lack of research into the decision-maker and firm characteristics (Chetty & Holm, 2000) has also generated some criticism. Network theory is considered highly applicable when studying SMEs, as SMEs use their network relationships to conquer size-related barriers that restrain their growth (Coviello & McAuley, 1999; Coviello & Munro, 1997). Coviello and Munro (1997) and Chetty and Holm (2000) pointed out that understanding the network of firms is an important way to understand how firms internationalise. Through the natural exchange of information or engagement in internationalisation through a network approach, firms can spur their internationalisation (Chetty & Agndal, 2007), not to mention that Meyer and Skak (2002) implied that foreign market entry is triggered by opportunities arising in the existing network.

2.3 INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESS THEORIES

Internationalisation process theories acknowledge the importance of networks, alliances, entrepreneurship, trust development and relational capital as central to internationalisation, while identifying that internationalisation processes can be maintained for non-rational reasons, particularly in the case of born globals (Ault et al. 2021; Freixanet & Renart, 2020; Gammeltoft & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2021; Rober, 2020). However, there continues to be an emphasis on the importance of insidership in relevant network(s) in internationalisation versus the liability of outsidership as a key concept of relationship formation and success.

Relationships offer potential for learning and for building trust and commitment, both of which are preconditions for internationalisation and cultural understanding (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009). The contribution of U-model research cannot be understated in that it has influenced an extensive body of work around the world in internationalisation and this subsequent empirical research highlighted the value of knowledge in export market development.

The focus in this stream of research started to move away from firms towards networks. As a firm works within foreign markets, relationships are developed with partners in foreign networks, and this process is driven by the firm's efforts to create value through coordinating their activities (Holm et al., 1996). As a result of this activity, relational networks can be formed. The advantage of this type of relational activity is the ability of the firm to build capability and competitive advantage by access to resources, markets, information, and technologies (Gulati et al., 2000). From a relational network perspective, the implications are positive in that the internationalisation process provides several advantages which help determine the success of internationalisation through alliances, which may be: (1) firms are more able to specialise in core businesses of the value chain, which allows for improvements in efficiency, with potential for scale and scope economies; (2) firms within an alliance or network have the flexibility of not having fixed commitments to activities which are non-essential, and this nimbleness is a competitive advantage; (3) transaction costs can be reduced; and (4) there is greater access to key resources from the market environment (Jarillo, 1988; Johanson & Mattsson, 1988). Managing the internationalisation process of firms has become a key aspect of doing business internationally (Forsgren, 2015). In the context of this study, which considers the process of internationalisation of a firm utilising networks and alliances, researching the development of relational capital for Māori entities doing business internationally is important in understanding how Māori values may impact this process.

2.3.1 Network Theories of Internationalisation

A broad-based interdisciplinary stream of research began to examine networks rather than firms as the level of analysis. As discussed, earlier Johanson and Vahlne (2009) argued that the international business environment should be viewed as a web of alliances, relationships, and networks. Concepts of outsidership, in relation to the relevant networks, more than psychic distance, were identified as the real roots of uncertainty. Principles of trust-building and knowledge creation were added, the latter recognising the fact that new knowledge is developed in relationships and that relationship building was key to success in internationalisation. The importance of insidership in relevant network(s) in internationalisation versus the liability of outsidership is a key concept of relationship formation and success. Relationships offer potential for learning and for building trust and commitment, both of which are preconditions for internationalisation and cultural understanding (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009), an insight which was broadened to a network model of internationalisation (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988)

From this perspective, as a firm works within foreign markets, relationships are developed with partners in foreign networks, and this process is driven by the firm's efforts to create value through coordinating its activities (Holm et al.,1996). As a result of this activity, relational

networks can be formed. Trust becomes an important part of the stability and formation of the network and leads to the development of relational assets and capabilities between partners(Cox & Mowatt, 2004; Cox et al., 2008). The advantages of this type of relational activity are the ability for the firm to build capability and competitive advantage by access to resources, markets, information and technologies (Gulati et al., 2000). As discussed earlier, the understanding of rapid internationalisation under network theory emphasises the impact of business relationships, both informal and formal, upon the growth and internationalisation of firms (Collinson & Houlden, 2005; Coviello & Munro, 1995; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006).

New market identification and contributions to market knowledge are characteristics of network theory (Coviello & Munro, 1995). Markets are viewed as a system of relationships among several players including customers, suppliers, producers, competitors, and private and public support agencies (Coviello & Munro, 1995; Glückler, 2006). Accordingly, strategic action is rarely limited to singular firms and the nature or relationships established with others in the market influences and often dictates future strategic options (Coviello & Munro, 1995).

The broad sense of this theory, it is argued, is that international market entry is more dependent on a network position than on the institutional, economic, or cultural conditions of the host market (Glückler, 2006). In terms of foreign market entry, in some situations this may be the result of initiatives taken by a partner, and the firm itself may not have formally and consciously decided to internationalise (Ellis, 2000; Mtigwe, 2006). The firm's partner may demand that the firm accompanies them abroad or otherwise is interested in extending their relationship to encompass business into foreign markets and this is a common case when the firm enjoys close relationships with firms that are internationalising (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003).

A defining part of this theory is that entry problems are not associated with country markets. The focal point is in fact on specific customer or supplier firms and is on managerial problems associated with establishment and development of relationships with suppliers and customers (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003). The recognition that network theory is about the firm's internationalisation and not an isolated independent act by the firm, but rather the by-product of network relationships that are both formal and informal, lends weight to the importance of alliances and relationships. This proposition then leads on to the dynamic of Māori businesses internationalising and where they choose to go and why they make these decisions which are quite often related to the importance of the alliance and relationship, with the caveat of how they fit into a cultural framework (Puriri & McIntosh, 2019). Mtigwe (2006) presented the idea that the internationalisation of the firm is therefore basically viewed as a natural development from network relationships with foreign individuals and firms. The value placed on a firm's network and source of market information and knowledge that would otherwise take a firm a long time to acquire at great cost cannot be understated, and thus networks are bridging mechanisms that allow

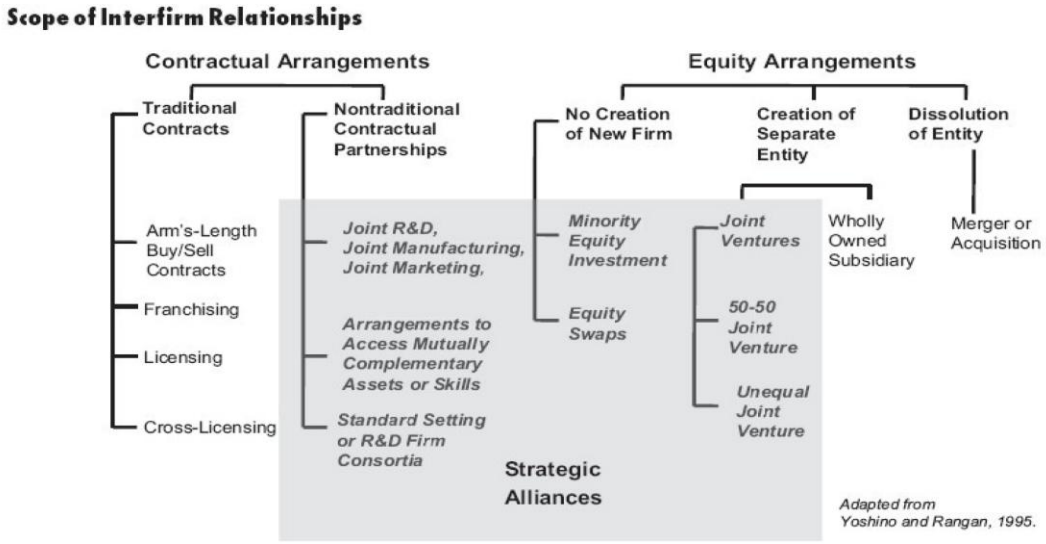
for rapid internationalisation (Mtigwe, 2006). Finally, because all relevant business information is conveyed through network relationships and each relationship is unique due to the characteristics of the relationship partners and the history of the relationship, the traditional international business issues are, in the pure network case, non-existent and anything outside the relationship is irrelevant. Country borders under network theory in internationalisation are not as important when expanding in the network world; rather, all barriers are associated with relationship establishment and development (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003). As empirical evidence suggested networks and alliances often failed, scholars become interested in what helped determine the success of networks, increasingly looking at the network form, motives and mechanisms at the micro-level.

2.3.2 Alliance Type

Networks and alliances may take on one of several forms; they are created in a manner that will be advantageous to the companies involved and will be customised to a certain situation or context which considers either contractual arrangements or equity arrangements. The criteria and reasons for the type of alliances which are considered for this project are as outlined below:

In general, a strategic alliance is a voluntary agreement among enterprises including exchange or division of product, technology, or services development according to Gulati (1998). The alliance agreement is always between two or more enterprises based on exchange and the mutual objectives to obtain some type of benefit (Barringer & Harrison, 2000). Kale and Singh (2009) have outlined the scope of these interfirm relationships, as shown in Figure 3, below:

Figure 3. Interrelationships Within Firms in Terms of Activity and Property Agreements



(Source: Kale & Singh, 2009, p. 47)

Note. Figure reproduced from Kale and Singh (2009, p. 47).

Commonly, a general characteristic of an alliance is that networks of interaction, which often involve a combination of two or more entities combining, achieve some type of advantage or positive outcome in which the entities can leverage their combined capabilities or capacities. It is important to note in the context of this study that alliances may vary in terms of their formality and governance structures, and it appears that they are informal rather than contractual. The key interest of this study in the construct of alliances corresponds to "strategic alliances" (a phrase which has been used by scholars to define other cooperative structures both inside and outside the marked area in Figure 3.)

Firms internationalising are increasingly seeing the value of alliances with external partners and, as Teece (1992) pointed out, while scholars may be fixated by property rights and legal titles, scholars such as Hotz-Hart (2000, p. 434) have identified the potential benefits of networks of interaction:

> 1. Better access to information, knowledge, skills and experience. Networks provide opportunities for learning about new ways of operating and about new forms of technology, and can reduce the development time and cost of new products and production processes.
>
> 2. Improved linkages and cooperation between network members, particularly between users and suppliers. As leading firms within a network develop competencies, this has the effect of creating benchmarks, where the effective network can encourage interactive learning, synergy, and complementarity between key specialist groups across participating firms, such as design, production, marketing, and finance.
>
> 3. Improved response capacity. Networks allow participating firms to respond more quickly and to anticipate changing competitive circumstances, and to learn about new forms of technology.
>
> 4. Reduced risk, moral hazards, information, and transaction costs. Networks of firms with complementary assets allow resources to be shared and reduce costs. Risks can also be assessed and shared throughout the network, leading to more informed decisions and further cost reductions.
>
> 5. Improved trust and social cohesion. Alliances encourage shared values, goals, norms, and ways of working which facilitate problem-solving, collective action and innovative behaviour, often through a complex combination of competition and cooperation.

Todeva and Knoke (2005) argued that motives for strategic alliances fall into four categories as in Table 1.

Table 1. Categories of Motives of Strategic Alliances Formation

Category	Motives included into the category
Organizational category	Training (formation of competences): different training courses, formation of collective competences; restructuring improvement of activity organization; searching for product distribution methods (searching for distribution channels); adaptation to environment changes; complementarities of goods and services; legal activity.
Economic category	Searching for markets; sharing of expenses and combining of resources; diminishing of risk and diversification; proportion economy; activity specialization.
Strategic category	Formation and strengthening of competitiveness; assimilation of new technologies, creation of new products; cooperation with potential competitors; influence and impact on industry development.
Political category	Development of technical standards; elimination of restrictions for legal regulation.

Source: "Strategic Alliances – Their Definition and Formation" Remigijus Kinderis and Giedrius Jucevičius 2013, p. 108.).

Māori and non-Māori businesses alike are continuously looking for networks or alliances which help to create competitive advantage and offset the disadvantages of internationalising on their own. These networks of interaction will continue to take on more significance because of their presumed importance for learning and innovation (Tracey et al., 2002). Another characteristic or result of networks is that there is interactive learning between participating organisations through the sharing of knowledge and information, which is itself facilitated through trust, shared values, and ways of working. Māori businesses view trust, shared values, and ways of working as identity markers in some cases for themselves. Thus, the concepts of networks and alliances are pertinent to how they seek an alliance partner by these identity markers (Puriri & McIntosh, 2019). These identity markers quite often are based on similarity of objectives, goals, aspirations, and commonalities in strategies between organisations. Māori and non-Māori firms look to alliances to maximise resources available to them to be competitive and mitigate the concerns of lone entries into markets or product developments which may expose the single entity. It is the aim of alliances and networks to progress the development of new products and processes, but it may also include the exploitation of new technology, the introduction of new skills, and/or the development of new markets. It is not surprising that networks and alliances are more likely to be sought after while companies are internationalising (Tracey & Clark, 2003). Currently, firms are increasingly demonstrating the capacity to build relationships through new and innovative forms of organisation (Grabher 2001; Teece 2000; Tracey et al., 2002) and these ties are increasingly international in scope as firms located in relatively small jurisdictions seek the most appropriate partners, regardless of their geography, to improve their competitive positions. Aotearoa businesses, let alone Māori businesses, have recognised the need to develop alliances and work

within networks to offset their capacity, resource capability and proximity to a global market while aiming to improve their competitive position (Warriner, 2009).

Firms require a multitude of competencies and tacit knowledge to achieve sustainable competitive advantage internationally. The literature indicates that alliances represent a critical means of doing so, because firms are given the ability to overcome resource limitations, expand into new markets and hedge against environmental uncertainties by creating options to grow (Kogut, 1991).

Researchers are beginning to develop theories which identify individual-to-individual or team-to-team interactions during the alliance pre-formation phase and the impact of different managerial cultural backgrounds and mind-sets (Buckley & De Mattos, 2015). Studies have shown, for example, that the success of Chinese business FDI is positively related to the cultural fit of the target country and organisation (Buckley et al., 2007). Research streams are beginning to find links between national, organisational, and other cultural values and competitive advantage. Accordingly, when we consider the system of social and family networks and key relationships which support business and other dealings in China, the importance of this type of relationship and understanding how it may be applied lends itself to the opportunity to explore whether Māori can expand on relational capital and further develop it. With this convergence, cross-cultural issues have been put forward to explain the high failure rate among American firms doing business in China and vice versa. Guanxi, as a source of Chinese relational capital, may provide a potential competitive advantage in a global market where American relationship marketing tends to assess a partnership's cost–benefits, which is a transactional approach and may lead to potential disengagement. Chinese culture, while not focusing only on cost–benefit, considers guanxi usually as the highest priority in terms of building sustainable business relationships and these social (non-economic) preferences are an important aspect of relationship utilisation (Cheng et al., 2010). These types of relationships are orientated towards strategic alliances.

Despite the benefits of alliances, given their complexity there are high failure rates, and scholars have examined some of the key causes of failure, as outlined in Table 2:

Table 2. Alliances in International Business

Types of Alliance	Description	Value of Alliance	Challenges in Alliance	Reference
Joint Venture	A joint venture is established when the parent companies establish a new child company. For example, Company A and Company B (parent companies) can form a joint venture by creating Company C (child company). In addition, if Company A and Company B each own 50% of the child company, it is defined as a 50-50 Joint Venture. If Company A owns 70% and Company B owns 30%, the joint venture is classified as a Majority-owned Venture.	**Strategic alliances create value by:** Improving current operations Changing the competitive environment Ease of entry and exit	Partners may misrepresent what they bring to the table (lie about competencies that they do not have). Partners may fail to commit resources and capabilities to the other partners.	Prescott, D., Swartz, S., & American Bar Association. (2010). *Joint ventures in the international arena*. Section of International Law, American Bar Association. Wu, F. (2012). *Implicit incentives in international joint ventures: An experimental study*. Gabler, Springer Fachmedien. Beamish, P. W. (2014). *Multinational joint ventures in developing countries.* Routledge.
Equity Strategic Alliance	An equity strategic alliance is created when one company purchases a certain equity percentage of the other company. If Company A purchases 40% of the equity in Company B, an equity strategic alliance would be formed.	**Current operations are improved due to:** Economies of scale from successful strategic alliances The ability to learn from the other partner(s) Risk and cost being shared between partner(s)	One partner may commit heavily to the alliance while the other partner does not.	Böhmke, M., & Syddansk Universitet. (2016). *The influence of contracting on opportunism in strategic alliances*. Syddansk Universitet. Glaister, K. W., Husan, R., & Buckley, P. J. (2004). *Strategic business alliances: An examination of the core dimensions*. Edward Elgar.
Non-equity Strategic Alliance	A non-equity strategic alliance is created when two or more companies sign a contractual relationship to pool their resources and capabilities together.	**Changing the competitive environment through:** Creating technology standards (for example, Sony and Panasonic announced working together to produce a new-generation TV). This would help set a new standard in the competitive environment.	Partners may fail to use their complementary resources effectively.	Michaelis, R. (1997). *A study of alliance formation and alliance mode choice for non-equity strategic alliances in the high technology sector*. National Library of Canada / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada.
Cooperative Agreements	Cooperative agreements between potential or actual competitors for the benefit of all companies concerned.	**Easing entry and exit of companies through:** A low-cost entry into new industries (A company can form a strategic partnership to easily enter into a new industry). A low-cost exit from industries (A new entrant can form a strategic alliance with a company already in the industry and slowly take over that company, allowing the company that is already in the industry to exit).	Partner opportunism	Boyce, G. (2002). *Co-operative structures in global business: Communicating, transferring knowledge and learning across the corporate frontier*. Routledge.
Short-term Contractual Agreements	Short-term contractual agreements between organisations who do not intend ongoing or long-term involvement in a particular project/s.	Nimble and informal in some cases, allowing for access into markets which may be regulated. Flexibility and less exposure to ongoing issues relative to traditional joint ventures.	Excessive reliance upon alliance partners	Contractor, F. J., Lorange, P., Rutgers University., & Wharton School. (2002). *Cooperative strategies in international business: Joint ventures and technology partnerships between firms*. Pergamon.

This table categorises different types of alliances and summarises their core characteristics in the context of international business. It identifies key motives, structural forms, and outcomes associated with alliances, particularly in relation to their relevance for Māori businesses. The table highlights the strategic drivers and success factors for alliances, with emphasis on cultural and relational considerations. In summary the table highlights the following:

1. **Motives for Alliance Formation**
    - Access to resources and capabilities not available internally.
    - Entry into new markets, leveraging local knowledge and networks.
    - Building trust and relational capital, especially in culturally significant contexts.
2. **Structural Forms of Alliances**
    - Joint ventures and equity-based partnerships.
    - Non-equity alliances focused on shared goals and knowledge exchange.
    - Informal alliances rooted in cultural and relational ties.
3. **Success Factors**
    - Alignment of values and objectives between partners.
    - Effective communication, with emphasis on face-to-face interactions (Kanohi ki te Kanohi).
    - Long-term commitment and reciprocity (Whanaungatanga).
4. **Challenges**
    - Resource constraints, particularly for smaller entities.
    - Cross-cultural misunderstandings in transactional relationships.
    - Maintaining trust and shared vision during periods of conflict or change.

Therefore, research has tried to examine the mechanisms of processes which are critical to successful alliances. Drawing on economic theory and predominantly quantitative approaches, a large body of research emerged examining alliances formation success factors, as shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Motives and Processes for Alliance Formation and Success

Factors Influencing Successful Alliance Formation	
Strategic Motivations	Strategic objectives such as market expansion, technological innovation, risk-sharing, and competitive advantage (Contractor & Lorange, 2002).
Partner Selection Criteria	The selection of alliance partners is influenced by factors such as complementary resources, technological capabilities, cultural compatibility, reputation, and trust (Parkhe, 1993).
Environmental Dynamism	The dynamic nature of the external environment, including market turbulence, regulatory changes, technological advancements, and competitive pressures, shapes firms' decisions to form alliances (Doz & Hamel, 1998).
Institutional Factors	Institutional environments, including legal frameworks, cultural norms, industry standards, and government policies, influence the formation and governance of alliances across different countries and regions (Geringer & Hebert, 1991).
Processes of Alliance Formation	
Partner Search and Screening	Firms engage in systematic processes to identify potential alliance partners, evaluate their compatibility, and assess the feasibility of collaboration (Das & Teng, 2001).
Negotiation and Agreement	Alliance formation involves negotiations over terms, conditions, and objectives, aiming to achieve consensus and alignment of interests among partners (Beamish & Lupton, 2009); sensemaking and culture (Das & Kumar, 2011; Kumar & Patriotta, 2011)
Alliance Governance	Establishing governance mechanisms, such as contracts, equity stakes, and joint decision-making structures, is essential for managing relationships, resolving conflicts, and ensuring the attainment of alliance goals (Hennart, 1991).

This focus of the emerging research agenda is to examine the micro-level processes such as cultural alignment and the development of trust. Cultural values may create competitive advantage within international business relationships; some scholars have outlined the governing principles of successful cross-cultural literacy within the intercultural business relationship and have developed frameworks to approach the complex problem-solving and creative decision-making which takes place (Nomore, 2015).

2.3.3 Relationship Formation - Trust

A key factor in successful relationship formation in an international business alliance is trust. Researchers such as Morgan and Hunt (1994), Ahmed et al. (1999) and Palmatier et al. (2008) have found that trust is central to positive relationship formation. Accordingly, the importance of social interaction becomes imperative for the development of business relationships, and this can create an environment for an economic or transactional exchange to proceed without being dominated by legal constraints (Schurr, 2007). It has been suggested by Schurr (2007) that the nature of a legal contract, although required in most transactional events, is not definitive in outlining the complexity of an ongoing dynamic relationship.

Ballantyne and Varey (2008), Dwyer et al. (1987), Hunt et al. (2006), Arnott (2007), and Palmatier et al., (2008) have all suggested that, inherently, when trust is present in business it is a key element of any successful business outcome and, furthermore, it has been argued to be central to all major business functions (Young, 2006). The concept of trust has been discussed in disciplines such as sociology, psychology and economics (Rousseau et al., 1998). It has been defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another" (Rousseau et al., 1998, p. 395). Bachmann and Inkpen (2011) have indicated that it can be thought of as the decision to rely on another party based on a calculated risk and that it is an underlying psychological condition that allows us to be vulnerable and take risks (Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust encompasses many facets, including emotions, cognitions (Young, 2006), risks, interdependence, willingness, vulnerability, confidence (Rousseau et al., 1998), forbearance from opportunity (Gundlach & Cannon, 2010), as well as belief and values (Serva et al., 2005). Hence, trust is a broad concept, one which has macro (firm level) and micro (individual) level interpretations and is heavily value-based (Bachmann & Inkpen, 2011).

Some scholars have suggested that as different cultures become more familiar with each other and there is a level of open engagement, this converts into the ability for these cultures to adapt to each other and accept different ways of doing and thinking. We can see this occurring between 1800 and 1840 within Aotearoa when Māori were the dominant economic group (Petrie, 2006).

A theory referred to as Allport's Contact Theory (Pettigrew, 1998) assumes that increased interactions between members of different ethnic groups can lead to an escalation of improved mutual understanding, trust, a reduction in hostilities and prejudices, and the formation of friendships between groups in different social contexts (Kim, 2012; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). However, we can also observe that these interactions can have lasting and impactful consequences for societies such as Māori through colonisation where a Treaty supposedly enshrined tenets of mutual understanding (Fletcher, 2022). This ability to successfully build trust relationships between different cultures has also been referred to as cultural intelligence – which is the individual's ability to interact satisfactorily in cultural settings with distinct ethnic groups and nationalities (Ang et al., 2007). Aligned with cultural intelligence is a theory referred to as cultural metacognition, the prevalent theme being that intercultural success accrues from being mindful of one's own and others' assumptions when interacting with individuals from different cultures (Johnson et al., 2006; LaBahn & Harich, 1997). The intercultural success is the skill and ability to reflect on cultural assumptions to prepare for, adapt to, and learn from intercultural interactions to build relationships of trust (Earley & Ang, 2007; Earley et al., 2010; Klafehn et al., 2008; Thomas, 2006).

Principles around cultural metacognition suggest that individuals who are higher in cultural metacognition are more likely to develop affect-based trust in their intercultural interactions and relationships. People of different cultures with low cultural metacognition have a higher chance of misunderstanding of comments, or the potential to misconstrue comments, and decline invitations because of cultural differences. The concept of reflective thinking about cultural differences enables one to interpret these awkward moments for what they are, and not let them be impediments to building relationships of trust (Chua et al., 2012).

Abdou and Kliche (2004) have defined alliances as collaborative, durable relationships which are established between two or more independent enterprises, with the purpose of sharing the resources to undertake a business activity or venture for their mutual economic advantage. A key feature of these alliances is different types of interactions which exist between individuals and teams. During the alliance formation process, the importance of these interactions cannot be overstated in terms of how people from different cultural backgrounds engage and develop mind-sets, which may have a significant impact on how the relationship is built (Buckley et al., 2015).

It is also important to acknowledge that alliances can also create problems in terms of trust and conflict. Firms have the potential to try to share principles and characteristics which are unique in themselves and not easily accepted by the partnering firm in a partnership venture. These companies may have different organisational cultures and management philosophies, and may differ in their normal routines, policies, and procedures. It has been suggested that when these

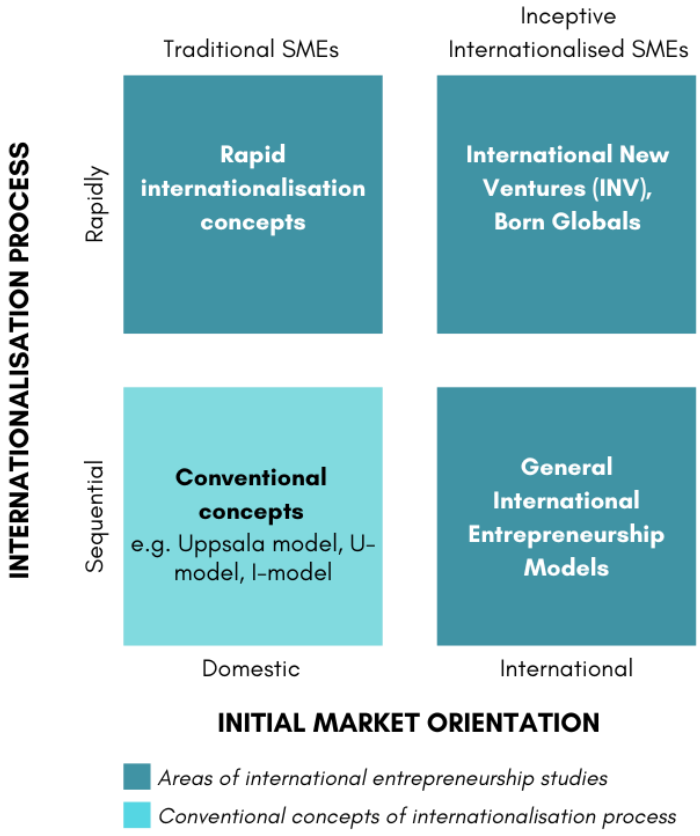
partners are from different national cultures, these differences can be magnified with the potential to create greater challenges in building relationships (Brito & Silva, 2009). As a result, it is also likely that the mutual trust which should be in place could be eroded and therefore, without this sense of mutual trust and commitment to each other, these partnerships can be strained because of cross-cultural relationships within the alliance. As we consider Māori businesses and their unique business values, such as manaakitanga, tūhono, whakawhirinaki, kotahitanga, kaitiakitanga, tikanga and other principles, these values collectively create an identity or profile reflecting how Māori maintain their own unique world view.

2.3.4 An Entrepreneurial Process

The emergence of a field of research in 1994, in a paper by Wright and Ricks, highlighted international entrepreneurship as an important thrust in the field of international business, shifting the research lens in two key ways: first, away from MNEs to SMEs, and second, towards the micro-lens around managerial decision-making which could draw on the characteristics and values of the actors involved. International entrepreneurship was defined as "a combination of innovative, proactive and risk-seeking behaviour that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organisations" (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000, p. 903). Developing views of the firm saw it as an international learner, coordinator, cross-border arbitrageur, multiple network alliance partner, and integrator across borders (Contractor, 2007; Paul & Rosado-Serrano, 2019; Taylor & Jack, 2016; Tobiassen & Pettersen, 2023).

Māori entities are naturally inclined towards entrepreneurship and this orientation continues to develop as markets and global opportunities arise, and many Māori entities adapt business practices to internationalise via international entrepreneurship (Mrabure et al., 2021). According to Stats NZ (2022), Māori entities have higher rates of innovation and tend to display risk taking behaviour in their overall development as a business (Mika et al. 2019). The study of international entrepreneurship examines and prioritises the role of the entrepreneur as a key factor in the internationalisation process of the firm (Wach, 2014, p. 68). Oviatt and McDougall (2005) later refined their definition to encompass discovering, enacting, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities abroad. Thus, internationalisation in connection to entrepreneurship is a process-centric activity that entails value-seeking in foreign markets. Wach (2014) illustrated the basic typology of relevant international entrepreneurship concepts (see Figure 4). These international entrepreneurship concepts are reviewed as internationalisation process theories in the following sections.

Figure 4. Basic Typology of International Entrepreneurship Concepts



One insight of this field explained the increasing movement in the number of firms becoming active in international markets not long after establishment, which were deemed to be 'born global'. Several terms have been used by academics describing these firms, including: 'born globals' (Moen & Servais, 2002; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006), 'international new ventures' (Coviello, 2006; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994), 'instant internationals' (Fillis, 2001; McAuley, 1999), and 'global start-ups' (Hordes et al., 1995; Oviatt & McDougall, 1995). For this research the term 'born global' has been adopted and will be used when referring to the phenomenon. The characteristics of a born global firm is that of a highly entrepreneurial small firm that quickly internationalises without the time or need to develop firm-specific internalised advantages in their home nation (Contractor, 2007; Jones & Coviello, 2005; Rialp et al., 2005; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). As a result, these firms challenged the conventional theories of incremental and gradual internationalisation, like the Uppsala Model (Rialp et al., 2005; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006), and used a range of market entry modes in multiple markets (Jones & Coviello, 2005). The nimbleness of these firms was characterised by the lack of resources compared to large international firms, but their advantage rests on learning derived from abroad, from their ability to coordinate and arbitrage across national borders, and from alliance network relationships

(Contractor, 2007; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). These mobile and rapidly internationalising smaller entrepreneurial firms viewed the world as their arena of operations and avail themselves of opportunities in many markets, irrespective of the psychic or geographic distances involved (Loane & Bell, 2006). The unique selling points were quite often based on an offer of highly innovative and cutting-edge products (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). A key to the speed and nature of that internationalisation was the orientation and experience of an entrepreneur within the company. The born global approach discussed innovation, risk seeking and proactiveness. There is research to indicate why and how businesses become 'born global'; quite often the why and how is related to an organisation's ability to develop alliances and networks (Mandl & Patrini, 2018). Born globals are often SMEs or start-up firms, therefore expanding the scope of firms explained by theory. Born-global strategy can be either an alternative or complementary strategy to asset and market seeking through networks. Therefore, acknowledging the research in this field offers new research questions and relevance to Māori firms.

2.3.5 Indigenous and Māori Entrepreneurship

Warriner (2009) found that networks were the preferred approach to internationalisation by Māori firms, and Ransfield and Reichenberger (2021) suggested that the Māori firm doing business internationally will always give priority to networks, alliances and relationships which are based on their cultural beliefs and values. These authors indicated that the knowledge obtained from these interactions provides a guide for how Māori firms will conduct business in the future as it relates to their cultural beliefs and frameworks. The emerging research stream of Indigenous entrepreneurship highlights the importance of understanding the agency and cultural context of the entrepreneur, acknowledging the uniqueness of different Indigenous cultures and their values, as well as their importance to their communities. Research in this field can help inform micro-level research into internationalisation and alliance formation processes.

Entrepreneurial activities have long been a part of Indigenous peoples' environments and circumstances. Petrie's (2006) *Chiefs of Industry* highlighted the entrepreneurial nature of Māori conducting international business during the early 1800s and their success during this period. Although Indigenous entrepreneurship is considered an emerging field, it has undoubtedly been in existence for many years. For Māori, entrepreneurial activity has dated back to before the Europeans arrived in New Zealand, predominantly in the adoption of a bartering system and regular trading patterns among whānau and hapū, and within and between iwi (Te Ara, 2010). Entrepreneurial activities continued to the earliest era of European contact and were deeply embedded in the sense of commitment, and obligation carried out for, with, and by the Māori community, as reviewed in Chapter 1 (Henry, 2007, p. 547; Petrie, 2006). In a post-European contact context, Māori (like many other Indigenous peoples) have endured challenges and crisis

because of colonisation, land alienation, the introduction of disease, and war (Kawharu et al., 2015). As a result, resilience, adaptation, and transformation have become defining values and lessons for Māori in many aspects of life including entrepreneurial activities.

Opportunity recognition is the ability to recognise entrepreneurial opportunity with a view to extracting value (Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Kizner, 1973). It is acknowledged that the perceived value of a resource may not be shared by a person from another culture (Dana, 2006). Thus, opportunity-seeking and the value-seeking of entrepreneurship may be perceived differently among cultures. Several core characteristics have been identified as being distinct to an entrepreneur such as an entrepreneur's ability to be innovative (Schumpeter, 1983); the organiser who takes initiative (Shapero, 1975); one who is strategic in thought (Carland et al., 1974); the value creator and opportunity aware (Kao & Stevenson, 1985); the leader, holistic, persistent, and committed (Timmons & Spinelli, 2004). For the Indigenous entrepreneur, entrepreneurial endeavours tend to be centred on tino rangatiratanga or self-determination, collectiveness, kinship ties, and community well-being (Dana, 2007; Foley, 2008; Henry, 2007; Henry & Dana, 2019). These entrepreneurial activities tend to be decolonising and can lend themselves to the concept of emancipatory entrepreneurship. According to Rendova et al. (2009), emancipatory entrepreneurship can encompass three core elements, namely seeking autonomy, authoring, and making declarations (see Table 4).

Table 4. Core Elements of Emancipatory Entrepreneurship

Core Element	Views from Emancipatory Perspective
Seeking Autonomy	• Actors seek to escape from or remove perceived constraints in their environment. • Constraints are perceived in a variety of environments – economic, social, technological, cultural, and institutional.
Authoring	• The rules of engagement with key resources providers should reflect change-creating intent. • Organisational arrangements can be designed to preserve emancipatory potential.
Making Declarations	• Making declarations about intended change is essential to mobilise support and generate change effects.

Note. Adapted from Rendova et al. (2009, p. 480).

Henry (2017) drew the connection between Māori entrepreneurship and emancipatory entrepreneurship, describing the participants of their study as being from diverse backgrounds and outlooks who share common views about the importance of revitalising Māori culture and language. Due to a changing tenure system (because of colonisation), Māori have had to find new ways to sustain communities economically, politically, culturally (Kawharu et al., 2012), and spiritually (Spiller & Wolfgramm, 2015). Understanding ancestral precedents as well as finding new ways and opportunities to navigate the challenges and crisis faced by Māori have provided

reference points and calls to action, particularly concerning entrepreneurial activities for Māori and Indigenous peoples alike. Māori entrepreneurial activities tend to be driven by manaaki or a duty of care for the Indigenous community. As Kawharu et al. (2012) suggested, "We have much to guide us from our history 'kit' of experiences, measured against these contemporary realities" (p. 35).

From an international perspective, and perhaps of domestic relevance in Aotearoa, Indigenous entrepreneurship has the potential to contribute to the maintenance of Indigenous culture, which can be viewed as having long-term intrinsic value that may form an essential part of a country's identity (Macpherson et al., 2021; Peredo & McLean, 2013). Furthermore, Henry et al. (2017) argued that behavioral norms deriving from one's culture are known to serve reliably as distinct drivers of Indigenous entrepreneurial activity. Within the emerging field of Indigenous entrepreneurship, research has shown that social and cultural capital are important conceptual foundations for the understanding of entrepreneurship within Indigenous communities (Henry et al., 2017; McKeever et al., 2014). Henry et al. (2017) argued that, most often, social and economic changes that benefit Indigenous communities are because of entrepreneurial activities which are formed by cultural and social capital. As a result, Henry et al. (2017) proposed a two-part framework (consisting of cultural and social capital) for explaining Indigenous entrepreneurial activity. Cultural capital, or a sense of one's place (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 113), refers to education, cultural skills and refinement, and command of high culture (Goffman, 1951, p. 239). Social capital, as a construct within the field of entrepreneurship, refers to the stock of diverse resources derived from an entrepreneur's network, acquaintances, relationships, and group memberships (Bourdieu, 1986). Furthermore, Wdowiak et al. (2012) suggested that the entrepreneur's cultural background profile has a stronger influence on new venture performance than education or industry experience. Their findings supported the assumption that entrepreneurial performance in new ventures is culture-driven and suggested that economic analyses of entrepreneurial actions should encompass cultural values as well.

2.3.6 Māori Values

Hinga iho, tomo atu I te pa

With the strength of the enemy overcome, be quick to attack the pa.

The ngākau of this study is the importance of Māori values. It is essential that we look at the definitions of culture and values from a Māori and non-Māori perspective. Māori view culture as

the way they make sense of the world and give purpose to what they do and are (Reid et al., 2016). Reid et al. (2016) have also suggested that relational networks are a key aspect of cultural engagement amongst Māori. A key attribute of Māori culture is the relational links with whānau and whenua which constitute core cultural values and have a relationship to their well-being as well as identity. Furthermore, the importance of whenua and turangawaewae and mātauranga supports the narratives Māori have about specific cultural knowledge and the sense of identity these narratives bring to both the individual and family unit (Reid et al., 2016).

Culture, in Geertz's (1979) classical definition, is "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and their attitudes toward life" (p. 89). This aligns with Māori in that cultural knowledge obtained through whakapapa (genealogy) determines their way of life, how they view the land (whenua), family (whānau) and relationships to the world. Scholars have defined cultural identity as "a social construction that gives the individual an ontological status [a sense of 'being'] and expectations for social behaviour [ways of 'acting']" (Yep, 2004, p. 71). Tajfel (1981) pointed out the importance of culture as an identity, which in turn gives an individual an understanding of self, a sense of belonging, a system of meaning and a way of acting. Berger and Luckmann (1966) applied a social constructivist or interpretive viewpoint (Primecz et al., 2011) to express the idea that culture is the learned and social dimension of human beings, by which they 'give meaning' to and 'make sense of' the world. Across cultures, this implies that meaning needs to be negotiated, and we must assume that multiple perspectives shape perceived social realities. Māori, through colonisation, have had to consider these differing perspectives for many years and are beginning to develop relationships globally as their own capabilities and capacity improve.

Māori demonstrated between 1800 and 1840 that they were more than capable of navigating amongst many cultures in global industry with good outcomes (Petrie, 2006). These intercultural engagements have developed, and culture is a focal point of most engagement. Te Huia and Liu (2012) have referred to this by observing that "Māori culture is a psychological asset for New Zealanders' acculturation experiences abroad" (p.145. They have found that because of Māori's strong relationship with their own cultural and value-based beliefs, there is some advantage in establishing relationships of trust and understanding with other cultures. Henare (2001) put forward the premise that a traditional spiral of ethics "simultaneously presents a Māori world view and acts as a check on that world view" (p. 213). This view aligns with that of other commentators who have highlighted the role of values as instruments to make sense of the world (Marsden 2003; Shirres, 1997). Māori believe that culture, wisdom, and well-being are one and the same, and that these values exist in dynamic relationship with each other; they are inseparable in terms of the context and meaning of life. This is an important aspect of Māori engagement and

how they relate or interact with the world. Culture has enormous importance and sets a precedent for public interactions amongst other types of relationship development (Sen, 2004a).

Traditional ethics also help determine where one's perspective begins and ends, and this can be aligned to business perspectives that emphasise reciprocal relationships of respect between humans and ecosystems (Durie 1998, 2003; Henare, 1994, 2001). By association, the nature of these values reflects a woven universe (Marsden, 2003), which supports the idea that culture cannot be disconnected in the process of developing a relationship. This spiral of ethics or tikanga encapsulates a broad and dynamic range of concepts relative to Māori: the values, practices and norms and the unique way Māori view this world (Barlow, 1993; Cleave, 1998; Mead, 2003; Patterson, 1992).

There is a large body of organisational literature which stresses the importance of values and culture in guiding business action and decision-making (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Kotter & Heskett 1992; Senge et al*.,* 2004; Spiller 2000). It is not surprising that Māori culture or tikanga is now finding its way into strategies, structures, government organisations and business (Best & Love, 2011; Harmsworth, 2005a; Tinirau & Gillies, 2010; Tinirau & Mika, 2012; Warriner, 1999). The resurgence of Māori cultural practices, beliefs and tikanga is evident in approaches to education (Hohepa et al., 2000), health (Durie, 1999, 2001b, 2004; Gillies, 2006) and the creative sector (Henry, 2011, 2012; Mataamua, 2006; Mika et al., 2005; Royal, 1998; Warriner, 2009). The importance of culture within employment and economic development for Māori has been explored (Durie, 2001a; Pihama & Penehira, 2005; Te Puni Kōkiri, 2011; Walker, 1990). Mika (2014) stated that Māori, by tradition, are collectivist and western constructs of individualism can create a gap in commonality of goals and values in business contexts.

In relationship to business, Māori may represent the aspirations of an individual, a small hapū or an iwi, and will therefore tend to engage from a collective approach as opposed to singularly. However, this does not remove the importance of culture to an individual Māori who may be engaged in business as a sole trader. Enterprises in Māoridom take many forms; land-based Māori enterprises, SMEs, corporates, post-settlement Māori enterprises, whānau, hapū and iwi enterprises and social enterprises (Haar, 2020). In some form these enterprises incorporate Māori values, language, knowledge and tikanga into their organisational culture to engage with shareholders and stakeholders in the hope of differentiating themselves from others in the marketplace (Best, 2013; Dawson, 2012; Harmsworth & Tahi, 2008; Knox, 2011; Tinirau & Gillies, 2010; Warriner, 1999, 2007; Young, 1992). A holistic and integrated world view guides Māori organisations, including individual Māori who are value based (for example, see Durie 2001, 2003; New Zealand Institute for Economic Research [NZIER], 2003; Reihana et al., 2007) and want to enhance holistic well-being which is often in contrast to western economic models

for profit maximisation (Casson, 2010). The interwoven or interconnected world view is not a new development, as suggested by Senge et al. (2004), rather their findings identify a reawakening of wisdom dormant in western cultures.

As with many Indigenous peoples, Māori prefer the concept of 'process' or, as Puriri and McIntosh (2019) suggested, a "cultural framework", which contrasts with the modern western predilection for 'progress' which represents inexorable, incremental improvements over a period, monitored, measured and, by nature, materialistic. This is quite often reflected in how Māori will take the time to express a view or a concept because of process on the marae where there are no time limitations (except for the pressure of food waiting to be consumed in the wharekai – the food hall). This contrasts with set times which are embedded in non-Māori meetings where progress is quite often measured by being on time.

It needs to be noted that critical diversity scholars suggest that inequalities in engagement between cultures are intrinsic to social relations at work and beyond, and may even be institutionalised (Ridgeway, 2009). This is easily illustrated in first contact and the ongoing assimilation of Indigenous cultures to dominant cultures where little option was left for some Indigenous groups but to conform to the acceptable social norms of the dominant culture or coloniser (McAllan, 2008). The issue here is that despite the strength of culture, the engagement of cultures indicates that there are no simple and mono-causal effects; this points towards complexity, which is commonly referred to as intersectionality (McCall, 2005). Thus, intercultural interactions are not well-balanced in the sense that representatives of different cultures meet on an even playing field, but the interaction should be considered more as part of a bigger picture which has complexity and the context around intercultural relations (McCall, 2005). Cultural explanations and categorisations, whether they are visible and invisible, diversity hallmarks such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, and so on, are where the majority-minority relations and processes of identification and recognition influence how intercultural relations pan out (McAllan, 2008). This suggests that social identity and diversity processes are a crucial aspect to be considered for more balanced management and business engagement amongst differing cultures. It is against this backdrop that we should consider how Māori have engaged through internationalisation and intercultural relations in the business environment.

Māori are enjoying the opportunities provided by internationalisation and Aotearoa's increasing connectivity with new and established international markets. Historically, and prior to the impacts of full assimilation and the colonisation of Māori, in the period from 1800 to 1840, Māori not only enjoyed the opportunities provided by internationalisation, but they also excelled (Petrie, 2006). The findings of the international Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) (2011) studies support the premise that Māori as a group of people are natural entrepreneurs and Māori cultural

values lends themselves to entrepreneurship (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Kawharu & Tapsell, 2019; Mika, 2015). As the strength of the Māori economy gains traction and with increasing engagement by Māori with international companies, there is a desire for innovative means and methods within their own firms or organisations to succeed (Awatere et al., 2017; Frederick, 2004; Henry et al., 2017). When we consider how Māori businesses view success, we would need to know what success looks like to Māori (Haar & Delaney, 2009; Henry & Poyser, 2024). Furthermore, what are the cultural prompts which allow them to be entrepreneurial or successful in building relationships with international companies or non-Māori? It is important to note that current definitions of firms and competitive advantage are western theories; however, this does not mean they are not useful in drawing learnings and understanding, (Frederick & Henry, 2004).

Māori values are important when discussing successful relationship formation such as whanaungatanga, and manaakitanga. The Māori cultural value or principle of whanaungatanga, or relationship, kinship, sense of family connection, or relationships built through shared experiences and working together, provides people with a sense of belonging. It develops because of kinship rights and obligations, which also serve to strengthen each member of the kin group. It also extends to others with whom one develops a close family, friendship or reciprocal relationship, and talks of obligations and strengthening of relationships. The values which are the basis of the way Māori conduct themselves lead to definitive actions which amplify these principles. As an example, the concept of manaaki refers to being respectful and showing kindness and hospitality, and this value may take the action of providing kai (food, refreshments) in meetings or when there may be a disagreement or conflict, Māori may reserve the right to say no at a later time, after an event which demonstrates hospitality (Barnett, 2001; Catton, 2021; McIntosh et al., 2004). However, when a koha is shunned or kai after a pōwhiri is rejected, these are manifestations communicating disappointment in relationship and placing pressure upon the host to consider their respective obligations, and these concepts in general are applied currently in some diplomatic situations (Ombler, 2021).

Knowing that the capabilities in an organisation can provide benefits over competitors towards firm performance supports the importance of Māori values. For example, can manaakitanga be recognised as a vital capability or aspect of cultural capital where, if correctly applied, it will support a sustained competitive advantage through relationship formation (Barry & Doney, 2011)? It could be suggested, in studying these behaviours, that these cultural traits expressed by Māori in forming relationships within business do assist the firm's capabilities or individuals in developing competitive advantage, in terms of what this type of leverage or influence amounts to. The Māori firm which adheres to, believes in, or is characterised by kaitiakitanga, and which may apply this cultural value in a business context, is where the RBV could be most useful for understanding how Māori cultural values might influence firm performance. At the heart of this

research is how Māori organisations, or any organisation doing business with a Māori business, could explore how these cultural values are operationalised above and beyond a simple cultural interpretation, for example whakapapa links to whanaungatanga. A holistic and integrated world view guides Māori organisations that are value-based (for example, see Durie 2001, 2003; NZIER 2003; Reihana et al., 2007) and want to enhance holistic well-being, an approach which is often in contrast to western economic models focused on profit maximisation (Casson, 2010). However, as we consider the nature of the Māori firm internationalising and the importance of the decision-maker or innovator, the firm is being directed by key decision-makers in the process of internalisation. These decision-makers are highly influenced by value systems.

There are several Māori values that are key to developing successful enterprise. These include tikanga, mana, whakapapa, wairuatanga, utu, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga and tapu (Knox, 2005; Mika, 2014; Morgan & Mulligan, 2006; Waa & Love, 1997). A summary of Māori values is provided in Table 5:

Table 5. Key Māori Values

Value	Meaning	Author
Mana	Prestige, honour	
Utu	Reciprocity	
Tapu	Sanctity	(Waa & Love, 1997)
Tikanga	Customs	
Mana	Power and authority	
Whakapapa	Ancestry	
Wairuatanga	Spirituality	(Knox, 2005)
Whanaungatanga	Relationships	
Rangatiratanga	Leadership	
Mana	Respect	
Kaitiakitanga	Stewardship	
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, care	(Spiller et al., 2011)
Wairua	Spirituality	(Morgan & Mulligan, 2006)

There are links to the way Māori view relationships and how they are developed by non-Māori. In the first place, whether Māori or non-Māori view the concept of trust as crucial in relationships, when this is aligned with respect, values orientation, and a genuine desire to improve the engagement, then generally there is a relatively high likelihood that the foundations of a positive transactional event may occur within business (Barry & Doney, 2011). Both Māori and non-Māori share an understanding of the importance of relationship development or relationship building

and the literature does imply some linkage to core Māori values and relationship building principles.

According to Haar et al. (2021), Māori businesses are distinct within Aotearoa and these enterprises report higher cultural capital while applying core Māori values, which is part of the employees' knowledge and skills within a cultural values framework.

Within the literature, relationship building principles in relationship formation loosely align with Māori core values and highlight the importance of culture, as is outlined in Table 6:

Table 6. Core Māori Values and Relationship Building Principles from Literature

Core Values	Definitions	Relationship formation literature	Author
Whanaungatanga	Relationship building	Relationship development	(Styles & Hersch, 2005)
Kotahitanga	Unity	Team and Unity	(Cialdini & Newbern, 2016)
Whakawhirinaki	Trust	Trust building	(Sako, 1992) (Khakhar & Rammal., 2013)
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, respect	Respect within teams and business	(Khakhar & Rammal., 2013) (Sonenshein et al., 2017)
Kaitiakitanga	Stewardship, Guardianship	Guardianship, responsibility	(Spiller et al., 2011)
Wairuatanga	Spirituality, ethical	Ethical considerations	(Krkač (2007), (Fritzsche & Oz, 2007) (Fritzsche, 2004) (Brophy, 2015)
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face to face meetings preferred	Face to face meetings	(Kirkman et al., 2004) (Oshri et al., 2008) (Goman, 2016)
Aroha ki te tangata	Love for people, show respect	Respect	(Vincent, 2015) (Wallwork, 2014).
Titiro, whakarongo, kōrero	Observe, listen, then talk	Listening development	(Shimoda, 2017)
Mana	Honour, authority, respect	Respect and recognising authority	(Shimoda, 2017) (Spence et al., 2017)
Tikanga	Customs, our way, values	Values	(Bartczak & Śmiloskaw 2016) (Sheehan, & Schmidt, 2015) (Bahava-Montieth & Fong, 2017). (Borah & Hazarika, 2015)

Whakapapa	Ancestry, the why of things, legacy	Purpose and legacy	(John, 2014) (Goldman et al., 2015) (Riordan, 1998)
Rangatiratanga	Effective leadership, inspiring	Leadership, Transformational	(Effelsberg et al., 2014) (Ramsey et al., 2017) (Srihari, 2012)

There are some indicators suggesting that culture can be viewed as an asset in the development of business relationships. That is, the understanding of values and respect given by both engaging parties will have a positive effect (Barney, 1991). Furthermore, understanding values or culture supports the foundations of potentially strong and sustainable business relationships if there is an openness and willingness to learn or be open (Hofstede, 2001). There is increasing research into the dynamics of cross-cultural engagement in business and, as the world continues to shrink with regard to national borders, and becomes more susceptible to intercultural activities and cultural comparisons, differences can be more defined and analysed (Hofstede, 1994; House et al*.,* 2004).

2.3.7 The Economy of Affection & Mana

As aforementioned, essentially economic approaches to internationalisation theory have pioneered and, until recently, dominated the field of international business. Other perspectives that move beyond traditional thought of economic approaches to internationalisation process theory can be found in the economy of affection, a term coined by Hyden (1980), and Henare's (2011, 2016) economy of mana. Hyden's (1980) work derived from research in the East African region and focused on the dynamics found in peasantry and how both state and market might access and penetrate African society which was largely organised in informal institutions. Hyden (1980) found that peasants in Africa were much more dependent on customary practices, unwritten rules, and an entrepreneurial spirit that relied on managing relationships to one's own favour. The economy of affection is based on structural and relational underpinnings, is centred on reciprocity and entails either or both reward and punishment. Reciprocities do not necessarily need to be immediate, nor equal in value. An agent may withhold giving something back for an unspecified later reason (Kimambo, 2008, p. 19). Within these exchange relationships, exchanges are predominantly non-negotiated. In other words, individuals may respond sequentially, whether it be by performing actions of reward or by performing actions of punishment (p. 20). The economy of mana, coined by Henare (2011), built on this concept and is based on the following premises:

Table 7. The Economy of Mana

Key Theme	Description
Te ao Māori	It emanates from a Māori world view and is informed by traditional Māori economics
Four well-beings	It is inspired by four well-beings – spiritual, ecological, kinship, economic
Ecological system	It is embedded in the ecological system that sustains it
Multidisciplinary approach	It requires multidisciplinary approach to its research
Reorganising and new futures	It is a system that is capable of reorganising itself to created new futures
Reciprocity and gift exchange	It manifests as reciprocity and gift exchange

Note. Adapted from Henare (2011).

Dell et al. (2018) later provided a definition of the economy of mana as:

> An economic system in which decisions regarding investment, production, consumption, and wealth distribution are influenced by the interplay of mana-enhancing interactions between people and the environment. (p. 55)

The mana-enhancing aspect of the economy of mana acts as a fundamental premise that influences the decision-making process of individuals. That is, a person cannot claim to have mana but, rather, are credited, recognised, and endorsed by others around them (Dell et al., 2018). Notions that support mana-enhancing activities within relationship development are not defined by a person's ability to destroy others, but the way in which an individual can protect, manaaki (care for) and look after those around them (Shirres, 1997). Dell et al. (2018) further developed principles of an economy of mana that inform how people make decisions, how they interact, and how the economy works. Decision-making processes within an economy of mana are centred on principles of increasing the collective good, intergenerational long-term outlooks, mandates, and authorisation by the people, and are guided by mana-enhancing behaviours (Dell et al., 2018, p. 56). Interaction is based on relating through shared experience, and a desire to maintain a sense of belonging and connection with each other. The economy works based on the four well-beings, a focus on wealth distribution (as opposed to wealth accumulation), viewing the world as providing abundance (rather than scarcity and competition), and viewing the world as a kinship network of all living things (p. 56).

2.4 RESEARCH GAPS

The literature review has provided several key insights into our current understanding of key international business theories which can help explain the role of Māori values in international business alliance formation. The chapter has highlighted changes in levels of analysis from firm to manager to the alliance and to the micro-processes around alliance formation. The literature has also provided an indication that entrepreneurship aligns with Māori businesses which are developing international business alliances, and that networks are a relevant focus for Māori firms for many reasons. This is largely because of being able to move nimbly with resource constraints into markets, develop relationships in an international business alliance, and hold long-term and non-market orientations, as seen in the findings of prior research.

As we look specifically at Māori business and how competitive advantage could be developed, it is important in the first place to define what success in a firm is to Māori. There is some research to suggest that while Māori cultural values may be important for Māori business development and growth, there may be difficulties in applying such aspects on an economic basis (Haar & Delaney, 2009). Māori, according to some scholars and practitioners, look to positive outcomes in commercial output, cultural recognition, and social values as recognition of the success of the entity (Henry, 2007; Morgan & Mulligan, 2006; Zapalska et al., 2003). In contrast, within the literature, the success of firms or performance of firms points towards economic indicators. The literature review has considered the importance of culture and how culture may support competencies in international business alliances towards firm performance.

While these theories do cover aspects of relationship building, these concepts are still measured against definitions of firm success which are economically orientated. The first notable gap in the literature is the lack of consideration for how firm success definitions are relevant to groups such as Māori. This is important because Māori businesses are culturally nuanced and the practices, processes, or principles of engagement within international business are driven by values and belief systems.

The literature has also identified the importance of relational capital. This is where the intangible assets of an organisation that are not recorded in financial statements are important (Zack, 1999) – specifically, human capital and the knowledge and skills of individuals. We have noted Bourdieu's notions of social and cultural capital (1986, 1990) and Henry et al.'s (2017) two-part framework for explaining Indigenous entrepreneurial activity which emphasises the importance of relational capital. Relational capital also considers the often-intangible relationships that an organisation has with its clients/customers and the environment (Day, 2000; Saint-Onge, 1996; Stewart, 1997). Kale (2000) has suggested that a key aspect of relational capital is the level of mutual trust, respect and friendship that arises out of relationship building. Relational capital

resonates with Māori principles of trust and the importance of relationship building which are incorporated into whanaungatanga and kaitiakitanga for instance. The development of theories which identify individual-to-individual or team-to-team interactions during the alliance pre-formation phase and the impact of different managerial cultural backgrounds and mind-sets (Buckley et al., 2015) are beginning to look at how integral cross-cultural literacy functions are in successful relationships, but not at any significant level or through any in-depth scholarship. As indicated in reviewing the literature, Māori are adept in practising principles of respect, openness, and acceptance of other cultures. This is itself not unique to Māori and therefore cannot be totally exploited for competitive advantage, but it is something that can be considered a tacit competency or asset in the internationalisation process.

The literature review provides the theoretical foundation and contextual background necessary to address the following research questions:

1. What are the attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances from the perspective of Māori businesses?
    - The review explores the relational perspective of internationalisation, emphasizing how trust, reciprocity, and alignment of values are critical in building successful alliances.
    - Studies on Māori values, such as Whanaungatanga (relationships) and Kanohi ki te Kanohi (face-to-face interactions), highlight the importance of relational approaches over purely transactional models in alliance formation.
    - It identifies key attributes like:
        - Cultural alignment.
        - Shared objectives and long-term commitment.
        - Communication and trust as pivotal for relationship success.
2. What is the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances?
    - The review discusses how Māori businesses are guided by principles like Tikanga (customary values) and Whakapapa (genealogy) in forming and sustaining alliances.
    - Māori values are linked to developing competencies such as:
        - Relational capital: Building trust through culturally informed practices.
        - Adaptive learning: Drawing on Mātauranga (indigenous knowledge) to navigate cultural and market complexities.
        - Resilience and sustainability: Embedding values like Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and long-term thinking into alliance strategies.

- It connects these values to broader theories of internationalisation and alliance capitalism, emphasizing how they offer a competitive advantage in cross-cultural settings.

The literature review synthesises insights from Indigenous entrepreneurship, relational international business theories, and Māori cultural frameworks to provide:

- A detailed understanding of the unique contributions Māori businesses make to alliance formation.
- A critique of existing international business theories, highlighting gaps in their applicability to Indigenous approaches.
- A foundation for developing a culturally relevant framework, such as the Tikanga Business Alliance Formation Process, proposed later in the thesis.

This structured approach ensures the literature review explicitly supports the research questions, providing a coherent foundation for the subsequent findings and discussion chapters.

Finally, the literature on internationalisation does not comprehensively address definitions of success for Indigenous entities such as Māori businesses internationalising. Despite the importance of the internationalisation of the Māori economy, there have been few studies on how this is achieved (Harmsworth, 2005; Tonumaipe'a, 2018; Warriner, 2009), and most of the existing research has been conceptual (Mika, 2014). Despite the importance of networks to Māori internationalisation, there has been scant empirical research in this area.

CHAPTER 3 / HOAHOA RANGAHAU / RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Kaihore he tarainga tahere I te ara

You will not be able to fashion a bird spear on the road. The bird spear must be made before leaving home, otherwise one will die of hunger.

This chapter presents the philosophical assumptions, including the research design strategies, which provide the groundwork for answering the research questions. This study examines how Māori businesses develop international business alliances and the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances with two key research questions:

- What are the attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances from the perspective of Māori businesses?
- What is the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances?

The nature of these questions is suited to qualitative research to allow for an interpretive approach, allowing participants a voice and the space to define their own experiences. The research design for this study is descriptive and utilises case studies in conjunction with semi-structured interviews and will be analysed through qualitative methods using a critical realism (CR) lens. Critical realism is a philosophical approach to research that seeks to understand the nature of reality and its influence on knowledge production. According to Bhaskar (1975) reality is seen as stratified into different levels: the empirical (what we experience), the actual (what happens, whether observed or not), and the real (underlying mechanisms and structures). Critical realists believe that while reality exists independently of our knowledge, our understanding of it is inevitably limited and shaped by social and cognitive factors (Bhaskar, 1998).

This approach acknowledges the existence of objective truths while recognising that our access to these truths is mediated by our experiences and interpretations (Archer et al. 1998). In research, critical realism supports a focus on uncovering causal mechanisms and explaining complex social phenomena rather than merely observing or describing them (Sayer, 2000). It is particularly useful for studying social science issues, as it allows researchers to consider both the observable patterns

and the underlying structures that drive them, bridging the gap between positivist (objective) and interpretivist (subjective) methodologies (Easton, 2010).

This philosophical approach is compatible with the Kaupapa Māori research methods which provide the overarching research philosophy guiding the study because of the participants and subject matter. The Māori way or Kaupapa Māori presupposes that when the world is examined through a Māori lens, then principles, concepts, philosophies are accepted in terms of how the world is seen and the study is legitimised by how Māori view these key concepts. These converging research philosophies inform the basis of this study when considering how Māori values are evaluated against internationalisation theories in business and particularly when we consider alliances, networks, and partnerships in international business, with a focus on relationship formation.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The primary research philosophy for this study is CR, as informed by Bhaskar (1975, 1998). CR approaches are particularly suited to both examining networks and relationships within internationalisation processes and conducting research with case studies, as suggested by Morais (2011). A few recent studies in international business have called for further CR research for its ability to encompass micro-level approaches and rich qualitative data such as ethnography and case studies, and the ability to contrast this with existing higher-level theory, bridging micro- and firm-level perspectives, and because it can allow for larger generalisations to be drawn from small numbers research (Ryan et al. 2012). Equally importantly, the nature of the questions posed examine cultural interpretations, alternate world views and Indigenous perspectives when we consider Māori businesses, and so we allow for Kaupapa Māori approaches which are discussed later. CR is positioned as an alternative to the positivist and interpretivist paradigms, and leverages elements of both to provide new approaches to developing knowledge. This research philosophy is also influenced by principles of Kaupapa Māori research as discussed by Smith (2012) in her seminal work acknowledging the views of Indigenous peoples worldwide. The Māori perspective on Kaupapa Māori research methodologies has been likened to a Treaty approach in terms of what the Treaty of Waitangi should have been, where two distinct cultures, systems and peoples came together to live as one, while recognising the distinct differences between them (Hoskins & Jones, 2017). Thus, the overall research philosophy allows for elements of an interpretivist approach which is required to interpret elements of the study. Interpretivism integrates human interest, as well as the positivist research paradigm, given much of the current theory in international business has originated from economic positivist foundations with the firm being the unit of analysis (Toyne, 1989).

The nature of this project requires sensitivity when considering the interests of Māori entities building relationships while internationalising. This sensitivity originates from the interests of a group of people (Māori) where knowledge, information and data shared are taonga (gift, treasure) and to be respected. The knowledge shared also belongs to those who have shared it (Kukutai & Taylor, 2016). CR may be a most appropriate philosophy which recognises the role of the subjective knowledge of social actors in each situation as well as the existence of independent structures that constrain and enable these actors to pursue certain actions in a particular setting. In this research, these structures are attuned to theories and practices within international business. An advantage of this type of research paradigm is that theorists and researchers can apply these methodological approaches in a manner which is consistent with the CR paradigm, being positioned to provide more detailed causal explanations of a given set of phenomena (Easton, 2010). Furthermore, the CR paradigm considers the actors' interpretations, structures and mechanisms that interact to produce the outcomes being observed. The coverage of extant CR-based literature represents a variety of social science disciplines including sociology (Pawson & Tilley 1997; Steinmetz, 1998) and economics (Downward et al., 2002; Lawson 1997). Business disciplines such as management (Fleetwood & Ackroyd, 2002; Tsoukas, 1989) and marketing (Hunt, 1990; Sobh & Perry, 2006; Zinkhan & Hirschheim, 1992) also add to the scope and range of disciplines covered by CR.

3.2.1 Critical Realism

As noted, CR has been situated as an alternative to the positivist and interpretivist paradigms, where elements of both are counterbalanced to provide new approaches to developing knowledge. In essence it could be suggested in this study that neither the positivist nor the interpretivist outlooks on reality and knowledge are sufficient on their own. When we filter a Māori world view, then CR may be more equipped to capture the dynamic philosophical methodologies which converge than positivist and interpretivist philosophical assertions which lead to merely partial and possibly biased outlooks on reality and knowledge. CR would also include a Māori research perspective such as Kaupapa Māori, which is addressed later. Naturally the positivist outlook has worked best for the natural sciences and the interpretivist outlook for the social sciences. But in the context of this study, the question at hand is not one which is easily dealt with. Consequently, there is a requirement to provide a philosophical approach which is sensitive to the dynamics which a positivist and interpretivist view cannot deal with in isolation of each other.

As stated earlier, when we consider CR across the proposed study, it can help inform aspects of social research in the field of international business by observing a philosophy of the nature of the social world while considering established theories which are generally economic in their origin and structural development (Belfrage & Hauf, 2017; Bordogna, 2020). The advantage of

this approach is the ability to look at the ontology of how we conceptualise the social world and an epistemology which informs how we can study the social world and develop knowledge. The ontology at the centre of this research philosophy maintains that much of reality exists and operates independently of our awareness or knowledge of it; thus, to Māori, it simply is. This ontology for Māori highlights key perspectives such as whanaungatanga ki te taiao (with the natural world). For example, the traditional view of the taiao or 'natural world' is that a natural order of the universe exists, by which the living and the non-living are connected. This Māori perception of connectedness highlights the relationships of all living things, rather than a Pākehā view which maintains ownership or control of the natural world. According to Marsden (2003, p. 67):

> the resources of the earth did not belong to man [sic] but rather, man belonged to the earth. Man as well as animal, bird, fish could harvest the bounty of mother earth's resource but they did not own them. Man had but user-rights.

Thus, a Māori way of thinking or perspective emphasises the connectivity and relationships within the natural world, which requires one to protect, care for, guard, nurture, connect with and cherish the natural world. These are realities which just are, and do not require human conception according to Māori (Rameka, 2018).

As stated, there is a reality which exists independent of its human conception (Bhaskar, 1975). Epistemology is clearly different from a theory of being, or ontology. Bhaskar (1975, 1979) stated that CR can act as a sensitising tool to help conceptualise the phenomenon being researched. Many problems are complex and demand an integrative approach, the black and white view of positivism versus interpretivism may be too simplistic and in this research project it is preferable to look for an integration of both. For example, on one end of the spectrum there is positivism, the modernist, logical empirical approach which assumes an independent reality can be perceived and measured in terms of internationalisation theories in international business. The juncture at which positivism is located is one of logic and data which supports empirical inquiry. At the other end of this spectrum are the interpretivist approaches which counter the bedrock assumption of positivism and claim that perceptions and the interpretations of what is perceived, can be observed from the outside in. The example referred to earlier, the perception of the natural world by Māori, is in direct contrast to the positivist position. By contrast, interpretivism is the principle that real understanding can only result from a process in which we try to grasp people's actions from the inside out rather than try to explain them from the outside in. It is important to note in this study that both have merit and the integration of both in CR is best suited for the purposes of this research.

The assertion that critical realists view external reality independently of specific world views prescribes the need for reality to be looked at from different perspectives and to continue to challenge the status quo (Cozette, 2008). This premise can be supported when considering how to approach reality and how this is done in an active, constructive way. The interaction experienced in an active world has an impact on views about reality. This may be problematic because are we able to remove ourselves to consider something in true objective reality directly. As an example, how can a relationship which is formed from a certain set of values, such as Māori values of hospitality, collectivism, family, generational or guardianship, work in isolation of another culture which may espouse individualism or non-generational goals. Kaupapa Māori views would come into play, where Māori should and will do what is best for Māori. When observing a view or perspective from cultures which are different from another and attempting to interpret or analyse them from a realist perspective, then it may be easier to explain what it looks like and how it may appear. But this will not explain the essence of why it looks this way, where it comes from, and how the actors view the experience.

CR adopts a view of reality as an open system (Bhaskar, 1998) and alludes to the fact that certain things are beyond our ability to control directly. From a purely scientific perspective, as with many of the natural and physical sciences, it is possible to design laboratory experiments as more or less closed systems. These experiments will have contextual conditions and exogenous influences which are regulated, controlled, and determined to make the phenomenon visible by reducing confounding effects and to ensure a common environment for replicated investigations. The limitation of this type of approach with these closed experiments which isolate the specific causes of a given outcome, event or state, is that it does not consider variations which may impact from the non-scientific realm, such as social systems. Social systems and other complex phenomena rarely display such experimental or spontaneous closure (Bhaskar, 1998) and, as Table 8 indicates, the stratified relationship of this ontology highlights experiences are all connected if we consider a Māori world view.

Social systems, such as socio-technical systems in organisational settings, cannot adequately be constrained in the real world as can be done with laboratory experiments. Each event is not only dependent on the causal powers available within a social structure, but also on the continuously changing contextual conditions and the evolving properties of components within the structure or, in the case of this study, value systems of Māori and non-Māori alike. As mechanisms are enacted, the structure is modified because of their effects (Archer, 1995), making constant contextual conditions a rare exception. Instead, because the boundaries of social systems are typically fluid and permeable, one cannot assume that the mechanisms that were enacted in each system and environmental context will generate the same events if enacted in the future. In CR,

the dynamic and variable reality of open systems shifts the focus onto identifying the tendency of mechanisms to act within a specific contextual environment at a specified time (Sayer, 1992).

Table 8. Stratified Ontology of Critical Realism

	Domain of Real	Domain of Actual	Domain of Empirical
Mechanisms	X		
Events	X	X	
Experiences	X	X	X

Note. Adapted from Bhaskar (1975, p. 13).

Chua (1986) argued that epistemological assumptions relate to the notion of what counts as acceptable truth when specifying the source, characteristics, and assessment of truth claims. Furthermore, it is these epistemological assumptions that determine how to acquire and develop knowledge claims, including the evaluation of the truth or validity of these claims, and how these claims are to be measured against extent knowledge. Māori value systems and the impact these have on how business is conducted is very much rooted in how Māori perceive their own truth and the validity of their 'world view' and is not subject to debate.

CR takes the stance of positing descriptions of reality based on an analysis of the experiences observed and interpreted by the participants, along with other types of data. This leads onto the resulting knowledge claims which in turn are focused on specifying and describing those elements of reality which must exist for the events and experiences under examination to have occurred. It is the nature and form of these knowledge claims which are derived from specific epistemological assumptions linked to the ontological premises of CR. This position therefore supports the idea that the truth of Māori-based values for Māori can interact and engage with perspectives which are interpreted by Māori participants.

For studying contemporary phenomenon within complex human cross-cultural relationships, CR as an ontological premise helps to uncover the causal mechanisms and contextual factors that combined to generate them, and case study research is well-suited to conduct CR research in the context of Māori business values and relationship formation in international business alliances.

Methodological principles for the conduct and evaluation of critical realist research using explanatory case studies are set out in Table 9, below. The principles are derived from both the ontological and epistemological premises of CR. The definition of 'principle' is used in a way which is like the guidance offered for interpretivist field studies (Klein & Myers, 1999), design science research (Hevner et al., 2004) and critical theory research (Myers, 2009). These principles are relevant to the current proposed study. The principles proposed are fundamental ideas which

will assist in conducting and evaluating this research. Wynn and Williams (2012) have suggested that these principles are important insights and essential requirements which provide a strong foundation for CR as the basis for sound research methodology.

Table 9. Principles of Conducting Critical Realist Case Study Research – Examples from CR Case Studies in Information Systems

Methodological Principles of Critical Realism			
CR Principle	**Ontological and Epistemological Basis**	**Evaluation Criteria**	**Examples from CR Case Studies in Information Systems**
Explication of Events Identify and abstract the events being studied, usually from experiences, as a foundation for understanding what really happened in the underlying phenomena.	•Stratified ontology •Mediated knowledge	•Thick description of case "story" including actions and outcomes •An abstracted sequence of events (including the experiences of participants and observers)	•Morton (2006) described a detailed sequence of five composite events associated with the strategic IS planning project. •Volkoff et al. (2007) abstracted core events from empirical observations as changes to structure associated with an IS implementation.
Explication of Structure and Context Identify components of social and physical structure, contextual environment, along with relationships among them. (Critically redescribed from actor's viewpoint into theoretical perspective.)	•Stratified ontology •Open-systems perspective •Mediated knowledge •Unobservability of mechanisms	•Description of the structural entities, constituent parts, and contextual conditions existing in the case •Identification of the relationships among the entities •Explication of changes to the structure •Description of the resulting emergent properties	•Bygstad (2010) identified various elements of the information infrastructure, and the relationships among them. •Morton (2006) identified organisation units and actors as primary structural entities, and described three structural relationships with causal implications for observed outcomes. •Volkoff et al. (2007) explored elements of structure, structure changes, and contextual influences by focusing on participant activities, responsibilities, and interactions.
Retroduction Identify and elaborate on powers/tendencies of structure that may have interacted to generate explicated events.	•Emergence •Focus on explanation •Explanation via mechanisms •Multiple explanations •Unobservability of mechanisms	•Identification of a set of plausible candidate causal mechanisms •Logical and analytical support for the existence of proposed mechanisms linking the structure to events	•Bygstad (2010) explained how the emergent higher-level structures affect lower-level entities and vice versa in identifying the innovation reinforcement and service reinforcement mechanisms
Empirical Corroboration Ensure that proposed mechanisms have causal power and that they have better explanatory power than alternatives.	•Independent reality •Stratified ontology •Unobservability of mechanisms •Multiple explanations	•Analytical validation of proposed mechanism based on case data •Assessment of explanatory power of each mechanism relative to alternative explanations •Selection of the mechanism(s) that offers the best explanation	•Volkoff et al. (2007) and Morton (2006) demonstrated causal efficacy by using the hypothesised mechanisms to explain other events occurring in the cases. •Bygstad (2010) discussed a comparative analysis of candidate mechanisms to determine which offered the strongest explanatory power.

Triangulation & Multimethods Employ multiple approaches to support causal analysis based on a variety of data types and sources, analytical methods, investigators, and theories.	•Independent reality •Mediated knowledge •Unobservability of mechanisms •Multiple explanations	•Multiple theoretical perspectives •Multiple analytical and methodological techniques •Variety of data sources and types •Multiple investigators	•Zachariadis et al. (2010) integrated a series of studies based on interview data, econometric analysis, survey data, and historical analysis. •Volkoff et al. (2007) utilised multiple data sources, data types, and investigators.

Note. Source: Wynn and Williams (2012).

In a critical realist approach it is important to take into consideration and incorporate a more sophisticated approach, when addressing an oversimplified ontological position. CR promotes applying a triangulation and multi-methods approach strategy which in turn provides support for causal analysis when working through an array of sources, philosophical research designs, methods, and theories. The benefits of triangulation are obvious in developing confidence in the research data, providing another perspective or worldwide view, the challenging of or integrating theories, finding solutions or frameworks, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem (Jick, 1979). When triangulation is effectively introduced into a study, several benefits come in to play in that the completeness and confirmation of data in the research findings of qualitative research are enhanced. Streubert and Carpenter (1999) have suggested that "if different philosophic and research traditions will help to answer a research question more completely, then researchers should use triangulation." This is particularly relevant when applying Kaupapa Māori with other research methodologies and philosophies employed in this study.

Across the premise of this study is the convergence or flow of internationalisation and methodology perspectives. This flow is derived from the evolution of internationalisation theories which have been originally economic- and transaction-based, to more relational- and alliance-based perspectives. Studies of these perspectives in internationalisation would have traditionally been accustomed to taking a more positivist approach in a research methodology, whereas the dynamic nature of this study requires methodologies and philosophies which are interpretivist, while recognising Kaupapa Māori research. It is from this foundation that incorporating these methodologies, perspectives and philosophies supports the analysis of data for this study.

This pliability exposes the social phenomenon and importance of value systems for Māori when examining how relationship formation occurs in international business alliances, whereas international business, as a discipline, has employed a largely positivist approach.

3.2.2 Critical Realism: Focus on Causality

In the pursuit of robust research practices, the actions of researchers are guided by the systems of belief by which they generate and interpret knowledge derived about reality (Chua, 1986; Myers,

2009). These belief systems or paradigms (Guba, 1990) can be defined by their responses to three sets of questions involving ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Ontology deals with assumptions about the nature of reality; epistemology investigates the evidentiary assessment and justification of knowledge claims; and methodology refers to the process or procedures by which we create these knowledge claims (Chua, 1986; Guba, 1990; Orlikowski & Baroudi 1991). Kaupapa Māori ontology indicates that there is a set of philosophical beliefs as well as social practices (tikanga). As discussed earlier in this study, they are based on (whanaungatanga) interdependence between and among humankind (kotahitanga), the relationship to the 'gods' and the cosmos (wairuatanga), and acknowledgement that humans are guardians of the environment (kaitiakitanga), combining in the interconnection between mind, body and spirit. Taken together, these ethics inform traditional Māori ontology and assumptions about human nature; that is, 'what is real' for Māori.

In other words, these research paradigms comprise three elements: a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology, and criteria for validity (MacNaughton et al., 2001). Accordingly, Neuman (2000) and Creswell (2003) have described these paradigms, and their associated epistemology, ontology, or even research methodology, as being categorised by some researchers as positivist (post-positivist), constructivist, interpretivist, transformative, emancipatory, critical, pragmatism, deconstructivist and postpositivist (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It is important to recognise that in the post-positivist paradigm, the philosophy is determined by cause and effect (Creswell, 2003), while interpretivist researchers understand "the world of human experience" (Cohen & Manion, 1994: p36). It is from this position that the likes of Creswell (2003) and Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2011) have asserted that interpretivist researchers discover reality through participants' views, and the background and experiences of the researcher. This is certainly suitable for the subject type and actors being addressed in this study when looking at the world view of Māori. While this study presents international business theory and knowledge, Kaupapa Māori must be considered when contemplating which philosophical paradigm to adopt.

The advantages of utilising this type of philosophy are that CR, as previously stated, recognises the role of the subjective knowledge of the social actors. An advantage in this type of research paradigm is that theorists and researchers applying these methodological approaches consistent with the CR paradigm are positioned to provide more detailed causal explanations of a given set of phenomena. In this case, it is the phenomena of Māori forming business relationships within international business. Importantly the CR paradigm considers the actors' interpretations, and acknowledges Māori world views and the structures and mechanisms that interact to produce the outcomes being observed. From the perspective of the subject and their own beliefs, the value systems in CR provides some credibility in terms of the way it may be applied to the research. This is relevant considering the way Māori participants will view the researcher and their

credibility. This particular methodology perspective, Te Awekotuku (1991) suggests, means that the most effective researcher will be a highly trained individual, one who is sensitive, has experience and is willing to share their views openly with Māori. In the case of this study, they will also be Māori. This becomes an asset because of the ability to engender trust quickly, provide credibility with participants and ensure that the participants' views are recognised as the centre of the findings that will come forth, therefore respecting the mana (status and prestige) of the participants. When this type of environment is created then Māori can not only see the benefits to the research but also to themselves, hapū, or iwi, (Smith, 1999a).

While it is important to note that the interpretive paradigm can accommodate multiple perspectives and versions of truth and an understanding of the context in which the research is being conducted, it is equally important to acknowledge that the positivist paradigm is important particularly when we look at the environment an actor is subjected to. It was proposed by Willis (2007) that interpretivism usually seeks to understand a particular phenomenon and context, the central belief being that the interpretive paradigm recognises that reality is socially constructed. Thus, by applying a positivist outlook in conjunction with an interpretive paradigm we can provide more detailed causal explanations of a given set of phenomena. It is no surprise that most research today is constructed within a western paradigm. When we consider culture or Māori world views, then Willis' proposition supports the application of interpretation to investigate a phenomenon in a study such as this which involves several cultures. The inclusion of a Kaupapa Māori approach serves to counter a purely western paradigm of research and positivist outlooks.

Applying a hybrid approach recognises the strength of merging both interpretivist and positivist approaches. Thus, when we apply post-positivism, this approach generally looks for the discovery of universal and critical theory or the rules actors are subjected to, and interpretivism includes, as described by Willis (2007), "accepting and seeking multiple perspectives, being open to change, practicing iterative and emergent data collection techniques, promoting participatory and holistic research, and going beyond the inductive and deductive approach" (p. 583). Attempting to explore the understandings of participants in an interpretive and positivist approach, CR provides a context not only for the participants to express their world views as they respond to the researcher and the researcher's background, as noted above with respect to Māori, but also to consider the structures they are bound to and the causation within this environment of interaction.

There is, however, a temptation to focus strongly on the interpretivist side. This is because, as Willis (2007) proposed, the goal of interpretivism is to value subjectivity, and "interpretivists eschew the idea that objective research on human behaviour is possible" (p. 110), and this may be more in line with the nature of the topic of this study. In addition, Smith (1993) has indicated that supporters of interpretivism do not accept the existence of universal standards for research;

instead, the standards guiding research are “products of a particular group or culture” (p. 5). However, one must consider that the participants are still influenced and subject to the rules and norms of the environment they are part of, namely Māori businesses operating internationally with non-Māori. It is also correct to say that the participants being Māori will help to establish the standards guiding this research while the researcher is able to explore their specific cultural value systems within the bounds of the relationship formation of the current business environment. In this case the role of the researcher is not to seek the answers for their studies from an inelastic perspective but to approach the reality from that of the participants or, in this case, Māori businesspeople who are operating internationally, as well as objectively within the environment this phenomenon exists in. The purely positivist standpoint will only seek one correct answer, while interpretivism allows for more inclusivity because of multiple viewpoints of different individuals from different groups or cultures. The CR standpoint is to consider both and work through an amalgamation of philosophies to explain the phenomena. Willis (2007) has maintained that the leading viewpoints of each nation, region, culture, or ethnic group are often founded in unique experiences attached to the perspectives of those individuals and when we consider the acceptance of multiple perspectives in interpretivism this often leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation. The appropriateness of this type of research philosophy will enhance our understanding of unique cultural groups (Morehouse, 2011) and when we consider contemporary CR, the positivist influence provides a counterweight to considering the environment actors work within. For this study and the research philosophy behind this topic, it is appropriate to apply a CR ideology, utilising qualitative methods which strongly support the concept of examining reality and participant experience. In support of this philosophy, Creswell (2009) stated that “qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p.4). The methodological philosophy of this study is a CR paradigm and the methods being applied in this research are qualitative in nature.

The paradigm is a world view or set of assumptions about how things work and why. As noted above, the interpretive paradigm is subjective, which assumes different people perceive the truth differently. For this study, a CR approach supports an exploration of if and how Māori values and tikanga were incorporated into relationship-building in global enterprise, while at the same time identifying how these relationship-building dynamics marry existing theory in international business.

A qualitative research path is appropriate when conducting exploratory research, which is research on a concept, people, or situation that little is known about, and CR allows for the researcher to encompass this type of approach The paucity of such studies, as found in the

literature review highlights the lack of knowledge or understanding that currently exists around tikanga Māori (Māori values, perspectives and practices) applied to internationalisation.

3.2.3 Critical Realism and Kaupapa Māori Research

Kaupapa Māori research as a concept has evolved from several perspectives that relate to the idea of self-determination and identity in economic, cultural, political and spiritual aspirations, including the way we view research (Glover, 2002; Smith, 1999a). Martel et al. (2022) advocated for research methodologies that recognise the world view of Indigenous peoples, and Māori in this case, and research philosophies such as CR are considered favourable to this type of thinking. CR is an acceptable approach and partner to Kaupapa Māori research in that it allows for an equal emphasis of Māori world views while ensuring that exploitation is negated (Smith, 2021).

There is a collaborative approach between Māori and non-Māori, where research skills and support are actively being applied within academia while providing opportunities for greater protection of Māori data and participants (Powick, 2003). By nature, CR should accommodate different perspectives on understanding reality and the interaction with Kaupapa Māori research may have similarities to interactions with interpretivist philosophies. This is a developing methodology which seeks to express a Māori world view and, specifically, the way Māori should be studied. The emergence of social, political, and economic development in many areas of Māoridom has created a groundswell of support for employing Indigenous ways and processes in Māori research. With the advent of iwi settlement entities, the ongoing growth of ahu whenua (land) trusts, Māori immersion schools and health organisations, prominence in media, and Māori businesses formation, has created some momentum within Māoridom and academia to develop more effective ways of researching the Māori perspective (Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003; Mrabure et al., 2021; Powick, 2003). In the context of this study, Kaupapa Māori informs the approach in terms of the conduct of this research, while CR provides the theoretical lens.

A Kaupapa-Māori-driven perspective has provided an impetus for methodologies other than westernised positivist-orientated research to be considered and, equally, the critique of these positivist perspectives (Cram, 2001; G. H. Smith, 2003; L. T. Smith, 1999a). Barnes (2000) and Powick (2003) have suggested that western positivist-orientated research has influenced research into Māori and other non-western world views for many years. The impact of colonisation has ensured that Indigenous peoples have been examined from an unreal view of who they are (Smith, 1999a). The exploitation of research influences upon Māori began to be challenged by Māori academics, with questions on interpretation and accuracy (McNicholas & Barrett, 2002; Tearikі & Spoonley, 1992). Māori were being compared to non-Māori in unfavourable ways which only

depicted Māori in less than positive ways because of how the data was being analysed and viewed by Pākehā (Bishop, 1996; Powick, 2003).

Indigenous world views in research counter an emphasis on western positivist methodologies which quite often ignore the real interests and perspectives of Indigenous peoples (Jack et al., 2011; Prasad, 2012). The span between positivist, interpretivist and Kaupapa Māori research is accessed through CR approaches which acknowledge the importance of each.

Kaupapa Māori research is counter-intuitive to the concept of the "the way of doing", since it is just the way it is (Barnes, 2000; Bishop, 1996; Gibbs, 2001; Smith, 1999a). Applying principles of tikanga or the right way of doing characterises what Kaupapa Māori research is supposed to be and what it represents in regard to a Māori way of doing and viewing everything. It is therefore as equally important to focus on the doing as it is to obtain the data or information. In no way should principles of positivist and interpretivist philosophies be unable to be applied in the same discourse in adopting research philosophies when making considerations for Māori studies.

Māori have always applied tino rangatiratanga, which means sovereignty, self-determination, governance, autonomy, and independence in forms of identity and in how they view themselves (Pihama et al., 2002). This type of thinking ensures that they hold some type of authority or control over how important certain things are to Māori and how they view the world. When we consider how this applies to studies or research involving Māori, it clearly defines that research should be Māori-centred, specific and true to the Māori (Bishop, 1996).

The strategy behind Kaupapa Māori research, or research by Māori, for Māori and with Māori (Smith, 1999b), is about ownership, validation and acknowledging a view of Indigenous peoples that says they are relevant and there is a way of doing which reflects who they are.

Eketone (2008, p. 67) suggested that when Kaupapa Māori research is conducted, there is a fluidity which indicates that the writer does not so much write, as they are guided by the effects that the Kaupapa Māori process has on the research. The position is that in order to do Kaupapa Māori research, one should be Māori. The researcher should understand a te ao perspective of the world, have a grasp of te reo and a knowledge of tikanga to be able to do this research (Glover, 2002; Jahnke & Taiapa, 2003). One of the challenges in this process of doing research is that many Māori researchers have non-Māori supervisors to guide them (Bishop, 1996). In this study, it is important to note that this researcher has been guided by a non-Māori as the primary supervisor, an expert in the field of international business and also, importantly, a highly prominent Māori academic rangatira. Pākehā can participate in Kaupapa Māori research, if they do not take a dominant position where the control and authority to make key decisions are in their hands.

The Māori researcher will understand concepts, world views and principles which are known to them. Culture is more ably interpreted, sensitivities are understood, and an insider perspective is advantageous, which competes with the idea that an outsider is more objective (Bishop & Glynn, 2000, p. 4).

Eurocentrism is a dominant concept where western beliefs, ideologies and perspectives are considered the right and only way to hold a world view. This view gives no consideration to or acknowledgement of other world views or perspectives – it is almost omnipotent in its application and impact in political, societal, educational, and economic systems, and it does not allow for any other view to exist:

> Eurocentrism is generally defined as a cultural phenomenon that views the histories and cultures of non-Western societies from a European or Western perspective. Europe, more specifically Western Europe or "the West," functions as a universal signifier in that it assumes the superiority of European cultural values over those of non-European societies. Although Eurocentrism is anti-universalist in nature, it presents itself as a universalist phenomenon and advocates for the imitation of a Western model based on "Western values" – individuality, human rights, equality, democracy, free markets, secularism, and social justice – as a cure to all kinds of problems, no matter how different various societies are socially, culturally, and historically. (Chatterjee, 2011, p. 321)

A Māori ontological and epistemological perspective demands autonomy over all that is Māori and rejects the dominant perspective of Eurocentrism. This whakairo becomes quite relevant when we consider whakawhanaungatanga and how important this principle is to Māori in the relationship-formation process. Thus, relationship formation in business for Māori is impacted by ways of being and knowing, which in turn present patterns of behaviour which may not be acknowledged in a Eurocentric world view and may be taken for granted.

The relationship between Kaupapa Māori and critical realism can be understood as a complementary interplay between an indigenous Māori worldview and a philosophical framework that emphasises understanding the underlying causes of social phenomena. In the context of this study, Kaupapa Māori is a research methodology and philosophical approach grounded in Māori values, principles and worldviews. It centres on Māori knowledge (mātauranga Māori), tikanga (customs), and the collective aspirations of Māori communities. Kaupapa Māori prioritises relational ways of knowing, emphasising whakapapa (genealogy), whanaungatanga (relationships), and manaakitanga (hospitality and care). It focuses on empowering Māori by integrating cultural identity and sovereignty into research.

Critical realism is a philosophical approach to social science that seeks to understand the real mechanisms and structures underpinning observable events. It posits a stratified ontology,

distinguishing between the empirical (what is experienced), the actual (events that occur), and the real (underlying structures and mechanisms). Critical realism emphasizes causality, complexity, and the interplay of structure and agency. The relationship between both Kaupapa Māori research and Critical realism emphasises:

1. **Ontology and Epistemology**:
    - Both kaupapa Māori and critical realism align in their rejection of purely positivist approaches. Kaupapa Māori values indigenous ontologies that see the world as interconnected, spiritual, and relational. Similarly, critical realism goes beyond surface-level observations to explore the deeper realities and mechanisms shaping phenomena.
2. **Focus on Relationality**:
    - Kaupapa Māori places a strong emphasis on relationships, both between people and the natural world. Critical realism complements this by focusing on the relational structures that govern interactions and outcomes, such as power dynamics or socio-economic systems.
3. **Empowerment and Emancipation**:
    - Kaupapa Māori seeks to empower Māori communities by embedding Māori values and perspectives in research. Critical realism similarly aims to uncover mechanisms of oppression or inequality, enabling change and emancipation. Both approaches share a transformative agenda.
4. **Methodology**:
    - Kaupapa Māori uses indigenous methods such as pūrākau (storytelling) and whakawhanaungatanga (building relationships) to gather and interpret knowledge. Critical realism supports such approaches by advocating for pluralistic methodologies that respect contextual and cultural specificities.
5. **Causality and Context**:
    - Critical realism's stratified ontology aligns with the Māori understanding of layered realities, where historical, spiritual, and social contexts influence outcomes. Kaupapa Māori research explores these layers through whakapapa and mātauranga Māori, seeking holistic explanations.

By integrating Kaupapa Māori and critical realism, researchers can respect and elevate Māori worldviews while employing robust philosophical tools to analyse and address complex social issues. This approach fosters culturally grounded, emancipatory research practices.

3.2.4 Critical Realism and Relationship Formation

It is apt that we consider CR as an appropriate research philosophy when we measure it against business relationships which could be viewed as socially constructed entities (Ryan et al., 2012). Business relationships are key to Māori in developing any commercial opportunity and in tandem with this thinking is the "reality" and the ability to have an influence over outcomes and events. The "reality" that sits within CR is something that can have a causal influence or an ability to generate developments. Ideologies and beliefs are contestable in many situations, but the acceptance and adherence of one to these beliefs creates a clear "reality" and thus makes a difference to people's actions. Thus, for a Māori businessperson, developing an international business relationship becomes a reality. The reality of this relationship development can cause events to occur and may influence the characters whose activities directly influence the engagement. Ryan et al. (2012) have determined that business relationships could be deemed as real entities, and that CR provides an ontological justification of why the processes of business relationships are legitimate and necessary objects of analysis.

It is a contention that business relationships and networks are real structures and cannot of their own be explained by analysing an individual (Bhaskar, 1998). This becomes relevant for this study when we look at Māori business values as a group or cultural set and consider how Māori engage in networks and the structures which influence the way they develop networks or partnerships in relationship formation. The CR explanations of business relationships do not allow for them to be reduced to the properties of individuals alone, as this would exclude the configuration between (network) parties (Bhaskar, 1998; Elder-Vass, 2005). Ryan et al. (2012) summarised reflective questions with responses in Table 10:

Table 10. A Summary of Reflective Questions and Suggested Responses

Tasks in the research process	Sub-themes in the research process	Reflective question	Suggested response
Task one: designing critical realist research	Ontological realism	1. How does the view that relationships and networks are 'real' affect our attempts to understand and explain them?/or what are relationships if they are not seen as 'real'?	We need to try to understand business relationships such that their properties are legitimate objects of analysis.
		2. How does the critical realist view of relationships and networks-as-structure deal with the issue of change and transformation?	CR proposes interplay between human agency as the primary mechanism of change and the provision of stability via structure that involves learning, reproduction and elaboration processes, which emerge throughout the lifetime of the relationship.
	Epistemic relativism	3. Does taking a critical realist position mean that we should consider our knowledge of business relationships as corresponding directly with our empirical observations?	There is no simple correspondence between ideas and reality as knowledge is always fallible and theory-laden.
	Abductive research design	4. How can we design our research so as to allow for higher levels of theoretical sensitivity?	We need to make use of theoretical lenses to sensitize the researcher to collect certain kind of data, but to not restrict data collection to only that type of data.
Task two: field investigating in critical realist research	Choice of unit of observation	5. What kinds of data should a critical realist be interested in and why?	Narratives, documents, observations; data triangulation
	Choice of unit of analysis	6. What role do events play in critical realist research?	Events occur at the domain of actual and are the lead to specification of causal mechanisms.
		6a. What then, along with and beyond events, might critical realist research be drawn to, in the study of business relationships and networks?	Human actions, perceptions and decisions and the consequences of these on the relationship.
Task three: analyzing data in critical realist research	Retroduction	7. How can we move beyond rich description and consider causality in business relationship and network research?	CR requires particular modes of thinking to reflect on not only what happened, but what could happen or what hasn't happened; taking into account the situational and contingent nature of causal powers.
	Identification of mechanisms	8. What are the possible sources of mechanisms and how do we decide on those most important?	A priori from existing alternative theories or posteriori from the data, including within the conscious intentions of actors, and in a less observable state within the context of processes.
Task 4: causal explanations in critical realism research	Judgmental rationalism	9. How can a researcher judge between competing explanations of the phenomenon under examination?	This is based on judgmental rationalism where all explanations/conjectures are not equally fallible
	Identification of boundaries of explanation	10. When do we stop causal analysis?	When we can make sense of the internal relations in a relationship and accepting that our explanations are both local and theoretically generalizable. Of course other more practical issues can also play a part in deciding the end date of research.

Note. Source: Ryan et al. (2012, p. 147.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design for this study was crafted around case studies. These case studies were centred on the use of storytelling or pūrākau with key managers or people who lead the internationalisation of their respective firms, projects or ventures. CR also supports this type of research design for this project and acknowledges the interpretive perspective in this study.

A research design is the thinking and logic that connects a research purpose and the research questions to the processes for empirical data collection, data analysis, to make conclusions drawn from the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Rowley, 2002; Yin, 2009). The research design for this study was developed from the research paradigm around interpretive case studies (Creswell, 2009) and the use of interpretive case studies helped define the key exploratory research decisions. This type of research design allows for the role of prior theory, where researchers may attain some theoretical sensitivity from several sources such as the literature and professional and personal experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this study, the researcher is involved in a professional sense in a Māori business which is internationalising and has a rich source of personal experiences, relationships and networks from working globally for many years. However, Miles and Huberman (1994) have suggested that "pre-structured research" (p. 17) is an important factor when the researcher has some understanding of the topic through professional and personal experience. Notwithstanding, the researcher must attempt to limit any

preconceptions arising from the literature review into the field; in other words, no specific theories or propositions should be developed prior to meeting with participants. It is relevant to point out that, according to Eisenhardt (1989), it is very difficult for researchers to start with a clean theoretical slate, and it is "impossible to embark upon research without some idea of what one is looking for" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 157).

3.4 RESEARCH METHOD – CASE STUDIES

While Bhaskar (1995) did not prescribe a specific research methodology, several CR researchers have identified the case study method as a good fit for exploring the interaction of structure, events, actions, and context to identify and explicate causal mechanisms (Ackroyd, 2010; Easton, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Mingers, 2006), and network internationalisation (Morias, 2011). A case study "involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data" (Easton, 2010 p. 119). "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2003, p. 13). By focusing on a "sustained consideration of activities and behaviour in a particular location" (Ackroyd, 2010, p. 535). Additionally, it has been stated by Yin (2003) that

> the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and… relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion (pp. 13-14).

As indicated, the research strategy is qualitative by approach and nine case studies are undertaken with Māori businesspersons who are currently experiencing the process of internationalisation. Merriam (2009) and Pickard (2013) said that the purpose of case studies is to provide an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit situated in a specific context to provide insight into real-life situations. The strength of using case studies in research includes the ability to use a variety of research methods as well as establishing a rapport with the research subjects in their natural settings, obtaining sufficiently rich descriptions that can be transferred to similar situations (Merriam, 2009) and, ultimately, gaining in-depth insights (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2001). The defining feature of case study research is its focus on 'how' and 'why' questions (Myers, 2009). This supports studies which are descriptive and exploratory (Mouton, 2001). The unit of analysis is the international relationship between the Māori businessperson and the relationships they have developed towards international business alliances. The focus reviews interactions and ventures related to the alliance, as opposed to the overall business. The ventures being examined were one venture (alliance) per business entity, meaning there was not more than

one venture per business. This supported a spread across sectors for comparability and cross-case analysis. Case studies can be conducted until data saturation is reached, and it is thought 6-10 studies were sufficient for this project (Eisenhardt & Graebnar, 2007).

The qualitative approach assisted in determining how Māori businesses form relationships in international business alliances. The case study focus recognises contextual conditions, which are highly relevant to the phenomenon being investigated. Case studies are a suitable research method when the phenomenon is intertwined with its context, and it is important that it is studied in conjunction with contemporary events, and the experience of the actors. The case study can utilise multiple sources of evidence and data collection techniques. Yin (1994) listed six major sources of evidence: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts. However, in qualitative research and with respect to case studies, data collection and analysis does pose some concerns. The collection of data can be time consuming and onerous, with the potential to accumulate large amounts of data. Another disadvantage may relate to subjectivity in the data collection and analysis process. It is possible that bias may form based on the interests and beliefs of the researcher over the participants' behaviours.

Finally, when the researcher gets to reporting the findings, it may be difficult as there is a need to establish the rigour of the process applied and the validity of the findings (Darke et al., 1998). The data collection and data analysis form an iterative process with the option of accessing further data collection dependent on the results of previous analysis. This analysis can be a subjective process dependent on the researcher's approach and this underlines the importance of the researcher.

Caution is needed, however, when working on case studies under a qualitative interpretive framework. As Myers (2009) stated, it is "a serious mistake to think that case study research is an easy or a soft option" (p. 82), and it may be difficult to gain access to the intended candidates for interviews. Simply getting access to the intended organisations and targeted people may be difficult because of time constraints and the workload of a company or individual (Hill & Wright, 2000). Some organisations or individuals will fail to see the value of the research and persuading them to give up valuable time to participate in a study could be difficult (Jeffcoate et al., 2002; Myers, 2009). In this study, the importance of having relationships with the organisations or individuals involved was crucial, and the ability to leverage these networks was an important aspect of curtailing some of the challenges listed above in qualitative interpretive case studies. As discussed, the importance of the Kaupapa Māori approach in this research project was conducive to facilitating engagement and building trust between a Māori researcher and those Māori being researched (Smith et al., 2022).

3.4.1 Case Study Selection

Underlying the unit of analysis is the selection of cases, according to Eisenhardt (1989), who stated that the "random selection of cases is neither necessary, not even preferable" (p. 537); relevance to the research questions rather than representativeness is the criterion for the selection of cases (Carson et al., 2001). As such, and within Māoridom, having knowledge, networks, and familiarity, including whakapapa, are an important part of establishing and building relationships. Hartley (1994) observed that those contacts in industry, academia, and friendship can be helpful in establishing a list from which cases can be selected and approached as participants. This approach was also used by Chibelushi and Costello (2009), where potential cases were identified using a snowball sampling strategy. A snowball sampling strategy focuses on personal networks and word-of-mouth referrals; and in the present study the researcher applied these known networks and relationships to great effect.

The case studies allowed for available information to be supplied by the key businesspersons interviewed, to support the ability (Pervan & Maimbo, 2005) to triangulate data (Yin, 2009) and to allow significant insights to emerge (Myers, 1997). These interviewees' different perspectives emphasised the dynamics around developing international business alliances and relationship formation while considering Māori values. It was crucial to identify the participants for this study who were key to the processes and strategies involved in developing the international relationships in business for Māori entities. The participants of the case study were involved in internationalising the business while engaging with other cultures. It has been commented that interpretivist research often relies on total immersion in a setting; however, this is not necessarily a requirement and because of the need to understand what relationship formation looks like from an international business perspective, a CR approach underpinned the need to look at the phenomenon holistically.

The selection of cases relied on their internationalisation processes at the time data was collected. With the intrinsic similarities and/or differences between them, this sample size had to be adequate for testing the same theory in different settings. Accessibility to the intended case organisations was a partial determinant of who was selected. It was also those firms that were actively internationalising which helped to determine who participated in this study.

While having strong and established networks is a significant advantage in identifying and interviewing participants, there can be some challenges. These challenges relate to the participants who may have difficulty in adjusting to the role of an interviewer who is known to them in a different context, where responses may be skewed or affected because of researcher–participant familiarity. In countering this potential issue, it was acknowledged, as Myers and Newman (2007) stated, that "the more comfortable interviewees are, and the more they are

prepared to open up and talk, the better the disclosure is likely to be" (p. 15). Some Māori recognise the importance of known networks and being able to trust each other, and the influence of an existing relationship also works positively in the sense that Māori want to be open and transparent in communicating what is important to them. This impacted positively on the quality of the data gathered and allowed for frank, open discussion on why the participant viewed the world in such a way.

Semi-structured interviews suit the pūrākau approach of narrative and allowing the participants to express themselves without restrictions, permitting the integration of existing theory as an initial frame, but enabling participants to give their view and suggest new avenues for investigation. However, it is important, as stated previously, that a participant should not feel inhibited or confined in the sharing of knowledge. This also means that there is some flexibility for the researcher to adjust some questions, as determined by the flow and direction of the interview. In many cases, the interviewees may not know the correct terms for concepts they are using but this does not imply a lack of understanding or application of the concepts. Adapting the formulation of probe questions, including terminologies, to suit the background and degrees of understanding of the participants in this study encouraged open feedback and impressions, allowing for enhanced, data-rich information. Importantly, the fact that the researcher is of the same culture and has some mana amongst the participants also assisted with rapport, improving the conversational nature of the interview and promoting an environment which was responsive.

Ka motu te mahanga I te weka e kore a muri e hokia

The woodhen escaped from the snare does not return.

The proverb above alludes to the knowledge gained and the lessons learnt from those experiences shared in the pūrākau of participants. It is hoped that what was shared will provide guidelines in terms of future engagement and experience with Māori businesses and with Māori in business. It is important to reiterate the strength of oral histories, narratives, stories, and case studies, which tend to be quite effective, especially as a Kaupapa Māori way of 'doing' research (Smith, 2012). Semi-structured interviews are the primary means of gathering knowledge in a subjective tone, and they align well with storytelling, a Māori way of sharing knowledge, and reflect the importance of how Māori share mātauranga. Pūrākau, as noted, could be considered the Māori way of storytelling, as it was used before the colonial era as a method of passing history from generation to generation (Ruwhiu & Cone, 2010; Walker et al., 2006). Passing on knowledge this way was evident in many waiata, whakapapa, karakia, whakataukī and whaikōrero, and was a

way of sharing and supporting Māori culture and language (Lee, 2009). Pūrākau are powerful as they contain Māori perspectives, world views and cultural indicators; these are essential characteristics of the identity and experience of being Māori in a variety of contexts, including business and enterprise.

Ruwhiu and Cathro (2014) wrote about the need to have the research process grounded in Māori tradition, and pūrākau is a Māori tradition. Smith (1999a) understood the power of pūrākau as a decolonising methodology – methodologies that oppose traditional western positivist approaches by re-creating, recognising, and recovering research using Indigenous epistemological and ontological constructs. As a result, Smith (1999a) used pūrākau to collect data on the judicial process from a Māori perspective. Lee (2009) also used pūrākau in a study involving Māori teachers. This research also used a pūrākau approach to gather knowledge, and interviews soon turned into longer storytelling sessions with participants keen to share their perspectives and experiences of how tikanga influences relationship-building in business settings.

It was the desire and hope of the researcher that during the interviews and the pūrākau within them, a Kaupapa Māori approach to sharing knowledge would be acknowledged and this did happen. This manifested itself by ensuring that the participants could share their thoughts and experiences in a dialogue (in Māori and English) which was conducive to them telling their story. It was therefore important throughout the process of interviews to invite the interviewees to share openly any thoughts and ideas they felt were relevant to the discussion being held. In all cases, it was acknowledged that what is being shared was and is a taonga or gift and would be respected as such; the information shared was and will be honoured. In all cases there will be an opportunity to share these learnings with the participants after the research is completed. The key aspect of the interviews was to allow the participants to tell their own stories in their own words, and in their own way, and when they are presented back to them in hui, the validation of this taonga will be recognised.

CR allows for current theories to relate to prior theories, and the questions to be asked are not bound by rigidity; in the present study this allowed questions to be developed which recognised the world views of Māori while maintaining appropriate rigour (Jackson, 2015). The questions were designed to guide and prompt, but not to constrain and dictate what could be shared. It was important to have the participants express their own perspectives through their lens and not feel restricted. Principles of tikanga such as manaakitanga were exercised before, during and after the interviews, and the researcher actively listened to participants' stories. Knowledge was also gathered and shared during the research process through:

- Observations and conversations held face to face or by phone/Zoom.

- The incorporation of an insider perspective from the researcher who is immersed in iwi-related entities and has led and worked in Māori organisations engaged in international business alliances.
- Karakia.

Kai was also shared, in keeping with the Māori tradition of manaakitanga or hospitality (Kuntz et al., 2014). However, as a backdrop to this type of familiarity, to strengthen the validity and credibility of the interviews, good research processes also had to be put in place. The data collection process was critically dependent upon the competence of the researcher; thus, the interviewer had to be able to ask well-structured and relevant questions, and able to listen and interpret the answers (Rowley, 2002). Walsham (1995) also pointed out that there should be a balance between passivity and over-direction, which was crucial during the narrative component of the interviews where Māori shared their experiences in a story-type approach. Intersecting Kaupapa Māori approaches to the interviews was very important in maintaining a balance between the structure of question frameworks and pūrākau.

It is notable that experience in interviewing improves the quality of the data collected and, consequently, the results of the research. Walsham (1995) has stated that good interviewing technique is necessary but not sufficient for "good interviewing," which requires "good social skills and personal sensitivity on the part of the researcher, and these are less easily acquired than matters of technique" (p. 78). This is a significant point, and the researcher should have the social capability to ensure the interview is successful where both the researcher and participant view the experience as positive and meaningful. A Kaupapa Māori research approach worked well in conjunction with CR, the case study format and the recognition of the need to reconsider other world views presented by Māori for Māori.

3.4.2 Story Telling – Pūrākau/Triangulation

The conception of the case study in this study and the form of data collection are entwined with an authentic Kaupapa Māori approach to data collection through storytelling, or pūrākau, with participants. Pūrākau is a key component of relationship building for Māori and from a western/Eurocentric academic standpoint may not be considered as important as it is to Māori. The practice and existence of pūrākau predates the colonial era where stories as a method of passing history from generation to generation were the norm; this is evident in many waiata and whakapapa, as it was a means of sharing information for the purpose of developing a better understanding of the world and building relationships. The use of pūrākau through waiata, whakataukī, oriori, moteatea or whaikōrero was a way of sharing and supporting the Māori culture and language. Eventually, Eurocentric attitudes and, as Lee (2009) suggested, colonisation would

dismantle the strength of pūrākau or, in other words, the mauri (life force, essence) of pūrākau. A central philosophical theme of this study is that pūrākau thus holds an important part of Māori ontology and epistemology, as these narratives help to explain ways of being and knowing.

It was pūrākau which guided the interviews themselves; this allowed for an authentic and mana-enhancing environment for the participants while also reflecting the tikanga of this type of approach. In terms of pūrākau, the telling and sharing of the participants' experiences supports the collection of data by recognizing Kaupapa Māori research methods for collection via storytelling and narratives (Lee, 2009). The Māori world view (Ruwhiu & Cathro, 2014) or Kaupapa Māori research perspective is the key element here in these semi-structured interviews. It is important to note, at this juncture, that a semi-structured interview applying Kaupapa Māori principles is about listening more than about specific question prompts. The idea is for Māori to express their insights or learnings or experiences in a way which is conducive to how Māori share stories.

Pūrākau, was understood, applied, and manifested by participants in several meaningful ways within the context of the research:

Understanding of Pūrākau

1. **As a Method of Knowledge Sharing**: Participants recognised pūrākau as a fundamental way of preserving and passing down Māori perspectives, values, and historical narratives. It was seen as an embodiment of Māori ontology and epistemology, emphasising relational and cultural dimensions.
2. **Cultural and Epistemological Significance**: Pūrākau was perceived as more than just stories; it was a means of embedding and transmitting the mauri (life force) of knowledge, ensuring the continuation of Māori ways of knowing.

Application of Pūrākau

1. **In Research Methodology**: Pūrākau was incorporated as a storytelling-based approach in semi-structured interviews, enabling participants to share their experiences in an authentic and mana-enhancing environment. This method aligned with Kaupapa Māori research principles, emphasising the importance of allowing participants to tell their stories in their own words.
2. **Encouraging Relational Dialogue**: Participants were invited to share their perspectives freely, ensuring that the research respected their contributions as taonga (treasures).

This approach highlighted the importance of manaakitanga (hospitality and care) during the storytelling process.

Manifestation of Pūrākau

1. **Relational and Cultural Insights**: Through pūrākau, participants conveyed deeply rooted values such as whakapapa (genealogy), whanaungatanga (relationships), and tikanga (correct practices). These narratives helped illuminate the processes of relationship building and cultural alignment in various contexts, including business.
2. **Illustration of Māori Principles**: Participants' pūrākau reflected themes of unity (kotahitanga), trust (whakawhirinaki), and sustainability, demonstrating how these values guided their decision-making and interactions in both personal and professional domains.
3. **Dynamic Storytelling**: The sharing of pūrākau allowed participants to frame their narratives around significant events, relationships, and cultural practices, providing rich, contextually grounded insights into Māori worldviews.

Through pūrākau, participants not only contributed to the research but also upheld the cultural integrity and relational ethos of Māori traditions, reinforcing their relevance in contemporary settings.

This story telling or pūrākau has been used as a method by Smith (1999a) in a study on Māori perspectives. Smith (1999a) used pūrākau to collect data on the phenomena and it was the primary methodology in obtaining relevant data. There is more use of this type of research approach through the work of Lee (2009) on the study of the narratives gathered from Māori teachers. In the confines of this study, participants were encouraged to share their respective experiences in a way which supported their own world views and acknowledged the importance of Māori values.

The strength of Kaupapa Māori research is the desire for research to be conducted by Māori who are sensitive to culture and customs, and additionally the idea of self-determination is echoed through this type of approach. Kaupapa Māori research builds confidence in those who are being researched and this could lead to an environment where data obtained, and responses requested are without slant or guile. Acknowledging the application of a Kaupapa Māori approach to the interviewees also creates trust and improves engagement or openness in the process. Kaupapa Māori research may re-dress the imbalance perceived by Māori that they have no representation and are marginalised because of the westernised approach to research. While this exploratory study may be situated in the subjective paradigm when we consider Māori as the subject matter, and the combination of a positivist and interpretive approach when considering the structures of

international business theory, then CR does align well with Kaupapa Māori research by potentially informing and providing for a "safe" place for Māori when studying Māori.

What could western philosophical practitioners in research learn from a Kaupapa Māori perspective when we talk methodology? In the first place, Kaupapa Māori research approaches challenges western approaches, such as monologic research, in favour of strengthening Māori-considered platforms for cultural, social, political, environmental, and economic theory and action. Smith (2012) suggested there is a deliberate thinking that argues that Kaupapa Māori approaches must include cultural and political movements to effectively support Māori action and analysis. The cultural element involves the assertion or reinvigoration of cultural ideas in action, such as ideas of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and reciprocity as social capital (Smith, 2012). Additionally, Kaupapa Māori approaches to knowledge creation, Indigenous research methodologies, and the recognition of another world view, confront the relative static Eurocentric research methodologies (Denzin, 2005). This backdrop is important as we see a globalising world where other cultures such as the Chinese are presenting themselves through economic incursion worldwide. Methodologies must recognise the diversity and decentring of a "western-derived" status quo in alternate non-Eurocentric methodologies to assist in how we begin to view an expanded world. CR may allow for this understanding and a recognition of the state of change in the development of methodologies in research which are relevant for today's environment.

The intention was not for Kaupapa Māori research methodology to be applied in isolation for this study, and the triangulation of CR and Kaupapa Māori supported the forms of data collection that applied and the rich content that has been analysed. Triangulating provides a moderation of the data collected for a more complete perspective. The phenomena being observed, when CR drives this type of approach, in this case subjective social actors – Māori businesspersons' values – can be seen across the context of theories in internationalisation, particularly in alliances and developing business relationships.

Finally, it is also important to note the relationship, in a Kaupapa Māori approach, of the researcher to those being interviewed. From a methodology perspective when we consider Kaupapa Māori approaches, Te Awekotuku (1991) believed the most effective researcher will be highly trained, sensitive, a motivated researcher with a strong desire and, importantly, one who is preferably of the same tribal descent as the researched when researching on Māori issues. The researcher for this study has whakapapa (genealogy) to three major tribes – Te Arawa (Rotorua/Bay of Plenty), Tainui (Waikato) and Taranaki (Taranaki) and has worked with many iwi for more than 25 years. This familiarity has some advantages in that there is the ability to engender trust quickly and to demonstrate credibility to participants. This in turn helps to create an environment which not only benefits the researcher but also the researched who, according to

Kaupapa Māori approaches, feel their mana (status and prestige) and perspectives will be respected by a Māori researcher (Smith, 1999a). The Māori researcher will also apply elements of culturally-specific ethics in the research process like those outlined by Te Awekotuku (1991):

1. aroha ki te tangata (show respect for people),
2. he kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face contact is preferred),
3. titiro, whakarongo ... kōrero (look, listen ... then talk),
4. manaaki ki te tangata (be generous),
5. kia tupato (be cautious),
6. kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not intentionally trample on the mana of people),
7. kaua e mahaki (do not flaunt your knowledge).

In the context of this study, these principles were applied in several ways:

1. Aroha ki te tangata (Respect for people)

- The Researcher demonstrated respect for participants by valuing their knowledge, experiences, and contributions as taonga (treasures). This included ensuring that interviews and interactions were conducted in culturally appropriate ways, such as beginning with mihimihi (introductions) to establish rapport and connection.
- Respect extended to the way data was handled, ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of participants unless explicit permission was granted.

2. He kanohi kitea (The seen face)

- The study prioritised kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) interactions wherever possible, reflecting the importance of physical presence in building trust and establishing genuine relationships.
- This principle was also evident in the way the researcher maintained ongoing engagement with participants, showing commitment and accountability to the community throughout the research process.

3. Titiro, whakarongo, kōrero (Look, listen, then speak)

- The research process emphasised listening deeply to participants' stories and pūrākau, ensuring their voices were heard without interruption or preconceived judgments.

- The Researcher adopted a reflective approach, allowing participants to lead discussions and ensuring that their perspectives shaped the study's findings and interpretations.

4. Manaaki ki te tangata (Care for people)

- Hospitality and care were central to interactions with participants, including providing a welcoming and comfortable environment for interviews and kōrero.
- The Researcher ensured participants felt valued by acknowledging their expertise, providing opportunities for them to review and approve how their contributions were represented in the study.

5. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (Do not trample on the mana of people)

- Participants' dignity and integrity were upheld by ensuring that their cultural values, identities, and knowledge were accurately represented and honoured in the research findings.
- Any data that was sensitive or tapu (sacred) was treated with care, and participants retained the right to withdraw their contributions if they felt their mana was at risk.

6. Kia mahaki (Be humble)

- The Researcher approached the study with humility, acknowledging their role as learners and showing deference to the participants' cultural expertise and lived experiences.
- This humility was reflected in the way researchers sought permission to use Māori knowledge and concepts, ensuring they did so with cultural competence and respect.

In terms of the specific applications to the study and how they were applied:

1. **Informed Consent**:
    - Participants were provided with clear, detailed information about the purpose of the research, how their data would be used, and their rights, in alignment with kaupapa Māori principles.
2. **Reciprocity**:
    - Participants were acknowledged and thanked through appropriate gestures, such as koha (gifts) or public acknowledgments, reflecting the principle of utu (reciprocity) and the importance of maintaining balanced relationships.

3. **Collaboration**:
    - The research design and methodology incorporated Māori perspectives, ensuring that the study was co-created with participants rather than being imposed upon them. This upheld the principles of partnership and shared authority.
4. **Guardianship of Data (Kaitiakitanga)**:
    - The data collected was treated as taonga, with measures in place to ensure its protection and ethical use, reflecting the responsibility of researchers to act as kaitiaki (guardians).

By embedding Te Awekotuku's ethical principles into every stage of the research process, the study upheld the mana of participants and ensured that the findings were culturally authentic and ethically robust.

3.4.3 Process of Collecting, Analysing and Interpreting Data

Creswell (2009) has observed that, when analysing data, the qualitative researcher attempts to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings the participants place on them. The qualitative interview data obtained in the present study were analysed using Cope's (2005) four levels of analysis. There is a preparation stage that considers the data collection in conjunction with recording process itself before Cope's (2005) four levels of analysis.

This preparation level is important to the overall process – the process of inductively analysing data commences as soon as the researcher starts collecting data, that is, during the interviews (Shaw, 1999). The researcher is therefore motivated, whenever possible, to conduct all interviews. Alvesson (2003) encouraged researchers to consider the impact of the social setting in which the interview takes place, the physical location, and the impact of language use in the interview, for example, the use of terminology with which the interviewee is unfamiliar. The location and environment are very important when working with Māori, and attention needs to be given to setting and a place conducive to good kōrero.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted over a period, subject to the availability of the interviewees. Such face-to-face interviews are referred to as kanohi ki te kanohi and have significant importance in establishing relationships (Kahanu et al., 2019). Māori, and peoples of the Pacific, also attach significant importance to the physical intimacy of these meetings where hongi, the hā and mauri may be shared with each other. While each interview was scheduled for 60 to 90 minutes, more time was available as participants shared their personal pūrākau or narrative. As most of the participants were already known to the researcher, the face-to-face rapport had already developed and setting the context of the meetings was the first point in the

interview. This is consistent in meetings between Māori, where rapport is in place and whakawhanaungatanga is a key part of the process of building and developing trust. The average length of interveiws was more than 90 minutes.

Voluntary participation, the option to withdraw at any point and the need to respect their mana was communicated to participants in written correspondence before interview and reinforced in the interviews. The researcher requested permission to record the conversation for transcription, an account of the interview was provided to verify accuracy, and notes were taken as a back-up to the recording. It is worth noting that a non-Kaupapa Māori perspective about the lack of objectivity because of the rapport or relationship between researcher and participant, such as insider-outsider research, is challenged in this approach. There is a space between the insider (researcher being part of the community) and outsider (researcher studying the community) that can be occupied, according to Dwyer and Buckle (2018).

Level one analysis incorporates the reading of each transcript and set of notes while the researcher may take detailed notes or identify potentially significant issues and experiences (Patton, 2002). According to Easterby-Smith et al. (1991), this allows for the researcher to become familiar with the data, which leads to the ability to begin the process of organising and structuring the data, while increasing awareness of the patterns, themes, and categories in the data. In the present study the transcription style applied a denaturalistic approach where “idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g., stutters, pauses, nonverbal, involuntary vocalisations) are removed” (Oliver et al., 2005, pp. 1273-1274). At this initial stage, the analysis focused on identifying key words, phrases, and recurring patterns directly from the data. The purpose was to summarise and organise the data into manageable chunks without interpretation. Descriptive coding provided the foundation for the identification of themes.

Participants frequently mentioned terms such as tikanga, whakapapa, and kanohi ki te kanohi. These phrases were highlighted as descriptive codes representing the cultural and relational priorities of Māori businesses. Descriptive coding required a close reading of the pūrākau (narratives) to ensure no key ideas were overlooked. This level ensured the analysis stayed grounded in the participants' own words and experiences.

Level two analysis is situated in interpretive coding. Building on descriptive codes, this level involved interpreting the underlying meaning of the data. Codes were grouped into broader categories or sub-themes based on their shared meanings and contexts. This process required engagement with the data to uncover implicit ideas and concepts. The mention of kanohi ki te kanohi was interpreted not only as a method of interaction but as a culturally significant practice essential for trust-building in international alliances. Similarly, whanauntanga was interpreted as the process of fostering connections.

At this level, the analysis moved beyond surface meanings to explore the cultural and relational significance of the participants' experiences. This stage relied on iterative coding and re-coding to ensure alignment with the study's framework.

Level three analysis concerns itself with cross-case comparisons to establish what is common and what is particular to each case towards conceptualisation (Stake, 2005). The advantage of this type of analysis is the amalgamation across cases in categories, themes, or typologies that conceptualise the data across all the cases, or the development of a substantive theory that may offer an integrated framework covering multiple cases (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative content analysis was favoured and assisted in the ability to identify coherent and important themes, and patterns in the data: for example, the researcher looked for "quotations or observations that go together, that are examples of the same underlying idea, issue, or concept" (Patton, 1987, p. 149). The themes and categories were constructed through coding, for which an a priori directed approach was selected. A priori coding themes are established prior to the analysis, based upon literature, and the themes are then applied to the collected data. The outcome of this level of analysis is the findings based on the collected data in correlation with the literature review. Under the overarching theme of Tikanga, sub-themes such as Whānau and Whakapapa and Kanohi ki te Kanohi were conceptualised as key principles guiding relationship formation. These sub-themes were linked to theoretical perspectives on relational capital and trust in alliances. The interaction at this stage involved comparing the data to existing theories while maintaining the integrity of the participants' narratives. The iterative process ensured that the conceptual categories remained grounded in the data.

The interpreting of the data and enfolding findings within the literature is the fourth level of analysis. This approach follows on from level three analysis where a deeper understanding of the data collected involved the "clustering" together of findings (Hycner, 1985). The findings in level four are discussed in the context of extant literature; this process is referred to by Eisenhardt (1989) as enfolding literature, and the outcome of this level of analysis leads to the interpretation of the findings. Yin (2009) has concluded that when writing up a case study report, it is important to create a convincing story that relies on rich pictures created by the descriptive narrative. This is particularly interesting when considering the way Māori view the art of oratory, storytelling, and narrative (Lee, 2009). Merriam (2009) also added that the final case study report may have a greater proportion of description in comparison to other forms of qualitative research. This is because of the opportunity to convey a totally holistic understanding of the case, though it is at the discretion of the researcher in terms of the arrangement of detail, description, analysis, and summary rounding-off. Stake (2005) outlined several questions or considerations the case study researcher must decide on:

1. To what degree should the report become a story;

2. How much content should be compared with other cases;

3. What level of formalising or generalisations should there be or should it be left to readers to generalise;

4. How much description of the researcher to include in the report;

5. Whether or not and how much to protect anonymity. (p. 460)

The questions or considerations above should be made considering the researcher's subjective role (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). There is some contention, according to Walsham (1993), that the validity of extrapolation from cases depends on "the plausibility and cogency of the logical reasoning used in describing the results from the cases, and in drawing conclusions from them" (p. 15). This qualitative research has some implications, whereas recommendations tend to be more direct about generalisability, which could be hazardous, and it is therefore preferable to present the implications of the research results (Wolcott, 1994).

Because of the large volumes of data collected from multiple sources, it is necessary to ensure that the management of the data is robust and effective during collection and, ultimately, for analysis. Pickard (2013) emphasised the importance of storing data comprehensively and putting in place appropriate systems so that the data can be analysed and referenced properly. As this type of study involves copious amounts of data and information, ideally the data is structured as soon as it comes in. This study employed the software package NVivo for data management as well as analysis. The software cannot identify themes hence this was the responsibility of the researcher. Walsham (2006, p.325) did warn that there is a risk of getting 'locked in' to themes because of the immense effort involved in attempting to match themes with the data obtained from the participants.

This stage of analysis synthesised the themes and sub-themes into a coherent framework or theory. This stage involved identifying relationships between the themes and aligning them with the research questions and objectives.

A Tikanga Business Alliance Formation Process Framework is developed by integrating the themes of Tikanga and Whakawhirinaki (trust) with supporting principles such as Whānau and Whakapapa and Whanaungatanga which is discussed in chapter 6. This framework highlighted how Māori values guide the development of successful international business alliances. At this level, the analysis became highly reflexive, with the researcher continually returning to the data to ensure the proposed framework accurately reflected participants' experiences. Validation was sought through iterative review and member checking.

Finally, as Ulibarri et al. (2014) stated, “Scholarly research happens in a messy, nonlinear process” (p. 251). It is natural that the path can be straight and narrow for a time, but research requires one to be able to walk a straight path and a windy, uphill road, sometimes at the same time.

3.4.4 Sample

The case study selections in the research were participants who were able to provide valuable insights into the research questions and were qualified to do so. The purposive approach to the selection of these participants supported a kaupapa of relevance, safety and meaning to those who participate in this study (Wilson et al., 2022).

3.4.5 Case Studies – Conceptual Description

In identifying potential cases and providing a sample profile for this study, there are several key characteristics that had to be present in the cases being studied. An important aspect of the study of relationship development in international business alliances was to look closely at the processes of forming an alliance within the case studies.

These principles helped to outline the importance of network relationships, trust building, knowledge creation, alliance, and alignment in the relationship. Secondly, it was important to ask whether the venture or relationships bear some semblance of an alliance either in its infancy or further on down the track.

Importantly, the type of relationships and the parties to the alliance or relationship needed to be identified and outlined. The firms themselves, whether they be iwi commercial entities or privately owned Māori enterprises, may not necessarily represent a particular sector because the ventures themselves may be part of the manufacturing, food and beverage, tourism, or housing industries, while it was the actual venture that was being observed. The firm characteristics of the case studies are summarised later in this chapter but, briefly, they represent joint ventures, contractual and equity agreements, traditional contractual buy-and-sell contracts, and agreements which establish distribution networks.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

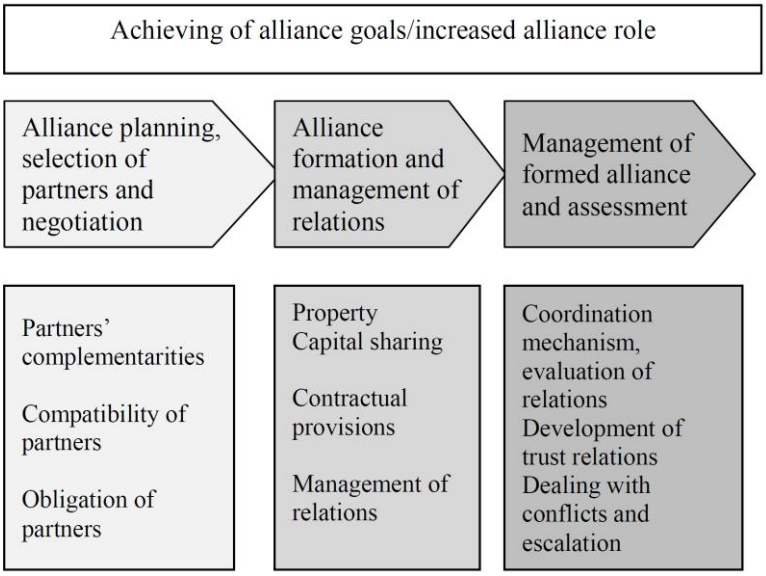
3.5.1 Sample Design

Māori businesses have been explorative in their approaches to partnerships through alliances in that they have not only developed alliances which are traditional contractual arrangements but have also participated in equity arrangements. Whether it is a minority shareholding, or 50-50

joint venture, unequal joint venture, or partial venturing in terms of R&D, manufacturing and marketing, there is enough scale and variety within the Māori businesses identified to cover many forms and examples of the structures of strategic alliances. Thus, the sample alliance type was expansive and encompassing of the different forms of strategic alliances when they are developing relationships within international business alliances, but the Māori businesses examined in this study all fall into the definition of strategic alliances suggested by Kale and Singh (2009) in Table 2.

The sample focuses on Māori businesses in the initial stages of relationship formation or partnership selection, and while some of these relationships between firms may be in place, the ventures represent a new alliance between the partners. According to Frankel et al. (1996), alliance formation can happen very quickly or over an extended period. As such, the companies that have been studied may have been undergoing alliance formation for differing timeframes. While this may be important in terms of understanding whether time is a key factor in the success of the relationships, it is the processes and factors which lead to a successful relationship which are more important. This was reflected in the discussion of the intention of Māori entities to maximise alliances and networks for intergenerational purposes and gives weight to or justifies the sample selection. Because of the nature of the industry, food and beverage as well as media services are relatively new in the context of other alliances in their respective segments of industry. They are also perceived by Māori as being relatively new because of the nature of Māori entities looking for relationships that may span generations and impact their tuhanga (descendants). Notable in the alliances considered was the intention of Māori entities to consider intergenerational strategic relationships and alliances, including networks to help achieve the strategic goals of these Māori entities. With reference to Kale and Singh (2009), the selected case studies fall into the “alliance formation and negotiation” phase, as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Stages Within Strategic Alliances and Critical Factors Considered



Note. Source: Kale and Singh (2009, p. 48.

3.5.2 Size and Sector

The size of the alliance relationship, or number of people involved, including scale of investment, sales and assets, was not part of the selection criteria, allowing for a mix of smaller and larger firms for cross-case analysis. The relational aspect of the alliance and the perceived value that a business relationship may represent could be defined by a Māori business or commercial entity differently from a purely transactional relationship only (Mataira, 2000). In terms of sectors, this study is expansive in looking at companies who are involved in information technology, primary sector, wine, tourism, food exports, arts and entertainment.

3.5.3 Informants

Informant selection for this study has been through purposive sampling. The strategy for participant selection was aligned, through a Kaupapa Māori ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspective, with the overarching aims of this study. Purposive sampling as a tool was used to select participants who were most likely to yield appropriate and useful information (Kelly, 2010, p. 317), as well as provide depth (as opposed to breadth) of understanding (Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive sampling was important for this study in ensuring the trustworthiness of data (Campbell et al*.,* 2020) and, potentially, increasing the credibility of the findings (Guba, 1981). The following illustrates how purposive sampling was implemented from a Kaupapa Māori perspective appropriate for this research.

The participants in this study are rangatira in business who were known to the researcher and with whom there was a relationship. The researcher was also known to the participants through informal networks. They are founders, CEOs, CFOs or business unit leaders who have a senior role within their organisation and are responsible for the international alliances the firm enters. Culturally, rangatira have always led communities and family groups – this is tikanga in terms of the right process. Māori businesses internationalising towards international business alliances hold these activities in the highest regard and it is quite common to have the most senior leaders participate in these activities (Roche et al., 2015). These business leaders have been involved in some form of internationalisation in the relationship-forming process with international partners, they have first-hand knowledge of working with foreign partners or potential foreign partners. The identification of these participants has been done through personal networks and thus participants are known to and have a relationship of some form with the researcher. Past this stage, these participants have identified other key interviewees. The participants effectively selected themselves through their availability and willingness, and as noted they referred on others who participated. In most cases, the participants had worked within the business entity for several years and had significant experience in developing and being part of the formation of the alliance.

When we consider Kaupapa Māori research methods, it is important to note that the participants have qualified themselves to be included in this study through their mana and mahi, irrespective of the relationship between researcher and participant. These rangatira in many cases have the trust and the recognition of their mana of those who work with them and around them. Two of the interviewees are knighted and have been recognised by government and community for their contributions to commerce and culture. Another two interviewees have received numerous business awards, while another two interviewees are high-profile creatives in Aotearoa and globally.

Another interesting principle relates to the concept of insider-outsider, which presents binary and dichotomous considerations; from a Māori perspective or world view, a Kaupapa Māori approach does not emphasise these perspectives (Rewi, 2014). The interview may range in time because of the nature of pūrākau and allowing the interviewee to tell their narrative. A distinctly Māori way of interaction will occur in such situations while the researcher respectfully listens to the interviewee by the application of manaakitanga and acknowledgement of the taonga that will be shared.

The definition of time should be raised at this point from a te ao Māori world view. Europeans or western society work based on clock time and while New Zealand Māori have adapted to and incorporated this dimension, Māori have traditionally worked on event time. The principal

differences are that European or western society sets appointments and organises schedules primarily according to clock time, while Māori traditionally practiced time around the natural flow of events (Lo & Houkamau, 2012). Another Māori perspective on time suggests that the past, present, and future are viewed as intertwined, with life as a continuous cosmic process. This continuous cosmic movement of time has no restrictions – it is both past and present (Rameka, 2018.). Notably, the participants in most cases were focused on presenting their narratives as opposed to completing a kōrero with a clock-time dimension. This dynamic was unique in the sense that western constructs around time are quite definitive, and the cultural nuance meant that the participants were going to take as much time as they felt they required.

3.5.4 Case Studies

Descriptions of the companies of the informants (rangatira), and the stage, size and purposes of the alliances are contained in Table 11, which can be found at the end of this section. Notably, while questions were posed in all interviews there was space for interviewees to express themselves in a way that reflected Māori cultural practices. This took on the narrative form and the questions and answers were woven together through a pūrākau approach.

Case study descriptors

At this juncture it is important to describe the participant case study companies presented in Table 11 in more detail, with information on the relative stages they are at in the internationalisation process, and the international business alliance and venture(s):

Participant case study 1:

A technology-based organisation where the CEO is the primary person engaged in developing the international business alliance; however, there is a team of key internationally focused personnel who support the mahi. There is extensive engagement with multiple parties within companies and partners are identified as media, sports, events, animation, television, movie and technology entities. The alliances are in multiple countries; however, the major share of the international business alliances is in the United States of America. Approximate gross revenue per annum is NZ$20 million. The ventures in this alliance are at several stages, depending on the venture, thus it is in the alliance formation and management of the relations stage, contractual provisions are mature, and the focus is on constant growth and the development of relationship formation. The type of alliance is a joint venture which is contractual and reflects an equity arrangement. The value of the relationship to the gross income of the business as a percentage in terms of international business is more than 50% and represents a significant part of the entity, including the importance to the viability and growth of the organisation. The organisation through website, annual reports, symbols, and external and internal communications, presents a very

strong Māori-orientated entity. The founder and CEO is a commentator on Māori values and mātauranga, openly representing Māori values in relationships with international partners and is recognised in Aotearoa and globally as a leader in the field.

Venture 1:

The venture observed and discussed in the kōrero and materials provided was that of a partnership with a major US media network, where an established relationship was already in existence; however, the product offering was new and innovative. It was suggested that the success of securing the new contract for services or product offering was based on the trust developed over a period and the values espoused by Participant 1's organisation. The alliance partner also indicated that there had been issues earlier in the discussions around the new contract, but these were resolved in face-to-face meetings at the instigation of both parties in Aotearoa and the USA.

Participant case study 2:

This is a software solutions company initially trading in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region for more than 20 years where almost all of its gross income per annum of NZ$7 to 10 million is with three clients. More recently, this organisation has established itself as a world leading production house for experiential digital apps and has extended its market to parts of Europe, Asia and North America. Content is brought to digital life in multiple languages and cultures, applying cutting edge technology. This company also provides services for many of New Zealand's largest companies which are trading internationally. The structure of the relationship discussed is a joint venture at the relationship formation stage with a company that has had other positive dealings with the company since its entrance into the Middle East and GCC region. While the relationship is contractually based, there is room for scaling up and increasing the size of the contractual relationship between the alliance partners. There is joint equity as a key part of the alliance and this venture operates via a contractual arrangement. The key relationships are between founder/CEO of the Māori business and the partnering entity for this venture. Notably, the venture is structured in such a way that the Māori business is a third-party supplier or sub-contracting partner and has exposure to not only the alliance partner's entity, but also entities which are in partnership with the core central alliance partner.

This Māori business utilises Māori imagery in its branding and storytelling as a unique asset. The concepts of nimbleness, innovation, creativity and out-of-the-box thinking are presented as Māori-sourced characteristics. Cultural similarities are a part of the Māori business's communications and the unique selling point to its alliance partners. There is a desire by this Māori business to expand its market base with a more diversified and expansive portfolio and reduce its exposure, but it recognises the importance of the three established alliance partners. This Māori business is a ground breaker for Māori businesses internationalising because of the

technology focus and as a service provider, and that it branded itself with Māori cultural symbolism in its founding years. The organisation has also won multiple business awards and is often profiled as a symbol of success in international business alliances.

Venture 2:

The specific venture discussed is the ongoing service and maintenance of systems which are operated by the Māori entity on behalf of the alliance partner towards third-party users of the software product. A feature of this relationship is the level of support and service provided by the Māori entity to the users, which has been recognised by alliance partner. This service excellence and willingness to also be flexible or nimble in the contractual relationship has endeared the alliance partner to the Māori entity. However, during the period of the contractual relationship there have been challenges with the changing of staff and key personnel from the alliance entity; this in turn has meant that the Māori entity has had to continue with extensive relational activities and, in some cases, hosting alliance partners in Aotearoa. The result of this hosting has been positive, with Māori culture at the forefront of this hosting and applications of manaaki have been received positively. This alliance partner is also of Middle Eastern origin and many of the values espoused by the Māori entity are values familiar and reciprocated by said partner in terms of family (whānau), hospitality (manaaki) and future or sustainability (kaitiaki). The alignment between both entities is clear according to Māori partner, thus there are strong tūhono elements in this relationship.

Participant case study 3:

This organisation is one Aotearoa's largest and most successful iwi commercial entities working in international markets. The primary export is seafood of which in this venture there are exports in the vicinity of NZ$30 million per annum. This participating company features extensive engagement with distributors, wholesalers, and exports to many countries. The Māori values and heritage of this organisation is at the forefront of its marketing and narrative in all marketing. The governance of this organisation is also strongly iwi leadership based and all international partners are introduced to the whakapapa of this organisation and its history. The birth of this entity has also stemmed from an iwi settlement.

The type of alliance is characterised by contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy and sell contracts, distribution networks. The Southeast Asian market and China are the focus of the venture observed and, while they are mature relationships, new products are being introduced into the overall offering. The engagement team is led by the CEO and there are close relationships with a group of agents and distributors who have all been inducted or introduced to the Māori values and principles of this iwi entity. International trade expos and events sponsored by NZTE

promote this organisation as a successful Māori-owned-and-operated entity. This organisation has won many business awards domestically and internationally in its field.

Venture 3:

This venture features the building of new markets and developing relationships with new partners or creating new alliances in the Chinese market. Extensive relationship-building activities within Aotearoa and visits to China in delegations are key tenets of the strategy in play, which is relationship orientated. The sharing of values, aspirations and goals, acknowledging those who have built the foundations, and working towards the future of those to come are values shared by both the Māori entity and the Chinese partner. The contractual arrangements are also unique in that product has been sold and shipped to China with relative ease in terms of compliance by comparison to other markets the Māori entity exports to. Discussions around partnering to expand into other markets has been a feature of this relationship, with the Chinese organisation offering to introduce new markets to the Māori entity as partners. These discussions have been ongoing and pose significant advantages for the Māori entity. The only issue to date is the capability of the Māori entity to fulfil demand from the Chinese alliance partner.

Participant case study 4:

This participating company features extensive engagement with distributors and wholesalers, and exports to many countries. Revenue is significant in terms of export as a percentage of total gross revenue for both domestic and international business. The approximate gross revenue per annum is NZ$12 million, of which 80% is generated from international alliances. This organisation is part of the lucrative wine export market and contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy and sell contracts, distribution networks are standard features of this segment. The organisation relies upon excellent product, award winning brands and a powerful narrative that is based on Māori values and sustainability. Primary engagement for this organisation is held by export managers in conjunction with the CEO in terms of alliance partnerships. The venture discussed is a typical buy and sell contract, where the relationship is mature and ongoing. Target markets are the USA, Europe and the Southeast Asian market. China represents an area of growth for the organisation and there are positive indications that the Chinese market will become a good-sized portion of the total export market. Many of the wholesalers, distributors and partners have been hosted in the local whenua of this organisation, where Māori culture is introduced and promoted as part of the whole narrative. This company is a recognised and an award-winning organisation both in Aotearoa and globally; it is also promoted by NZTE as an example of a successful New Zealand and Māori company involved in international business. The CEO has a profile and is sought after as a motivational speaker and board member and is referred to on a regular basis in media.

Venture 4:

The venture discussed was to introduce wines into mature markets which have largely been dominated by European brands and, more recently, Australian brands. The product excellence and awards have helped to move product into these competitive markets in small quantities to begin with. However, this Māori entity has also partnered with strong distributors who have helped with product to get into markets at reasonable quantities and prices. The Māori entity, in conjunction with the award-winning wines, has presented a strong narrative of the whenua and whakapapa of the company and Indigenous richness and heritage. This has been a strong and unique selling point with alliance partners looking for organisations that can present strong narratives. The other interesting point is that the target market and partners are based in China and significant manaaki has been extended to potential partners with positive results and feedback from Chinese partners and representatives. This entity is also well known for its sustainability and culturally sensitive strategies which extend out to 500 years and are marketed to alliance partners.

Participant case study 5:

This award-winning technology company is based in a regional area of Aotearoa with contracts spread internationally. The approximate gross revenue per annum is NZ$8 million, and contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy and sell contracts, and distribution networks represent the type of alliances. The venture observed is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation. While this entity has existing contracts which are mature and has trusted alliance partners, this is a new product offering and there is an emphasis on establishing partnership costs and risk sharing, the risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies, and market access with the alliance partner.

The company promotes its unique Māori values based on data sovereignty, respect for data and those who are impacted using this data, and ensuring that mana enhancement is present in all operations and stages of the alliance. The lead on the engagement is a charismatic CEO who is well known within the field of expertise and segment in this technology-based organisation. The symbols and marketing messages are Māori, and the whakapapa of the organisation is elevated in all that the organisation does. This is another entity featured and promoted by NZTE as an example of a successful Māori entity involved in international business.

Venture 5:

The contract discussed is a newly formed alliance which is three years old and contractual obligations are very much the focus of the relationship with each entity. However, the relationship has recently been strained for unforeseen reasons and the non-payment of contracts by the alliance

partner or delays in payment for services. The interesting note here is that the Māori entity is focused on the relationship and views the financial challenges or issues with payment for services as secondary to the importance of maintaining a strong relationship base on similar values. This participant entity has made it clear to the alliance partner that they are willing to be flexible and patient in the contractual arrangements between both parties, because of the strong relationship and shared values of each entity. The Māori entity has even suggested ways of helping the alliance partner financially by introductions to potential investors.

Participant case study 6:

This an early-stage alliance company with a reliance upon distributors and wholesalers; 50% of total gross income is China based. The approximate gross revenue is NZ$3 to 4 million. The potential for growth is substantial and the products are niche in terms of dairy foods. A key feature of this entity is that they promote themselves as one of the few Māori-based companies to work in the field of dairy production. There is a strong Māori narrative in terms of values, respect of whenua and sustainability. The primary engager is the CEO, and this person has spent significant time in trade shows, Chinese-based events and Chinese media to promote the product. While there is pressure on the pricing of the product and its associated margins, the emphasis is on the story behind the product. The stage of this alliance is characterised by new partners and distributors identified, so partnership selection is important. There is specific focus on establishing partnership costs, risk-sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies, and market access. Additionally, there is a focus on the partnership sharing the vision for the purpose of the alliance and ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/partnership without partner exploitation or partner opportunism. It is interesting to note that this entity is highly sought after by Chinese partners and the process of partner selection is very important for this company, which is looking to work with alliance partners that are compatible and share similar values.

Venture 6:

The venture is a distribution relationship for New Zealand dairy product made by the Māori entity to be exported into China. Some of the challenges with the venture has been the identification of appropriate partners or partner selection, because of the huge interest shown by many Chinese organisations. Over a three-year period, partnership selection was the focus, many visits were made to China and these Chinese based organisations visited Aotearoa. An organisation was selected two years ago and while it is relatively new as an alliance partnership, the exports have scaled up significantly. There have been some teething challenges around this growth and increase in terms of supply chain and marketing of the product. The Māori entity has presented a very strong cultural narrative, and this has been accepted warmly by the Chinese alliance partners.

Discussion around shared values, the future and sustainability have been core matters that both parties agree upon in this relationship. While the contract arrangements are robust and clear, there has been some variance from specific points within the contract, in that pricing has adjusted on several occasions which does not match the tenets of the contract but are accepted by both because of the relationship. One anomaly is the size of the alliance partner in comparison to the size of the Māori entity. The Chinese organisation is potentially 20 times bigger than the Māori entity, yet the relationship to date has appeared equitable.

Participant case study 7:

This entity specifically works in the entertainment industry and the primary product is kapa haka and Māori-created presentations. This entity has been successful working in this field for more than 20 years and has represented Aotearoa at major sporting events such as rugby world cups, expos and high-profile events. The primary engager is a high-profile Māori entertainment personality who is at a mature alliance stage, with a strong brand; gross revenue is approximately NZ$2 to 3 million per year. The type of alliance is contractual arrangements with an existing network of booking agents who have been working with this entity for many years. The venture being observed is business into Southeast Asia and the Middle East where there are new opportunities. The alliance stage is early in terms of products/services being promoted, but the existing agents have mature relationships with the lead engager for this entity. The company is all about representing Māori culture and actively practices tikanga Māori in everything that it does.

Venture 7:

This organisation holds multiple events in different parts of the world and is contracted by both the New Zealand Government and global entities. The key to their ventures is relationship orientated in terms of referrals and quality of performance, where each performance or event helps to support the organisation to book another event. Major New Zealand sporting, conference and business events are also a way that this organisation promotes itself internationally. At present more than 50% of all performances booked for the next 12 months are international and these are generally by referral. The Māori entity is steeped in Kaupapa Māori and presents te ao Māori at the core of their performances. There have been challenges with some of the booking agents in terms of unfair expectations on pricing and timing, but these are generally resolved through relationship work.

Participant case study 8:

An early-stage alliance, with a strong reliance on agents and partnering creatives, is the type of alliance this entity represents. Approximate gross revenue is NZ$1 million. This entity is reliant on media exposure internationally and the lead is regularly on television, social media and general

media to help book events. The type of alliance is buying and selling services via contractual agreements. The venture observed is a contractual arrangement to facilitate major creative events internationally for an alliance partner. There is specific focus on establishing partnership costs, sharing, and gaining access to market. Additionally, there is a focus on the partnership sharing the vision for the purpose of the alliance and ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism. The area or region of interest is the GCC region and also Southeast Asia. While this entity has been working internationally for more than 20 years, because of the flux in and change of booking agents within this segment of industry, the company is regularly having to build new relationships. The products all depict Māori culture and the stories of Māoridom are a key part of how this entity presents its products and services. There is an opportunity to expand the business, but this is a small team, and they seem to be happy with the current revenues, size and growth of the company.

Venture 8:

This venture is centred on a high-profile media performer regularly on television and in social media presenting culturally based living art. There is a flux in and movement of agents in this industry and developing an alliance partner has been challenging for this organisation. Each new person that replaces someone who was in this field poses a challenge for the Māori entity in booking another event. However, the Māori entity has recently been building relationships directly with the end user or main contractor, which has provided some support for future-proofing relationships that are buy and sell services by agents on behalf of the end user.

Participant case study 9:

This entity is relatively new to international business; however, the lead on this business is a famous international Māori sculptor and artist. For more than 25 years the art and sculptures of this artist have been displayed or installed in Aotearoa and globally. This venture is relatively new, having been in operation for three years, and the concept is to bring Indigenous artists together at events to share their respective narratives while selling their own products. This entity facilitates these events, and to date the growth has been steady and there appears to be a willingness to scale it up for growth and expansion. The entity works closely with booking agents and event facilitators in alliances. The intention is to partnership the sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance and ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism. These alliance partners are generally but not exclusively Indigenous. The type of alliance is characterised by contractual arrangements, traditional contracts and buy and sell contracts. The alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation. The emphasis is on ensuring that there is equity

within the alliance/partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism; equally, partnership selection is important for this entity.

Venture 9:

The Māori entity has, over the last five years, worked closely with a significant international alliance partner where equity and partner exploitation are real issues for the organisation. The contractual arrangements are robust but there is pressure to concede or adjust ways of doing because of the size and influence of the alliance partner. This has been the main concern and something which is monitored and reviewed regularly for the Māori entity. In early stages, it was all about partnership selection; once the partner was identified and contracts were in place for the alliance, it has been about equity within the relationship. It is worth noting that the Māori entity maintains strong cultural values but feels that sometimes the importance of these values is not recognised

Table 11. Case Study Profile

Case company	Type of Alliance	Size of Alliance	Stage of Alliance	Purpose of Alliance	Venture
Company 1 **Sector:** Technology **Key participant:** Founder/CEO	Joint ventures, contractual and equity arrangements	Extensive engagement with multiple parties within companies, partners are identified as media, sports, events, animation, television, movie and technology entities. The alliances are in multiple countries. Approx. gross per annum NZ$20 million.	The venture in this alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are mature, and the focus is on constant growth and development of relationship formation with an emphasis on the following: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Competitiveness formation and strengthening, new technologies assimilation and acquisition, new products, competition, impact and influence on sector, industry development. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy.	Venture is a partnership with a major US media network, where an established relationship was already in existence, however the product offering was new and innovative. It was suggested that the success of securing the new contract for services or product offering was based off the trust developed over a period and the values espoused by participant 1's organisation. The alliance partner also indicated that there had been issues earlier in the discussions around the new contract, but these were resolved in face-to-face meetings at the instigation of both parties in Aotearoa and the USA.
Company 2 **Sector:** Technology **Key participant:** Founder/CEO	Joint venture, contractual arrangement	Modest engagement with companies situated in the Middle East, predominantly the GCC. Approx. gross per annum NZ$7 million.	The alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation with an emphasis on the following: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Competitiveness formation and strengthening, new technologies assimilation and acquisition, new products, competition, impact and influence on sector, industry development. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy.	The venture is an ongoing service and maintenance of systems which are operated by the Māori entity on behalf of alliance partner towards third-party users of the software product. A feature of this relationship is the level of support and service provided by Māori entity to the users which has been recognised by alliance partner. This service excellence and willingness to also be flexible or nimble in the contractual relationship has endeared the alliance partner to the Māori entity. However, during the period of the contractual relationship there have been challenges with changing of staff and key personnel from the alliance entity, which in turn has meant that the Māori entity has had to continue with extensive relational activities and in some cases hosting alliance partners in Aotearoa. The result of this hosting has been positive, with Māori culture at the forefront of this hosting and applications of manaaki have been received positively. This alliance partner is also of Middle Eastern origin and many of the values espoused by the Māori entity are values familiar and reciprocated by said partner in terms of family (whānau), hospitality (manaaki) and future or sustainability (kaitiaki). The alignment between both entities is clear according to Māori partner, thus there are strong tūhono elements in this relationship.

Company 3 **Sector:** Food **Key participant:** CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, distribution networks.	Extensive engagement with distributors, wholesalers and exporting to many countries. Revenue is significant in terms of export as a percentage of total gross revenue for both domestic and international. Approx gross per annum NZ$30 million.	New ventures, new markets, early stages of relationship formation. Establishing key areas of agreement around partnership selection: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Competitiveness formation and strengthening, new technologies assimilation and acquisition, new products, competition, impact and influence on sector, industry development. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy.	This venture features the building of new markets and developing relationships with new partners or creating new alliances in the Chinese market. Extensive relationship-building activities within Aotearoa and visits to China in delegations are key tenets of the strategy in play which is relationship orientated. The sharing of values, aspirations, goals, acknowledging those who have built the foundations and working towards the future of those to come are values shared by both the Māori entity and the Chinese partner. The contractual arrangements are also unique in that product has been sold and shipped to China with relative ease in terms of compliance by comparison to other markets the Māori entity exports to. Discussions around partnering to expand into other markets has been a feature of this relationship with the Chinese organisation offering to introduce new markets to the Māori entity as partners. These discussions have been ongoing and pose significant advantages the Māori entity, the only issue to date being the capability of the Māori entity to fulfil demand from the Chinese alliance partner.
Company 4 **Sector:** Food & Beverage **Key participant:** CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, distribution networks.	Extensive engagement with distributors, wholesalers and exporting to many countries. Revenue is significant in terms of export as a percentage of total gross revenue for both domestic and international. Approx. gross per annum NZ$12 million.	Ventures are partnership based and distributors are developed so partnership selection is important with a focus in the following areas: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Economic orientation, market development and penetration, distributors also provide some political focus through elimination of restrictions and compliance for market country, thus supporting legal regulation requirements.	The venture discussed was to introduce wines into mature markets which have largely been dominated by European brands and more recently Australian brands. The product excellence and awards have helped to move product into these competitive markets in small quantities to begin with; however, this Māori entity has also partnered with strong distributors who have helped with product to get into markets at reasonable quantities and prices. The Māori entity in conjunction with the award-winning wines has presented a strong narrative of the whenua and whakapapa of the company and their Indigenous richness and heritage. This has been a strong unique selling point with alliance partners looking for organisations that can present strong narratives. The other interesting point is that the target market and partners are based in China and significant manaaki has been extended to potential partners with positive results and feedback from Chinese partners and representatives. This entity is also well known for its sustainability and culturally sensitive strategies which extends out to 500 years and is marketed to alliance partners.

Company 5 **Sector:** Technology **Key participant:** Founder/CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, distribution networks.	Award-winning technology company, based in a regional area of New Zealand with contracts spread internationally. Approx. gross per annum NZ$8 million.	The alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation with an emphasis on the following: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Competitiveness formation and strengthening, new technologies assimilation and acquisition, new products, competition, impact and influence on sector, industry development. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy.	The contract discussed is a newly formed alliance which is about three years old and contractual obligations are very much the focus of the relationship with each entity. However, the relationship has recently been strained for unforeseen reasons, non-payment of contracts by alliance partner or delays in payment for services. The interesting note here is that the Māori entity is more focused on the relationship and views the financial challenges or issues with payment of services as secondary to the importance of maintaining a strong relationship based on similar values. This participant entity has made it clear to the alliance partner that they are willing to be flexible and patient in the contractual arrangements between both parties, because of the strong relationship and shared values of each entity. The Māori entity has even suggested ways of helping the alliance partner financially by introductions to potential investors.
Company 6 **Sector:** Food & Dairy **Key participant:** Founder/CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, distribution networks.	Early-stage alliance, reliance upon distributors and wholesalers, 50% of total gross income China-based. Approx. gross revenue NZ$3 million to $4 million.	Ventures are new as new partners and distributors are developed so partnership selection is important with a focus in the following areas: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Economic orientation, market development and penetration, distributors also provide some political focus through elimination of restrictions and compliance for market country, thus supporting legal regulation requirements.	The venture is a distribution relationship for New Zealand dairy product by the Māori entity into China. Some of the challenges with the venture has been the identification of appropriate partners or partner selection, because of the huge interest from many Chinese organisations. Over a three-year period, partnership selection was the focus, and many visits were made to China and these China- based organisations visited Aotearoa. An organisation was selected about two years ago and while it is relatively new as an alliance partnership, the exports have scaled up quite significantly. There have been some teething challenges around this growth and increase in terms of supply chain and marketing of the product. The Māori entity has presented a very strong cultural narrative, and this has been accepted warmly by the Chinese alliance partners. Discussion around shared values, the future and sustainability have been core matters that both parties agree upon in this relationship. While the contract arrangements are quite robust and clear, there has been some variance from specific points within the contract, in that pricing has adjusted on several occasions which does not match the tenets of the contract but are accepted by both because of the relationship. One anomaly is the size of the alliance partner in comparison to the size of the Māori entity. The Chinese organisation is potentially 20 times bigger than the Māori entity, yet the relationship to date has appeared equitable.

Company 7 **Sector:** Entertainment **Key participant:** CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, services agreement.	Mature stage alliance, strong brand and gross revenue is approx. NZ$2 million to $3 million. Good representation system.	Partners and clients are well established, and the direction is on sustainability of existing clients and ongoing development of the relationships. Focus is largely in these areas: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Relational orientation for market development and sustainability. Clients are seen as a leverage for entry into markets and are strongly developed.	This organisation holds multiple events in different parts of the world and is contracted by both the New Zealand Government and global entities. The key to their venture(s) is relationship orientated in terms of referrals and quality of performance, where each performance or event helps to support the organisation to book another event. Major New Zealand sporting, conference and business events are also a way that this organisation promotes itself internationally. At present more than 50% of all performances booked for the next 12 months are international and these are generally by referral. The Māori entity is steeped in Kaupapa Māori and presents te ao Māori at the core of their performances. There have been challenges with some of the booking agents in terms of unfair expectations on pricing and timing; these are generally resolved through very good relationship work.
Company 8 **Sector:** Creative industries **Key participant:** CEO	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, products and services.	Early-stage alliance, strong reliance on agents and partnering creatives. Approx. gross NZ$1 million.	The alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation with an emphasis on the following: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy, market development and entry.	High-profile media performer regularly on television and in social media presenting a strong culturally based living art. There is quite a lot of flux and movement of agents in this industry, so developing an alliance partner has been challenging for this organisation. Each new person that replaces a person which was in this field poses a challenge for the Māori entity to book another event. However, the Māori entity has more recently been building relationships directly with the end user or main contractor, which has provided some support for future-proofing relationships that are buy-and-sell services by agents on behalf of the end user.
Company 9 **Sector:** Entertainment **Key participant:** Founder	Contractual arrangements, traditional contracts, buy & sell contracts, products and services.	Small-sized alliance, reliant upon agents and international partners. Gross revenue near NZ$1 million.	The alliance is at the alliance formation and management of relations stage, contractual provisions are still in play and the focus is on early-stage development of relationship formation with an emphasis on the following: a. Establishing partnership costs & risk sharing, risks of product development, gaining access to critical core competencies and market access. b. Partnership sharing of vision for the purpose of the alliance. c. Ensuring that there is equity within the alliance/ partnership, without partner exploitation or partner opportunism.	Strategic and economic motivations. Sharing of expenses, resource sharing, risk mitigation, activity specialisation, proportion economy, market development and entry.	Māori entity has over the last five years worked very closely with a significant international alliance partner where equity and partner exploitation are real issues for the organisation. The contractual arrangements are robust but there is pressure to concede or adjust ways of doing because of the size and influence of the alliance partner. This has been the main concern and something which is monitored and reviewed regularly for the Māori entity. In early stages, it was all about partnership selection; once the partner was identified and contracts were in place for the alliance then it has been very much about equity within the relationship. It is worth noting that the Māori entity maintains strong cultural values but feels that sometimes the importance of these values is not recognised.

CHAPTER 4 / KITENGA / FINDINGS

4.1 PRESENTING THE DATA

This chapter presents the empirical findings from the case study-based interviews. Thematic data analysis was used to code interview transcripts. NVivo analysis framed concepts into nodes which were used to structure these values into themes and identify the relationships between these values. This process identified several key themes, which were grouped and given names by relating them back to categories identified in the review of the literature and the overall kōrero from the interviewees. These themes were relatively straightforward to develop from the nodes because of the universal meaning and understanding of Māori values and their respective definitions. It was also clear that, for the participants of the study, the values augmented commitment towards action through a psychological contract which provided the basis for proceeding with alliances, and in some cases formal legal contracts, and to commitments to proceed with the international alliance with their partners. These themes guide the examination of the data, allowing further analysis against existing theories, and the ability to refine existing theory within the context of the rich data collected and to generate new proposals and criticism of the validity of existing theory as potentially new contributions. The rich data from the cases allows insights to provide a distinct view of Māori values and how they impact relationship formation while Māori businesses are engaged in international business alliances. The key themes are considered here as principles which are Māori values identified from the interviewees' descriptions of their own truth or world view, and the pūrākau, as fundamental to Māori relationship formation processes. These principles have been analysed alongside relationship formation concepts in the international business literature to explore the thematic principles in context. The principles identified in the data analysis were two overarching core principles which were woven throughout the data:

- Tikanga (customary system of values and practices)
- Whakawhirinaki (trust)

and five additional defined themes:

- Whānau and Whakapapa (family, genealogy and the why of things, kupu whakataki)
- Whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga (the relationship and the process of establishing the relationship)
- Tūhono and Kotahitanga (alignment and unity, togetherness)
- Mātauranga (learning and knowledge)
- Kanohi ki te Kanohi (face to face)

Participant responses from the case studies are referred to by the case number, i.e., "Participant 1" relates to the key informant in the alliance formation cases presented in Chapter 3. Representative and insightful quotes from the data have been grouped thematically to provide evidence and support for the analysis, and to inform the discussion in Chapter 5.

Tikanga and kanohi ki te kanohi stand out from the pūrākau or narratives: kanohi ki te kanohi because of the importance of building relationships by sharing of each other's mauri (life force) which should be in physical proximity to all; and tikanga specifically because it was at the centre of how business relationships should be based on principles of doing it right and acknowledging customary values and principles. This was demonstrated in doing things the right way such as offering karakia during the interviews, providing manaaki through kai and presenting koha as a token of appreciation. This koha reflected gift exchange concepts where something was given such, as the time taken in the interviews, and it was reciprocated in the koha and kai. It is worth noting that some requested that koha be deposited into a school's bank account as a charitable donation and, in all cases of koha, the process was one which acknowledged the taonga (gift) of sharing and the binding of each other through appreciation.

The mihi (introduction) extended in the interviews by both parties was about making connections and acknowledging our whakapapa, the whenua, our atua, our ariki and following a process which reflects the way Māori build relationships, while respecting the mana of the interviewee and the taonga or gift of knowledge imparted. This procedure resonates with whakawhanaungatanga or establishing relationships, and knowledge about each other allows for the connections to be made and acknowledged. The simple principle of mihi also provided both parties with the opportunity to develop a connection and remove the foreignness of each other when perhaps meeting each other for the first time. Equally even when parties had met each other several times and over a period, the mihi allowed for partners to update, expand and contribute more to the relationship dynamics of the interchange in the meeting.

In many cases while all participants were of mixed descent, both Māori and European, there appeared to be a preference to recognise the importance of Māori values as a focal point in belief and value systems. These viewpoints often crafted the world views of the participants – in other words, they held a distinct Māori world view. Participants outlined how important being Māori was to their sense of identity and belonging. The concept of being Māori and presenting this to those with whom relationships were being formed within alliances was a prominent aspect that Māori established very early in relationship development. Most participants identified as a priority that Māori belief systems transferred into how most conducted themselves in their respective businesses. All participants recognised that being Māori was uniquely interesting for alliance partners when Māori communicated with alliance partners that key values would impact

the way business would be conducted. It was widely held by the participants that their respective belief systems in Māori values impacted any type of interaction, whether psychological, informal, formal, transactional, or contractual. The following three participants sum up how deeply ingrained Māori world views or values are entrenched in how they think and what they do, clearly belief systems which are weighted in values have a significant impact in everything Māori do:

Participant 3:

> *"Today I, to me that's how I like to approach the world, that's how I think I approach the world, that's how I approach my mahi, my whānau, my family at home, I like to think that I try to represent that well, but yeah. But if I was given a choice between Māori values and principles and western or, I would choose Māori 100%."*
>
> *"I think philosophically, it's everything, manaakitanga, all of those rangatiratanga, mana motuhake, ability to create search or find solutions, create solutions that suit us, that are based on our values and principles…I think there, maybe there are layers to this and so... how I think philosophically I like to think that's Māori."*

Participant 4:

> *"So, for me, I only know one way and I love it. I think it's my superpower. I wish for a lot of things in my life about it – greater connectivity, more presence at home, reo. I wish I was a kapa haka queen. I always think about what I would give up about myself to be that person. … There's all these things; there's all those wanting things. But fundamentally, I know and value more than most anything in my life being Māori."*

Participant 9:

> *"Regardless at the end of the day, they uh.. a principle, I just, just come at it from a Māori kind of perspective. But show that always at the end of the day we're all the same, but hey this is how we view this particular thing and shed more light around how we view those particular topics. Because I think a little more depth, just try to hey say, navigate maybe some points of view that people may have around Indigenous culture. Um ... Yeah. Oh, man, these guys are pretty clever, these Māori's are pretty clever. … Yeah. I think the funny thing is that, like I don't think I intend to do anything Māori, I don't think so. It just so happens that it kind of just ends that way, even though I'm not even looking to do that, I think when I go, if I'm looking at alignment like looking to do something, I'll go on a train in mind, But … for some reason it always kind of defaults into that sort of reo. It's kind of weird, but even though I may not. I don't know. Yeah even though I may not look in specifically, because all I want to do is to produce something that looks beautiful. If it so happens that it takes that kind of slant like … a Māori kind of perspective than …*

no I'll look at that but at the end of the day like, deep down I'll always will kind of resonate with things that are either Pro-Māori, that either encourage different ideas or different thinking around what we do. I think, I think maybe that's like might be more deep engrained than I think. ... This is my personal view that because you will inherently be Māori, you will inherently always move towards those things that you know if you are disposed that way, you will always naturally dispose those things. So, my thing, what, what I love doing is pretty much learning as much as I can about the other cultures, about their, you know in every way. And trying to learn as much as I can about, about them. Because I don't think, Inherently, you'll never, well I will never yeah lose my, or like change those things. But, but, being understanding around other cultures and being able to ... the more that I can understand them, the more that I can empathise and get deeper into communicating with them. The more that I engage in, learning about them, I don't know if that makes sense. But .. But, yeah, I think it's the one thing that's different. Like, for example, when cultures come over here, they have a tendency to sort of stick within their own culture, and I can understand the reason why. So I understand if you're in business you might just want to stick with your own. But I also see the benefits of like, you know it's also awesome that you learn both sides of the story or like, go and explore the other cultures and try and find those common things. But even if they're not common, just appreciate ... those aspects that make them different."

4.1.1 Overarching Core Themes – Principle of Tikanga

Tikanga serves as a fundamental principle guiding Māori business relationships, encompassing values such as whānau and whakapapa, whanaungatanga, tūhono, mātauranga, and kanohi ki te kanohi**.** While its expression varies across cultures, participants consistently viewed tikanga as the ethical framework shaping business interactions. It is the foundation that ensures business is conducted with integrity, fostering long-term, meaningful partnerships.

One participant described tikanga as *"our guiding compass, shaping decisions and interactions based on inherited values and principles."* Another noted that tikanga is *"not a rigid rule set but an evolving practice that aligns actions with ethical and cultural integrity."*

A recurring theme among participants was that tikanga is embedded in everyday business decisions. One participant stated, *"Tikanga is not something we turn on or off—it is who we are. It influences every decision we make, from how we greet people to the agreements*

we sign." Another elaborated, "It's not a set of rules that sit outside of us; it is part of how we think, how we act, and how we build relationships."

Significance in Business Alliances:

- **Cultural Integrity:** Tikanga ensures that relationships are conducted with honesty, transparency, and respect. Participants highlighted how upholding tikanga in business interactions preserves Māori identity and strengthens the credibility of Māori businesses on a global stage.
    - A participant explained, *"We don't compromise tikanga for financial gain. If a deal requires us to abandon our values, it is not the right deal."*
    - *Another added, "When we meet international partners, they recognise that we bring more than just business to the table—we bring integrity, heritage, and a way of doing business that is centred on doing what is right, not just what is profitable."*
- **Trust and Connection:** Tikanga fosters deeper relational commitment, akin to family ties, which strengthens alliance durability.
    - One participant shared, *"When we enter a partnership, we treat it like a whānau relationship—it's about mutual respect and shared responsibility. That's why our alliances last."*
    - Another participant elaborated, *"Our partners trust us because they know we operate with integrity. They see that we are not just about making money but about creating something meaningful."*
    - A different interviewee emphasised, *"We don't enter business relationships lightly. When we commit, it's for the long term, and that's built on trust."*
- **Strategic Advantage:** Several participants noted that tikanga differentiates Māori businesses, providing a unique, values-driven approach to international partnerships. This perspective enhances Māori businesses' appeal to global partners who prioritise ethical and sustainable business practices.
    - *"Tikanga gives us a competitive edge. Our international partners appreciate our commitment to values-driven business, and it sets us apart from purely transactional approaches,"* explained one business leader.

- Another participant noted, *"Some businesses chase the biggest deal. We chase the best relationships. And in the long run, that's what gives us strength."*

A participant shared*, "Applying tikanga to our business means ensuring our partnerships align with our values. If they don't, we walk away—even if the deal is lucrative."* This underscores that Māori enterprises prioritise ethical alignment over short-term gains. In one case, a Māori business declined a deal with an international partner after realising that their values did not align. Rather than seeing this as a loss, the business saw it as a reinforcement of their identity, strengthening their standing within their industry.

Broader Implications:

Participants emphasised that tikanga shapes not just business transactions but long-term strategic outlooks. One noted, *"We don't just look at financial bottom lines; we consider environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, and social well-being."*

Another participant discussed how tikanga ensures that success is measured beyond profit: *"For us, profit isn't just about dollars. It's about how our actions uplift our people, our land, and our future generations. That's tikanga in action."*

A case study highlighted how a Māori business declined a contract renewal due to tikanga concerns. The decision, rather than harming the relationship, enhanced the company's reputation, leading to future opportunities. A participant reflected on this, saying, *"Sticking to tikanga may mean walking away from some deals, but in the long run, it earns respect and builds stronger alliances. Our reputation is built on the trust that we will always do what's right."*

Another participant shared a similar experience: *"We had an international partner who wanted us to take shortcuts—cheaper materials, faster production—but that's not how we work. We explained that quality and integrity come first. They walked away from the deal, but months later, they came back because they saw the value in what we stood for."*

One interviewee also pointed out the long-term benefits of tikanga: *"You have to think ahead. What we do today affects the next generation. Our business isn't just about making money now—it's about building something sustainable that will last."*

Conclusion:

Tikanga remains at the core of Māori business engagement, reinforcing ethical, relational, and strategic priorities**.** It is a holistic approach to business that integrates cultural responsibility, social impact, and commercial success. Its integration into international business alliances ensures sustainable, values-driven partnerships that extend beyond profit-making.

Future research should explore how tikanga is interpreted by non-Māori partners and its long-term impact on alliance success. Additionally, further examination of how Māori businesses can leverage tikanga as a strategic advantage in global markets would provide valuable insights into how Indigenous business values contribute to sustainable and ethical economic development.

4.1.2 Overarching Core Themes – Principle of Whakawhirinaki

The participating organisations consistently highlighted the central role of Māori values in the formation and sustainability of international business alliances. Through the interview process and thematic analysis, it became evident that these values were fundamental in fostering trust, strengthening partnerships, and guiding alliances through all stages of internationalisation. Participants recognised that Māori principles were not just cultural markers but strategic assets that influenced decision-making and long-term collaboration.

A recurring theme across all responses was the principle of whakawhirinaki (trust), which emerged as the foundation of successful alliances. Participants unanimously acknowledged that trust was essential in building, maintaining, and strengthening partnerships, particularly in an international context. Within a te ao Māori perspective, trust is inherently woven into all discussions about business relationships, reinforcing the idea that without whakawhirinaki, an alliance lacks the depth and durability required for success.

Trust was also recognised as a critical factor in partner selection, shaping the criteria by which Māori businesses chose to engage in alliances. Participants emphasised that trust was not merely assumed but intentionally cultivated through shared values, ethical alignment, and relational investment. The ability to trust a potential partner was often

seen as a prerequisite before progressing to formal agreements, underscoring the relational rather than transactional nature of Māori business engagements.

Throughout the study, it became evident that tikanga and whakawhirinaki were interwoven, serving as dual pillars supporting alliance formation. While tikanga provided the ethical and cultural foundation for business interactions, whakawhirinaki ensured that these principles translated into enduring and meaningful relationships. Beyond these two core values, five additional principles were consistently referenced in participant pūrākau (narratives), highlighting the essential components that contribute to alliance success.

These five principles, identified from the case studies and reinforced through participant insights, represent the key Māori values that inform relationship-building and trust in international business alliances. The subsequent sections introduce each principle, provide direct participant quotes that illustrate their significance, and offer analytical commentary on their application in a global business context.

Five Key Principles Supporting Whakawhirinaki in Business Alliances:

1. **Whānau & Whakapapa** – The role of familial and genealogical connections in fostering trust and long-term relationships.
2. **Whanaungatanga & Whakawhanaungatanga** – The process of relationship-building and maintaining strong personal and professional bonds.
3. **Tūhono & Kotahitanga** – The alignment of values, vision, and unity to ensure collective success.
4. **Mātauranga** – The role of knowledge-sharing, learning, and reciprocal understanding in strengthening partnerships.
5. **Kanohi ki te Kanohi** – The importance of face-to-face engagement in cultivating trust and authentic connections.

These principles collectively illustrate how Māori businesses navigate alliance formation, ensuring that their international relationships are built on integrity, shared purpose, and a commitment to long-term success. The following sections explore each principle in depth, supported by participant narratives and analytical insights that demonstrate their practical application in global business alliances.

4.1.3 Principle 1: Whānau & Whakapapa – The Foundation for Relationship Formation and International Business Alliances

Whānau (family) and whakapapa (genealogy) are central to Māori business relationships, shaping the foundation of alliances and influencing long-term decision-making. Participants consistently emphasised that relationships extend beyond individuals and businesses, encompassing intergenerational responsibilities and collective well-being.

One participant stated, *"The relationships we form today must benefit our mokopuna and future generations. It's not about short-term gains but creating partnerships that have longevity and meaningful impact."* Another reinforced this sentiment, emphasising that alliances must align with Māori values, ensuring that decisions honor both past and future generations.

Whānau as a Guiding Principle in Business Alliances

Whānau extends beyond immediate family, forming the basis of relational accountability in alliances. One participant noted, *"I was raised in a collective environment—whānau was everyone around us. That's how we approach business; it's about more than just contracts, it's about building enduring relationships based on trust and shared values."*

Intergenerational thinking is integral to Māori business practices. *"Every decision we make today impacts our tamariki and mokopuna. We don't enter into partnerships lightly. We ask: will this relationship strengthen our whānau, our hapū, our iwi? If not, we reconsider."*

A participant described how becoming a parent reshaped their business perspective: *"When my daughter was born, my priorities changed. Suddenly, every decision I made was about securing a future for her and ensuring the opportunities available to me would also be there for her generation."*

Others spoke of how whānau provides resilience and motivation in business. *"My wife once asked if I feared failure, and I told her failure would be not trying at all. I never want to look my mokos in the eyes and tell them I didn't try for them. That sense of responsibility fuels everything I do."*

Whakapapa as a Connector in Global Alliances

Whakapapa fosters a deep sense of belonging and continuity, linking the past to the present and future. Participants highlighted that whakapapa is not just about ancestry but also about relationships and connections in business. *"Even non-Māori partners feel a connection to our culture. They may not fully understand whakapapa, but they recognise the depth of our relationships and the trust we place in these connections."*

Another participant explained, *"Whakapapa isn't just about bloodlines—it's about the shared history, the relationships we build, and the trust that grows from that. Our partners know that when they work with us, they are working with an entire network, not just a single entity."*

One interviewee working in international business highlighted how this connection extends across cultures: *"There is an energy in our culture that even non-Māori partners feel. They may not always understand the depth of it, but they sense something special, something deeply rooted in who we are. That is whakapapa at work—it transcends boundaries."*

Whānau and Whakapapa as Strategic Business Assets

Māori businesses approach alliances through a relational rather than transactional lens, prioritising relational trust over short-term gain. *"Our strength lies in the way we form relationships—our partners respect that we see alliances as long-term commitments, not short-term opportunities."*

This long-term approach mitigates common business risks such as cultural misunderstandings, misaligned objectives, and lack of trust. *"International alliances often fail due to conflicting priorities or lack of trust. Our approach—rooted in whānau and whakapapa—ensures that partners align not only in vision but in values."*

One participant provided a concrete example of how values-based decision-making influences business outcomes: *"We once had an opportunity for a lucrative deal, but the partner didn't respect our values. We walked away. Later, a different partner approached us—one who understood our way of working. That relationship turned into something far more valuable than the original deal."*

Whānau and Whakapapa in Overcoming Outsidership

Whānau and whakapapa help bridge gaps in cultural understanding, fostering a sense of insidership in business relationships. This approach offsets challenges such as outsidership and psychic distance by embedding a deep level of trust and connection from the outset.

"When we share our whakapapa and our stories, it allows our partners to see where we come from. This creates a sense of inclusion, reducing uncertainty and building trust," one participant explained.

Another highlighted, *"For Māori, business is never just about business. It's about relationships, shared responsibilities, and ensuring that our partnerships honor the past and build towards a sustainable future."*

Participants also discussed how whakapapa fosters accountability within business partnerships. *"When you enter into an alliance with us, you're not just dealing with one company—you're engaging with an entire history, an entire network of relationships that ensure integrity and accountability."*

Whānau and Whakapapa as a Competitive Advantage

The Māori approach to business, which prioritises relationships over transactions, is increasingly recognised as a strength in global markets. *"We don't operate on a short-term mindset. Our partners see that when they engage with us, they're forming a relationship built on trust, reciprocity, and long-term commitment."*

Another participant explained how Māori business values set them apart: *"In a world where deals are often transactional, our focus on whānau and whakapapa makes us unique. It strengthens partnerships and creates more meaningful business outcomes."*

This values-driven approach also leads to deeper collaboration. *"A potential partner once told us they had never encountered a business approach like ours. They expected to talk numbers, but we talked about values, relationships, and legacy. That made all the difference."*

Conclusion

Whānau and whakapapa provide the moral, ethical, and relational foundation for Māori business alliances, shaping long-term strategies and fostering trust. These principles not only strengthen relationships within Māori communities but also serve as a strategic advantage in international business, offering a values-driven approach that prioritises sustainability, reciprocity, and collective success.

By embedding whānau and whakapapa into alliance formation, Māori businesses create relationships that extend beyond traditional commercial agreements, ensuring that partnerships are enduring, ethical, and mutually beneficial. Future research could explore how non-Māori partners engage with these principles and whether this relational model could enhance trust-based international alliances on a broader scale.

4.1.4 Principle 2: Whanaungatanga & Whakawhanaungatanga – Processes and Attributes of Successful Relationship Formation

Whanaungatanga (relationships) and whakawhanaungatanga (the process of building relationships) are fundamental to Māori business practices, shaping the foundation of strong, enduring alliances. Participants emphasised that business success is deeply intertwined with relationships, where trust, mutual respect, and shared values take precedence over purely transactional engagements. A well-established sense of relatedness was seen as a key determinant of collaboration, resilience, and long-term sustainability.

One participant explained, *"Whanaungatanga is about more than just working together—it's about knowing who you're working with, understanding their values, and building a relationship based on genuine respect and trust. That's why our partnerships last."*

The Role of Relationship Building in Business Alliances

Participants consistently acknowledged that Māori business practices prioritise relationships over immediate financial gain. *"Everything I do is about relationships. There is no debate—I've set out deliberately to build relationships first, knowing that business will follow,"* explained one participant.

Another shared how their business model was built on enduring partnerships: *"We've never lost a client. People trust us because they see our commitment to relationships. It's not just about delivering a service; it's about partnership, understanding, and ensuring their success as well as ours."*

Strong relationships also provide resilience in challenging times. *"During economic downturns, our partners stepped up to support us—not out of obligation, but because they knew we would do the same for them. That's what true whakawhanaungatanga looks like. It's about showing up for each other in good times and bad."*

A participant elaborated on the depth of relationship-building: *"It's not just about one-off meetings or deals. We stay in touch, we host, we check in on our partners, not because we have to, but because that's who we are. That level of care strengthens our alliances."*

Another emphasised how whanaungatanga helps resolve conflicts: *"When we face challenges, it's the strength of our relationships that gets us through. If you've built trust and respect, you can work through almost anything together."*

Manaakitanga – Hospitality as a Business Strength

Manaakitanga (hospitality, care, and generosity) was identified as a cornerstone of relationship-building. *"It's natural for us to welcome visitors, make them feel at home, and ensure they're comfortable. That's just who we are,"* one participant explained.

Another reflected on their experiences in international business: *"When we meet overseas partners, we don't just engage in business—we engage as hosts, ensuring they feel respected and valued. That approach has strengthened our partnerships significantly."*

Participants also observed that this relational approach extends beyond Māori culture, resonating with other business partners. *"I've seen this value reflected in other cultures, like in China, where hospitality is also central to business. When we align through shared values like whanaungatanga and manaakitanga, partnerships flourish."*

One participant shared an example of manaakitanga in action: *"When our partners visit, we don't just take them to meetings. We take them home, we share kai, we introduce them to our whānau. That's how we form real relationships."*

Another described a specific business engagement where manaakitanga was key: *"We had a delegation from overseas, and instead of just formal meetings, we invited them into our community, shared a pōwhiri, and gave them an experience of who we are. That made all the difference in how they saw us—not just as business partners, but as people they could trust."*

Building Trust and Reciprocity in International Alliances

Participants emphasised that whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga create mutual trust and reciprocity in business dealings. *"We don't just sign contracts and walk away. We invest in the relationship, ensuring that both parties benefit long-term,"* noted one participant.

Another shared how Māori values influence negotiation processes: *"It's not just about making a deal—it's about ensuring that both sides feel respected, valued, and part of something meaningful. When you operate that way, people want to do business with you."*

A participant illustrated this through their experience with international clients: *"We had a business partner who was initially hesitant about our approach. But after experiencing how we engage—our commitment to relationships, our values, and our way of doing business—they became one of our strongest allies."*

Another emphasised that trust is built through consistency: *"It's not just words; it's actions. When partners see that we uphold our values in every interaction, that's when trust is solidified."*

A participant explained how reciprocity plays a key role: *"We invest in our partners, and they invest in us. That's how we ensure that our alliances aren't just short-term but built to last."*

Whanaungatanga as a Competitive Advantage

Participants highlighted that Māori businesses' emphasis on relationships provides a distinct advantage in global markets. *"We don't approach business in a purely transactional way, and that makes us stand out. Our partners appreciate that we prioritise long-term success over short-term gain."*

Another participant reflected on how whanaungatanga strengthens cross-cultural business relationships: *"I've been in meetings where language was a barrier, but the way we interacted—through shared customs, hospitality, and mutual respect—bridged that gap instantly. That's the power of our approach."*

One participant explained, *"In many cultures, relationships come first, then business. Māori have always understood this, which is why we connect so well internationally."*

Another shared a case where their business approach resonated with international partners: *"We had a new partner who was used to purely transactional relationships. At first, they didn't understand our way of doing business. But after experiencing how we operate, they not only embraced our approach but also adopted similar practices in their own dealings."*

A participant detailed how their approach helped secure a key deal: *"Our competitors were offering the same service, but we built the relationship first. That's what won us the contract—not price, not scale, but trust."*

Conclusion

Whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga underpin successful relationship formation in Māori business alliances. These principles foster trust, reciprocity, and long-term commitment, ensuring that business relationships extend beyond transactions to enduring partnerships. The integration of manaakitanga further strengthens these connections, demonstrating that business success is inherently linked to relational integrity.

Māori businesses that embrace whanaungatanga not only build stronger alliances but also create a sustainable, values-driven model for international engagement. Future research could explore how this approach can be further leveraged in cross-cultural business partnerships and global trade networks.

4.1.5 Principle 3: Tūhono/Alignment & Kotahitanga/Unity

Tūhono (alignment) and kotahitanga (unity) are foundational to Māori business alliances, ensuring that partnerships are based on shared values, vision, and mutual commitment. Participants emphasised that identifying alignment early in the relationship-building

process is crucial for long-term success and resilience in global markets. These principles underpin the way Māori businesses select partners, navigate challenges, and cultivate sustainable relationships built on trust and reciprocity.

One participant explained, *"We always start with relationships first. Are we on the same waka? Do we share similar aspirations? If the alignment is there, everything else flows naturally."*

Establishing Alignment in Business Partnerships

Participants consistently highlighted the importance of aligning values before engaging in transactions. *"Before we even discuss a deal, we sit down and share our vision and values. We ask potential partners to do the same. If there's alignment, we move forward; if not, we walk away,"* one participant shared.

Another described their structured approach to partner selection: *"We invited every major seafood company in New Zealand to sit with us, not to talk about deals, but to talk about values and vision first. Those who aligned became our long-term partners. It's a process we still follow today."*

Participants recognised that alignment fosters resilience in business relationships. *"When challenges arise, it's the shared values and vision that keep the partnership strong. We don't just focus on the transaction—we focus on long-term commitment and mutual benefit."*

A participant further emphasised*, "It's about knowing that in tough times, our values will hold us together. That's the difference between a short-term deal and a lasting partnership."*

Another explained, *"Alignment isn't just about business goals—it's about shared responsibilities and a collective vision. If a partner doesn't see our values as core to the relationship, we know that partnership won't last."*

One participant reflected on past experiences where alignment played a crucial role in partnership longevity: *"We've had partnerships where the business objectives were solid,*

but the values weren't fully aligned. Those relationships eventually fell apart because, when challenges arose, there wasn't a shared foundation to rely on."

Cultural Understanding as a Bridge in Global Markets

Māori businesses have a unique ability to build international relationships through cultural respect and understanding. *"Māori have always been worldly. We are built for the marae, and we are built for the world. Our ability to traverse both spaces gives us a competitive edge in global business."*

One participant reflected on their experience working with Chinese partners: *"They have their own tikanga and kawa—just like we do. When we acknowledge and respect their way of doing business, they reciprocate. It's about mutual understanding and respect."*

Another shared, *"In business engagements, we use our culture—our songs, our language—to connect with people on a deeper level. I've seen firsthand how this approach transforms relationships."*

A participant illustrated this with a personal experience: *"I've been in meetings where our partners were initially reserved, but when we shared waiata in their language, everything changed. It's about building trust through culture."*

Another described the significance of whakawhanaungatanga (relationship-building) in business relationships abroad: *"When we engage with overseas partners, we don't just start with negotiations. We bring them into our world, introduce them to our people, and create a shared experience that builds trust before any formal agreements are made."*

A participant noted how the ability to recognise cultural alignment creates stronger relationships: *"It's one thing to have a shared business objective, but it's another to share cultural principles. When we recognise those commonalities, whether through customs, protocols, or ways of communicating, it deepens the relationship."*

Values-Based Decision-Making and Accountability

Participants emphasised that business decisions must align with core values. *"We only engage with people who share our kaupapa. If values don't align, it's not a fit. We've learned that compromising on this never works long-term."*

Another participant shared how this principle shapes leadership: *"Knowing who we are and what we stand for makes it easier to choose the right partners. When you understand your own values as a business, you attract like-minded people."*

Tūhono also plays a role in accountability within alliances. *"When something goes wrong, we don't just cut ties immediately. We sit down, we talk, we try to understand what went wrong. That's the Māori way. But if it's clear that values don't align, we move on."*

A participant expanded on this by stating, *"We believe in second chances, in understanding differences, but we also know when to walk away if a relationship is no longer serving the kaupapa."*

Another shared an example of navigating misalignment in a partnership: *"We once had a partner who, on paper, seemed to share our values. But over time, their actions showed otherwise. We addressed it, had multiple conversations, and when we saw no change, we stepped away. The integrity of our values is more important than any financial gain."*

Another participant discussed how their decision-making process is influenced by accountability to their communities: *"Every choice we make isn't just for the business—it's for our whānau, hapū, and iwi. That level of responsibility means we must be absolutely certain that we are aligning with the right people."*

Kotahitanga as a Strength in Collaboration

Kotahitanga fosters a strong sense of collective purpose, both within Māori businesses and in partnerships. *"It's not just about business; it's about building something bigger than ourselves. We are accountable to our whānau, our hapū, and our iwi. That sense of unity drives everything we do."*

Another participant emphasised the strength of collective leadership: *"Our approach is different because it's not about individual success—it's about lifting our people as a whole. When we work together, we all succeed."*

One participant highlighted how unity strengthens decision-making: *"We don't just bring in partners for short-term gains. We look at the bigger picture—how will this alliance benefit our people in the long run? If we can't see that alignment, we don't proceed."*

Another explained, *"Our partners appreciate that we don't just see numbers; we see people, relationships, and the long-term impact of our work. That makes us different."*

A participant illustrated kotahitanga in practice: *"We've been in situations where we could have taken a bigger cut of a deal, but we prioritised the collective. When our partners saw that, they trusted us even more because they knew we weren't just looking out for ourselves—we were looking out for everyone."*

Another participant spoke about the influence of kotahitanga beyond business: *"Our success is measured by how many people we uplift. It's not just about profit—it's about creating opportunities for our communities, strengthening our networks, and ensuring our next generations have a foundation to build on."*

Conclusion

Tūhono and kotahitanga are central to Māori business alliances, ensuring that relationships are built on shared values, unity of purpose, and mutual respect. These principles guide Māori businesses in selecting partners, navigating challenges, and fostering long-term success in international markets. The ability to align values early in the relationship-building process enhances resilience and strengthens partnerships, creating a competitive advantage in global business.

Māori businesses that embrace tūhono and kotahitanga build alliances that are sustainable, ethical, and deeply rooted in cultural integrity. Future research could explore how these principles can further enhance Māori-led business expansion and influence international trade partnerships. Additionally, further exploration of how non-Māori businesses can integrate these principles into their own relationship-building practices may provide insights into strengthening cross-cultural partnerships.

4.1.6 Principle 4: Mātauraunga/Indigenous KnowledgeMātauranga Māori, the body of Māori knowledge, values, and intuition, was a recurring theme across participant interviews. It emerged as a guiding principle that informs both the **'**why' and 'how' of business, influencing strategic decisions, innovation, and cultural identity. The sharing of narratives was viewed as a vital way to gift knowledge, reinforcing the idea that mātauranga is both precious and deeply embedded in tikanga. Participants described it as something innate, embodied, and actively applied in business decisions, shaping interactions, strategy, and engagement in both domestic and international markets.

One participant reflected, *"Mātauranga isn't just something we learn—it's in our DNA. It guides how we navigate challenges and opportunities, just as our ancestors navigated the oceans."*

Mātauranga as a Strategic Compass

Participants frequently likened mātauranga to an intuitive compass, similar to celestial navigation, where traditional knowledge informs decision-making. *"I never wrote a business plan, but I always knew where we were going,"* one participant explained. *"Just like our ancestors read the stars and tides, we read the business environment—our values tell us what direction to take."*

Another participant shared an analogy from celestial navigation: *"When we're uncertain, we don't panic. We listen—to the environment, to our instincts, to what's around us. That's mātauranga. It's everywhere; we just have to tune into it."*

This intuitive, values-driven approach was seen as a competitive advantage in business. *"We don't always follow conventional business models. Instead, we rely on what we know to be right, what aligns with our tikanga, and what feels right for our people."*

A participant expanded on this, emphasising that mātauranga provides clarity in uncertain situations: *"Sometimes, the best path isn't the one everyone else is following. It's the one that feels right based on who we are and where we come from."*

Another participant reinforced this by stating, *"Mātauranga isn't just knowledge in books; it's something we live. It helps us read the world, make decisions, and trust our instincts."*

A further reflection emphasised that mātauranga, when integrated into decision-making, allows businesses to be resilient in the face of change: *"The world is constantly shifting, but we are grounded in something deeper than market trends—our knowledge system equips us to adapt and innovate without losing who we are."*

Mātauranga Māori as an Authentic Business Framework

Participants highlighted that Māori businesses initially adopted Western frameworks, but over time, many have developed authentic, Māori-centric models that better align with cultural values. *"At first, we used traditional Western models, but we realised they didn't fully capture who we are. Now, we create models that fit us, not the other way around."*

Another participant emphasised the shift: *"Being Māori in business isn't about fitting into existing models—it's about redefining the models in a way that reflects our identity and values. That's when they truly work."*

This process of integrating Māori values into business structures was viewed as empowering. *"When we embrace our mātauranga, our businesses thrive. It's not about rejecting external influences but making sure our foundations remain true to who we are."*

One participant shared how this approach transformed their organisation: *"We moved away from rigid business structures and built a framework that reflects our whakapapa. Now, everything we do is connected to who we are."*

Another participant described how mātauranga creates a natural synergy between economic success and cultural integrity: *"Our business strategy is shaped by our values. Profitability and cultural authenticity don't have to be at odds; in fact, when they align, success follows."*

A further insight from a participant highlighted the transformational potential of this approach: *"Once we stopped forcing ourselves into structures that weren't designed for us and instead designed businesses that reflected us, everything changed—our staff were more engaged, our partnerships were stronger, and our customers felt the difference."*

Mātauranga in Action – The Influence of Māori Knowledge in Global Business

Participants highlighted how mātauranga extends beyond domestic business practices, influencing how Māori engage with international markets. *"Mātauranga isn't just a local thing. It travels with us—it shapes the way we interact with partners in Asia, the Pacific, and beyond."*

Another participant shared how Māori historical engagement in global trade still informs business strategy today: *"Māori were traders from the start—our ancestors negotiated, adapted, and built relationships across cultures. We still do that today, and mātauranga guides how we approach those relationships."*

One participant described how mātauranga contributes to cultural diplomacy in global business: *"When we enter a new market, we bring our values with us. We don't just do business—we share our culture, and that creates deeper, long-term relationships."*

Another participant emphasised the importance of reciprocity in global business: *"Our relationships with international partners aren't just about transactions. They're built on shared respect and understanding, which makes them last."*

A participant expanded on this, stating, *"People respect us not just because we bring business opportunities, but because we bring a way of doing business that is based on relationships, not just contracts."*

One participant highlighted a practical example: *"We've been in negotiations where, rather than just focusing on numbers, we spent time ensuring both sides understood each other's tikanga. That's how trust is built."*

The Role of Mātauranga in Innovation and Future Generations

A recurring theme was the responsibility to pass on mātauranga to future generations. *"Our mokopuna shouldn't have to wait 70 years to understand our knowledge. We're making sure they learn it now, in school, in business, in life."*

One participant developed an educational platform to bring mātauranga into schools: *"STEM is just an English label for something we've always had—mātauranga. We built*

a platform to make sure our kids know that science, innovation, and exploration are in their whakapapa."

Participants emphasised that mātauranga is fluid and evolving, incorporating new knowledge while maintaining traditional wisdom. *"It's not just about looking back—it's about adapting, innovating, and moving forward while staying true to our roots."*

One participant reinforced the idea that mātauranga is not static but grows with experience: *"Every business challenge we overcome, every lesson we learn, adds to our mātauranga. We're constantly evolving, and that's what keeps us strong."*

Another participant reflected on how mātauranga shapes leadership: *"Māori leaders don't just make decisions based on what's happening today. They think about how those decisions will affect generations ahead."*

A participant further explained how mātauranga provides a long-term vision in business: *"We don't just chase short-term gains. We consider the intergenerational impact of our decisions—on our people, our environment, and our culture."*

Conclusion

Mātauranga Māori is more than a principle—it is a lived reality that guides decision-making, shapes business models, strengthens international relationships, and ensures long-term sustainability. It offers Māori businesses a distinct advantage by grounding them in cultural identity while allowing for flexibility and innovation. The ability to integrate mātauranga into business frameworks ensures authenticity, resilience, and a competitive edge in both local and global markets.

As participants emphasised, mātauranga is not just about knowledge—it is about application, intuition, and ensuring future generations inherit and strengthen what has always been there**.** Future research could explore how mātauranga continues to shape business strategy and global engagement, ensuring that Māori values remain at the core of economic success. Additionally, investigating how mātauranga can be leveraged as a tool for leadership development and industry-wide innovation could provide further insights into its growing influence in business.

4.1.7 Principle 5Kanohi ki te KanohiA key principle that emerged consistently throughout the interviews was the fundamental importance of meeting kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face). Participants emphasised that no form of digital communication—whether emails, phone calls, or virtual meetings—could replace the depth, trust, and relational strength built through in-person engagement. The ability to physically share space, experience another person's wairua (spirit), and engage with their mauri (life force) was viewed as essential for fostering genuine, values-based relationships.

One participant articulated the significance of this principle:

"It's really important that we sit down with each other face to face. Zoom and teleconferencing are great tools—we've used them more since Covid and they've made some things easier. But when it comes to critical mahi, hui with our shareholders, or our iwi, our preferred mode is kanohi ki te kanohi. It's about more than just talking; it's about showing that you care, taking the time to be present, to travel, to sit down with people on their own whenua. That is a demonstration of values."

Building Business Relationships Through Kanohi ki te Kanohi

Face-to-face interactions were seen as an integral part of relationship-building in business, particularly in selecting commercial partners and strengthening alliances. One participant described how this principle shaped their approach:

"We chose our first set of commercial partners through kanohi ki te kanohi. We invited every seafood company in New Zealand to sit down with us, and those who responded spent three hours talking with us—not about deals, but about values and vision first. That process of physically being in the same space, engaging in kōrero, and experiencing each other's presence was fundamental to making the right decisions. That's the Māori way."

This perspective reflects how in-person engagement establishes deeper trust, ensures alignment of values, and enhances the reciprocity and authenticity of business relationships. Meeting in person allows parties to gauge sincerity, body language, and intent—elements that are often lost in digital communication.

Cultural and Relational Depth Beyond Virtual Communication

Although participants acknowledged the convenience of online meetings, they strongly maintained that digital engagement should complement, not replace, kanohi ki te kanohi. As one participant stated:

"Covid changed how we interact—we had to rely on Zoom more, and it's been useful. But we always knew it was temporary. We're already making sure we go back to face-to-face meetings because that's where the real connection happens."

Another participant explained how physical presence fosters a different dynamic:

"When you sit with someone kanohi ki te kanohi, you pick up things you wouldn't over a screen. You see their energy, their reactions, their true intentions. That changes how the conversation flows, how trust develops, and how relationships are maintained."

This viewpoint underscores how face-to-face meetings go beyond functional business transactions—they involve relationship-building, cultural respect, and personal commitment to fostering long-term partnerships.

Demonstrating Commitment and Respect Through Presence

Traveling to meet partners in person was described as an **intentional act of respect** that reinforced the depth of the relationship. As one participant put it:

"Kanohi ki te kanohi isn't just about talking—it's about taking the time to go to where people are, to meet them on their whenua, to acknowledge their mana. That level of effort matters. It's how you show respect."

This principle was particularly important when working with iwi and shareholders, as one participant described:

"We hold hui twice a year, always kanohi ki te kanohi. We move around, hosting at different iwi locations, not just for the sake of the collective, but to also engage with each iwi individually—to understand their business, their whakapapa. That way, we strengthen our unity while honoring each iwi's identity."

This approach reflects how face-to-face engagement reinforces relational accountability, deepens cultural connection, and ensures that decisions are made with a holistic understanding of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

Kanohi ki te kanohi remains a foundational principle in business, governance, and relationship-building. While digital communication tools have increased accessibility and efficiency, participants were unanimous in affirming that nothing replaces the depth, sincerity, and commitment demonstrated through face-to-face engagement. Meeting in person fosters trust, enhances cultural understanding, and strengthens alliances in ways that virtual interactions cannot replicate.

As Māori businesses continue to expand into global markets, kanohi ki te kanohi will remain a critical tool for ensuring enduring relationships built on respect, authenticity, and shared values. Future research could explore how this principle is adapted in a post-pandemic world and how businesses can effectively balance virtual and physical engagement to maximise relational and economic success.

4.2 SUMMARY

The interconnected nature of these principles was evident in how participants framed Māori values as fundamental to international business alliance formation. Across all cases, participants consistently reinforced the dominance of a Māori worldview, emphasizing that these values and principles were central to relationship-building and engagement. A recurring theme was that being Māori was not just an identity but a guiding framework that shaped how business was conducted. This identity, deeply rooted in Māori heritage, provided a strong foundation for clarity, purpose, and decision-making in international alliances.

Participants also highlighted the shared understanding of these values among Māori, making it easier to communicate and justify alliance-building processes to boards, stakeholders, and whānau. This alignment fostered cohesion and trust, streamlining decision-making and enhancing transparency within alliance structures. The ability to articulate values consistently and apply them in real-world business settings contributed to fluid communication and shared accountability across all levels of engagement.

An important observation was that participants did not compartmentalize or separate relationship formation and alliance management into distinct phases. Instead, these aspects were seen as deeply interwoven**,** reinforcing the need to analyze them holistically. Consequently, the discussion in Chapter 5 integrates these findings with existing theory, reflecting the organic, values-driven approach Māori businesses take in forming and sustaining alliances.

Beyond relationship-building, participants viewed Māori values as a distinct source of competitive advantage. This advantage stemmed from a strong values base, a clear articulation of identity to alliance partners, and a long-term approach to strengthening relationships through mana-enhancing interactions. Table 12 outlines the key Māori business values identified by participants and their connection to critical relationship formation concepts within alliances.

Table 12. Key Principles of Māori Business Values

Principles	**Relationship Formation Concepts in Alliances**	**Participant**
Tikanga (customary system of values and practices)	Rules of engagement for the development of relationship formation concepts in alliances.	4, 5, 6, 7 & 8
Whakawhirinaki (trust)	Executions of commitments through: role interactions, personal interactions. Negotiations: Expectations of alliance through risk and trust, formal bargaining, informal sense making, uncertainty and trust.	1-9
Whānau and Whakapapa (family, genealogy and the why of things, kupu whakataki)	Purpose: Profits, market share, resources, technology, market access. Forms & entry: Networks, alliances, JVs, equity JVs, buying.	2, 4, 5, 7 & 9
Whanaungatanga and Whakawhanaungatanga (the relationship and the process of establishing the relationship)	Executions of commitments through: role interactions, personal interactions. Negotiations: Expectations of alliance through risk and trust, formal bargaining, informal sense making, uncertainty and trust.	1, 3, 4, 5 & 9
Tūhono and Kotahitanga (alignment and unity, togetherness)	Commitments: Future action of commitment through, formal legal contract psychological contract.	2, 3, 4, 5 & 7
Mātauranga (learning and knowledge)	Purpose, entry and engagement processes.	3, 4, 6, 8 & 9
Kanohi ki te Kanohi (face to face)		1-9

CHAPTER 5 / WHAKAWHITINGA KŌRERO / DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the findings presented in Chapter 4, i.e., the principles identified in the thematic analysis of the data, against the literature on international business alliances and their formation. The intention is to examine how the characteristics of Māori alliance formation processes can be studied using theory, how the role played by values – as identified in the principles reviewed in Chapter 4 – can be understood. This enables critical reflection on the theory, a discussion about how these values can be synthesised, and suggestions for how theory can be modified, applied or generated to better answer the research questions. The Kaupapa Māori approach is equally an important aspect for the discussion, as this approach recognises the participants' world view as Māori and provides an alternate lens as we discuss the findings of this study in reviewing, critiquing, and suggesting theory. There are several approaches applied and identified by Māori businesses and individuals which present these world views as a guiding influence when developing relationships of trust in international business alliances; these approaches are considered important and worthy of integration into theory. The principles identified as guiding the process by which Māori business leaders form international business alliances were: whakawhirinaki, whānau, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono, kotahitanga, mātauranga, tikanga and kanohi ki te kanohi. To answer the research questions, the principles are examined against some of the key concepts and constructs within the literature, as outlined in Table 13.

Table 13. Key Principles of Māori Business Values and Corresponding Relationship Formation Concepts

Principles	**Relationship Formation Concepts in Alliances**
Whakawhirinaki (Trust)	Expectations of alliance and mitigating uncertainty.
Whānau and Whakapapa (Family, genealogy and the why of things, kupu whakataki)	Purpose: Profits, market share, resources, technology, market access. Forms & entry: Networks, alliances, JVs, equity JVs, buying.
Whanaungatanga and Whakawhanaungatanga (The relationship and the process of establishing the relationship)	Executions of commitments through role interactions, personal interactions. Negotiations: Expectations of alliance through risk and trust, formal bargaining, informal sense making, uncertainty and trust.
Tūhono and Kotahitanga (Alignment and unity, togetherness)	Commitments: Future action of commitment through formal legal contract, psychological contract.

Mātauranga (Learning and knowledge)	Purpose, entry, and engagement processes.
Tikanga (Customary system of values and practices)	Rules of engagement for the development of relationship formation concepts in alliances.

In terms of a Māori perspective, these principles are viewed as helping set Māori entities apart in terms of how they maintain their own unique world view and engage in international business alliances.

The chapter concludes with the insights from the discussion and answers to the research questions being used to synthesise a proposed framework for Māori international business alliance formation processes. This study proposes the **Tikanga Business Alliance Framework** as a guiding model for understanding and shaping Māori alliances in international business. This framework is built upon core Māori values and relational principles, which have been identified as instrumental in forming and sustaining effective international alliances.

5.2 RESEARCH CONTEXT AND TIMING – MĀORI PRINCIPLES IN CONTEXT

At the start of this section, to provide context to the wider implications of the discussion, it is worth reiterating, first, the point made in Chapter 1 that Māori values are increasingly becoming part of everyday New Zealand society, and second, that the direction of the scholarship reviewed in Chapter 2 on alliance formation has increasingly looked towards understanding the processes of alliance formation and acknowledged the importance of constructs such as trust and the personal and cultural orientations of the managers and decision-makers. The thematic principles emerging from the data reflect how Māori are leveraging key values in international business alliances, in line with the current focus of the literature. In most of the narratives shared by participants, Māori values such whakawhirinaki, whānau, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono, kotahitanga, mātauranga, tikanga and kanohi ki te kanohi are having a significant impact on Māori economic relationships, and with a long-term intergenerational perspective. A certain irony was alluded to in observing how Māori have conducted their business dealings for many years with an intrinsic focus on environment, social well-being, sustainability, guardianship, and protection of natural resources, all of which are becoming important drivers of successful alliances and future value-creation.

The use of te reo Māori in everyday language within business was encouraging for many of the participants, as they saw a level of acceptance of their cultural value systems or at least the

outward appearance of it. Notably, many non-Māori were attempting te reo in karakia, pepeha or mihimihi in meetings, and while these were examples of domestic use, some of the participants indicated that international partners who had worked with them for many years were doing basic greetings in Māori. The principle was more about acceptance and the belief that Māori values were beginning to be recognised in some way within New Zealand and could be transferred into a global market. Many participants talked about the New Zealand All Blacks as a point of interest with international alliance partners and the fact that several partners enjoyed the haka and its cultural significance. Overall, there was a sense of pride that Māori values were much more prominent in society today as opposed to when many of the participants were being raised, and historically, when Māori were discouraged from learning the language and placed less emphasis on being Māori. The importance of Māori values has gone through a resurgence and many more Māori feel more connected to values espoused by Māori. Concepts such as kaitiakitanga, tikanga and a te ao view were supported by government in the renewed focus on embedding Te Tiriti principles into society. In job advertisements, all government departments, education and health organisations now discuss their adherence to Te Tiriti principles, although with recent government changes, there is some robust discussion about the embedding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in these departments and the removal of te reo.

Te reo Māori is presented every day by newsreaders on local television in Aotearoa and Matariki has become a national holiday. Māori tokutoku or symbols are used for branding in many companies and the New Zealand All Blacks perform the haka with more cultural sensitivity than ever before for the world to see. There was a consensus that the Māori way of thinking or seeing the world was being supported by non-Māori in Aotearoa and that the culture was being adopted by all to a certain extent. One participant made note of the fact that the first part of the New Zealand anthem is in te reo Māori and that through the years more and more non-Māori were singing this in Māori and not waiting for the second part of the anthem to sing in English only.

These principles identified in the findings listed below are reviewed against the data, and emergent themes explored:

- Whakawhirinaki,
- Whānau, Whakapapa,
- Whanaungatanga, Whakawhanaungatanga,
- Tūhono, Kotahitanga,
- Mātauranga,
- Tikanga,
- Kanohi ki te Kanohi.

These principles have been identified and analysed in the interviews conducted with Māori businesses and individuals who have worked on Māori business ventures internationally. These experiences were communicated through a Kaupapa Māori lens which gave each participant in the interviews the opportunity to share insights, thoughts, feelings, and commentary through a pūrākau format. Several core principles stemming from Māori cultural values were commonly observed amongst the group of participants, and values such as whānau and whakapapa were identified as the 'why' in many of the stories shared about their experiences in developing commercial relationships in international business alliances. Many of the themes that were discussed were interconnected, and highlighted Māori cultural values as a strong undercurrent in all aspects of developing business relationships internationally.

These insights into how Māori businesses and individuals are connected to their value systems were communicated through relaxed kōrero while applying principles of tikanga. It was clear that Māori cultural values impact on the relationship-building process in international business alliances. References to wairua, kawa, utu and manaakitanga permeated throughout the interviews via the process of pūrākau. Almost all the participants in the study were high profile Māori business leaders in some form who came from primary industries, iwi leadership, or the media, arts, technology, food, wine, or seafood industries, and many had achieved several industry awards and recognition in their respective fields.

Answers to questions about the dynamics of Māori businesses internationalising, where they choose to go, and why they make these decisions, are often related to the importance of the alliance and relationship, with the caveat of how they fit into a cultural framework (Puriri & McIntosh, 2019). Mtigwe (2006) presented the idea that the internationalisation of the firm is therefore basically viewed as a natural development from network relationships with foreign individuals and firms. The findings illustrate that Māori values within an alliance or international business venture represent an integral part of relationship building, according to the participants. The companies that have been observed reflect a wide range of Māori entities that are at various stages of alliances and ventures in international business. Some of these ventures are valued in the millions, while some in the hundreds of thousands and others are long-term and generational commercial opportunities. Some of these organisations are in the early stages of internationalisation, while others are in the later stages of alliance formation in international business. Māori businesses internationalising give some consideration to the transaction-cost approach; however, the drivers tend to be relational; these drivers are of a much higher priority and include cultural alignment to international partners through alliances (Mill & Millin, 2021). Māori businesses are highly entrepreneurial, many do not feature as having a firm-level advantage within the country, apart from some tourism businesses, and they move into markets with little regard for a transaction-cost approach (Mrabure et al., 2021).

Māori businesses in international alliance formation processes tend to be culturally nuanced; these processes are situated at a micro-level in comparison to industry and firm level (Ruwhiu et al., 2018). This is important in that the emphasis is different when we consider the scale or capabilities of organisations which are internationalising and consider the importance of cultural values (Ransfield & Reichenberger, 2021). International business theories are geared towards MNEs and do not examine the importance of decision-making within the international business alliance process. Examining the themes which involve SMEs and entrepreneurship may be more appropriate, where international business behaviours take into consideration Māori business entities, including the culturally nuanced focus suggested by Ruwhiu et al. (2021).

Māori businesses are at various internationalisation stages and their progress is partially reflected in the innovation-related models of international business such as born-globals (Vissak, 2006). These innovation-related models provide some explanations of how the process starts and the role of key decision-makers, but there are many variables that may influence their decisions; this is acknowledged as a key part of most models (Collinson & Houlden, 2005). In consideration of Māori businesses which are developing alliances in international business, some similarities can be seen but there is an opportunity to consider culture, values and the processes involved in building alliances which supports some of the main factors influencing enterprises' export initiation and behaviour patterns. This study echoes the determinants of innovation-related models that ensure the following internal determinants (Collinson & Houlden, 2005):

- Decision-maker characteristics: age, country of birth, value system, history, experience in foreign markets and behaviour in uncertain situations.
- The strength of managerial aspirations for various business goals, e.g., growth, profit and market development.
- Management expectations about the effects of exporting on business goals.

This progression towards the decision-maker, and their traits, beliefs, and value systems, begins to resonate with how Māori values play an important role in how relationships are formed while doing business internationally. In the context of this study, a Māori business features key innovators or managers who are at a micro-level, who make key decisions in working within international business and who have the audacity to take risks and apply relational perspectives (Mataira, 2000).

The relevance of these relational perspectives is not lost in the idea that Māori firms view relationally orientated alliances as important in the internationalisation of their respective businesses (Henry & Wolfgramm, 2018). As discussed, these relationship perspectives resonated with Māori businesses in the early settler period of colonial Aotearoa and current research

indicates the importance of these perspectives on internationalisation for Māori firms at the present time (Mika et al., 2022; Spiller et al., 2010). However, these theories do not amplify key tenets associated with value systems and the process of building relationships within these value and belief systems.

All participants spoke of the value of these partnerships and the importance of the relationship, including the value of the knowledge or learnings from these engagements. Many of the ventures engaged with more than one culture, including Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, Arabic, European, Australian, the Pacific nations or North American. All ventures or alliances were with non-Māori and non-Aotearoa entities. While the ventures were different in size, duration of relationship, products, and services, and were transactional and relational, according to participants all the alliances or ventures emphasised the importance of Māori values in building relationships.

It is important to note that researchers are beginning to develop theories which identify individual-to-individual or team-to-team interactions during the alliance pre-formation phase and the impact of different managerial cultural backgrounds and mind-sets, as previously discussed (Buckley et al., 2015). RBV theories have progressed from considering firms as the unit of analysis to the network relationship between dyadic partnerships and highlighting the importance of inter-firm cooperation (Dyer & Singh, 1998.) These research streams are beginning to find links between national, organisational, or other cultural values and competitive advantage. It is clear in the case studies presented here that it is individual relationships which are developed, and that culture is an important aspect of how these relationships form in international business alliances. It is worth recalling Henare's (2011) gift exchange model:

- It emanates from a Māori world view and is informed by traditional Māori economics.
- It is inspired by four well-beings – spiritual, ecological, kinship, economic.
- It is embedded in the ecological system that sustains it.
- It requires multidisciplinary approach to its research.
- It is a system that can reorganise itself to created new futures.
- It manifests as reciprocity and gift exchange.

Many of these characteristics of gift exchange, as per Henare (2011), appeared in the ways Māori businesses engaged with international business alliance partners. A focal point of this study has been to understand the motives and processes of internationalisation while observing the development of competencies in relationship formation within alliances and while considering the impact of Māori values. A Māori perspective on relationship formation while considering

Māori world views in international business clearly emphasises that Māori values have a real impact on relationship development, according to the participants of this study. Petrie (2006) described the collective motivations of Māori innovators doing business internationally, and Henry and Poyser (2024) emphasised that Māori business philosophies based on value systems are key drivers of the way business is conducted. Puriri and McIntosh (2019) went on to suggest that the 'how' of doing business is as important as outcomes for Māori businesses and that cultural frameworks inform the 'how' and 'why' in networks, alliances and building relationships.

The importance of networks and relationships to firms of all sizes is that they enable firms to link activities and tie resources together; however, networks seem to be particularly important for born global firms and other SMEs, given their resource constraints (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). Petrie (2006) wrote about the entrepreneurial nature of Māori businesses in the early-settler period of Aotearoa history but identified the constraints of not having existing networks initially and noted that there was a reliance on known relationships which eventually developed into a web of alliances and networks.

The notable characteristic of Māori businesses wanting to internationalise is, as discussed, that it is the innovator or specific manager who leads the choice of entry mode or choices made in market. These choices are impacted by cultural frameworks and values or belief systems.

If we consider a relational view of the RBV, particularly the needs of companies who wish and need to internationalise, we see that companies should maintain long-term, sustainable relationships to cultivate relational networks. This will allow the firm to keep long-term relationships with business partners to cultivate relational networks for mobilising external resources and improving relationship formation development (De Man, 2004). Table 14 highlights the theoretical alignment to relationship formation literature and international business theories.

Table 14. Participant Māori Business Values and Theoretical Alignment with Internationalisation

Core Values	Definitions	Relationship Formation Literature	Network Theories
Tūhono	Alignment	Respect, learnings	**Uppsala Model** (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009) **Alliance capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Whanaungatanga	Relationship building	Relationship development	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009) **Alliance capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Kotahitanga	Unity and alliance	Team and unity	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne 2009) **Innovation-related internationalisation models (**Bilkey & Tesar ,1977; Cavusgil,1980; Reid, 1981)

Whakawhirinaki	Trust	Trust building	**Uppsala Model** (Johanson & Vahlne 2009)
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, respect	Respect within teams and business	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne 2009)
Kaitiakitanga	Stewardship, guardianship	Guardianship, responsibility	**Alliance capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face-to-face meetings preferred, curiosity and engagement	Face-to-face meetings	**Aharoni decision-making model** (Aharoni, 1966/2004) **A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne 2009)
Tikanga	Customs, our way, values	Values	**Alliance capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Whakapapa	Ancestry, the 'why' of things, legacy	Purpose and legacy	**Alliance capital** (Dunning, 1995)

Māori entities in this study, or the participants who were interviewed, understood the concept of long-term, sustainable relationships which supported relational networks building towards alliances. They were more likely to succeed if the Māori entities adhered to their value systems and considered the importance of relationship-formation processes and development. A key foundational value of the relationship-formation process in building towards alliance development was the underlying value in all ventures of whakawhirinaki (trust) which is discussed as the first principle or value.

5.3 WHAKAWHIRINAKI

The underlying theme from alliance formation and network development is that whakawhirinaki is at the heart of how relationships are effectively developed amongst Māori and non-Māori. Part of this underlying theme for the participants is the connection that trust has with culture and, in this case, Māori values. Māori businesses view the principle of trust in a similar way to how most businesses look at trust in terms of the importance of developing business relationships and sustaining them. Some effort has been made by municipal councils within Aotearoa to build better relationships of trust and understanding because of an inherent mistrust of Pākehā (non-Māori/European) governments of the past (Ericksen et al., 2001). A key aspect of this building of better relationships of trust with Māori is for non-Māori/European to understand the tikanga (meaning, custom, right way) which in turn helps to build understanding and establish good practice for more effective relationships in almost all settings, including business (Harmsworth, 2005b). It is equally important for Māori to learn of the values of those they may work with in developing business partnerships and to respect these customs in turn. The post-colonisation experience of Māori could be looked at as an example of the willingness of Māori to engage with another culture and learn their way of living and their values.

Alliance literature has promoted the idea that trust and commitment as forms of relationship bonding are key to managing partnerships (Ariño et al., 2001; Parkhe, 1998). The premise becomes one where trust is an expectation of an alliance partner that is manifested in its credibility or benevolence, whilst commitment concerns a partner's intention to continue to make the necessary efforts in an alliance (Cullen et al., 2000).

Abosag and Lee (2013), Ariño et al. (2001) and Parkhe (1998) have suggested that trust and commitment are at the heart of bonding in relationship development in alliances. This supports the kaupapa that many interviewees discussed in terms of how an alliance partner's trustworthiness garnered a credibility or benevolence, which for Māori may take the form of transactional commitments and an intention to build on the alliance. Cullen et al. (2000) made this a clear point in terms of the willingness of partners to extend benevolence and understanding in the alliance amongst international business partners. Furthermore, without trust there is little to no ability to sustain a transactional relationship, according to Andersen and Kumar (2006) and Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007).

It appears that the concepts of commitments through role interactions and personal interactions which are trust-based created expectations within the alliance or venture that there was less uncertainty and the transition to formal bargaining was seen as being easier. Rauyruen and Miller (2007) suggested that the quality of relationship through trust extrapolates to more positive responses in dealing with uncertainty and becomes of key predictor of success. Sigfusson and Harris (2012) presented the idea that, where there is a lack of trust, or if it is frail, commitments to an alliance or venture are weakened, which has a significant impact on the success of that venture. They specifically drew on the experience of international entrepreneurs who worked with different cultures.

The participants maintained that the success of all business alliances lay in the ability of both parties to trust each other, through periods of stability and growth and, equally, through challenges and disagreements. Several of the participants alluded to the fact that when times were tough between alliance partners, it was generally the trust that they had in the alliance partner, through the strong relationships established, that allowed for a continuance of the venture and a willingness to work through difficult issues. This premise is supported by Schoenherr et al. (2015) who identified trust as being the key stabiliser, as opposed to the fine print in a contract. However, in some situations trust cannot overcome significant cultural differences and diverse value systems (Muethel & Hoegl, 2012).

Trust in almost all situations in the experiences of Māori businesses requires similar value systems and ideals. This is important in the sense that, while relationships were built on trust, they required

other factors to help sustain these relationships, such as similar value systems, alignment in objectives and willingness to work through adversity (Vanneste et al., 2014).

One of the participants highlighted an experience where a partner was unable to meet their contractual obligations in payment. For more than 12 months the participant worked with the partner until they were able to compensate the Māori entity for the work which had been done. It is important to note that the value of this contractual obligation was of the order of several million dollars and that there was some level of uncertainty that the partner would be able to fully pay what was owed. A large part of this type of response was because the participant had indicated that the partner shared similar values and belief systems. Several years later, the situation reversed, and the partner provided support for the participant company. At the base of this relationship was the trust each partner had for each other and a willingness to endure and continue in good faith. It was noted by the alliance partner that the cultural foundations and Māori values had significant impact on how the alliance company trusted the alliance participant. This related to the ideathat the Māori entity was in business for the long term and was connected to a whakapapa, including generations to come, which resonated with the alliance partner. The alliance partner in this case was American and spoke highly of the Māori values maintained by the Māori entity, according to the participant.

Alliance research supports the premise that cultural views and norms are at the centre of relationship development and the impact of culture (Ren et al., 2009). An understanding of culture is a prominent aspect of the business decision-making process. These cultural norms are central to trust and work towards the overarching strength of the relationship, and understanding another's culture was more than a cursory event. Akrout et al. (2019) discussed several factors which support trust in the international business alliance in tandem with values which are aligned or are shared by alliance partners. It was clear in the present study that the participants indicated that without this common understanding or respect for other cultures, there was less likelihood of success in the relationship formation in the alliance and less likelihood of trust within the alliance and partner selection.

Partner selection can impact the network and alliance direction in terms of relational versus transactional aspects when we factor in trust. The relational aspect, the appropriateness of the partner and the process of establishing the relationship leads to commitment events or transactional actions and overall trust in the alliances when Māori values are recognised. Dasí-Rodríguez and Pardo-del-Val (2015) suggested that the influence of cultural factors, such as aligned values, and developing foundations based on trust are significant determinants of partner selection. All participants in this study indicated that partnership selection was a key to the success

of these relationships and that partnership selection always worked in parallel with trust and aligned values.

As discussed in the literature, commitments in international business are developed from trust which has a positive impact on problem-solving, improves productivity, and optimises the alliance and alliance satisfaction where trust is built on shared values (Cullen et al., 2000). However, the literature only goes part of the way in explaining how trust is an important aspect of relationship development in international business when considering this study. The literature does not fully reflect the importance or the basis of the meaning of Māori views of trust as one of the most integral parts of whakawhanaungatanga, as depicted in many of the narratives shared by the participants, which indicated that if trust was present then the transactional component of the venture or alliance would work itself out eventually in a positive way. Furthermore, it is an alignment of values based on trust which distinguishes the relationship for Māori. It has been stated by De Groote et al. (2023) that similarity in culture in alliances supports the early stages of alliance formation but value alignment and relational trust is required to sustain these relationships.

The participants echoed these statements in the narratives presented. Lohtia et al. (2005) specifically suggested that alliance performance and partnership success is more likely when two distinct cultures can share and align with the respective values of each culture. This is not to ignore the fact that many Māori businesses continue to work with entities that do not share common values. The participants indicated that some partners are not aligned with their own value systems, and it was acknowledged that the relationships were more difficult to maintain and that there was also an unwillingness by the Māori entity, when faced with challenging situations, to endure in a similar way to that which was experienced with an organisation that shared similar values.

There were several examples discussed by the participants of alliance partners which were not suitable after a period because of a misalignment in values and initial common objectives. One specific example was that of an alliance partner wanting to own Māori land as part of the alliance. The Māori entity (represented in this study by Participant 4) responded by informing them that the land was not for sale as it belonged to a collective and, more importantly, the Māori entity viewed themselves as the guardians of this land for their tribe and future generations. Both parties reached an impasse and while it would have been lucrative for the Māori entity to work through this type of transaction, the tenets of the agreement did not match with the inherent value systems of the Māori entity at the time. The alliance or venture ceased with goodwill from both parties. A few years later these two entities did begin engaging again; however, it was in the export of food and beverage from Aotearoa to the partner's home country. This is an interesting case, as almost

all the participants indicated that if business ventures or specific alliances did not work out, there were still positive relationships where the mana of the partners was maintained and trust in each other had not been too impacted. In this example, Participant 4 was also impacted by the responsibilities they had to a collective of iwi and hapū groups.

It is important to note that while establishing the relationships is an integral part of the alliances discussed, all participants were very commercially orientated and desired positive economic successes from the relationships while conducting international business. The transactional importance of relationships was not taken lightly and was very important in the whole scheme of the relationship. But these participants all acknowledged that cultural values were an important feature of the ongoing success of these partnerships. Many of the participants were aware of the entrepreneurial orientation of their ancestors, and three of the entities involved in this study originated from iwi settlements or ahu whenua trusts, so there was a feeling of continuity from and connection to the history of Māori trading successfully in early colonial Aotearoa.

The participants all indicated that there was a natural inclination to trade or develop international business relationships with other cultures because it was familiar and seemed part of their respective whakapapa. Table 15 identifies various Māori values and how they correspond with relationship formation concepts in alliances; all the participants referred to Māori values to some extent in the interviews.

Table 15. Key Principles of Māori Business Values from Interviews, Corresponding Relationship Formation Concepts and Alliance Concepts

Principles	Relationship Formation Concepts in Alliances	Alliance Concepts
Whakawhirinaki (trust)	Executions of commitments through role interactions and personal interactions. Negotiations: Expectations of alliance through risk and trust, formal bargaining, informal sense-making, uncertainty, and trust.	Overcoming uncertainty and poor communication
Whānau and Whakapapa (family, genealogy and the why of things, kupu whakataki)	Purpose: profits, market-share, resources, technology, market access forms & entry, networks, alliances, JVs, equity JVs, buying	Partner compatibility and shared value systems
Whanaungatanga and Whakawhanaungatanga (the relationship and the process of establishing the relationship)	Executions of commitments through role interactions and personal interactions. Negotiations: Expectations of alliance through risk and trust, formal bargaining, informal sense making, uncertainty and trust.	Strong resilience and relationship strength
Tūhono and Kotahitanga (alignment and unity, togetherness)	Commitments: Future action of commitment through, formal legal contract, psychological contract.	Alignment and similar goals and objectives

Mātauranga (learning and knowledge)	Purpose, entry, and engagement processes.	Environments of knowledge, learning and innovation
Tikanga (customary system of values and practices)	Rules of engagement for the development of relationship formation concepts in alliances.	Process of engagement and establishing the alliance parameters and overcoming poor communication
Kanohi ki te Kanohi (face to face)	The actual engagement.	Unique factors in the alliance relationship

Trust or whakawhirinaki supports the notion of the execution of commitments through role interactions and personal interactions leading on to the negotiation. The expectations of the alliance to respond to risk, uncertainty, formal bargaining, and informal sense-making can only be achieved by a strong sense of trust, which is a key tenet for Māori in building towards successful international business alliances. The relationship of trust to Māori values is a key tenet for Māori in how business is viewed and conducted, according to the participants. Relationship formation concepts in international business are built on a level of trust when we view international business theories; however, these principles of trust may not be attributed to how companies and organisations present their own values.

Many of the partnering organisations or alliance partners did not present values and belief systems overtly in the early development of the alliances, and it was the Māori entities which elevated their respective values and belief systems as a marker or a statement of intent to the alliance partners. All the participants presented their respective entities in such a way to help the alliance partners understand who they were and what they could expect in the alliance interactions. The Māori entities emphasised the reasons for their being and the ways they would like to engage, which were directly attributable to values and belief systems.

Finally, Māori entities viewed success differently from non-Māori entities. Mrabure (2019) indicated the definitions of success are unique to Indigenous organisations because concepts such as values, and adhering to maintaining these values in any situation, are a marker of success for these entities.

5.4 WHĀNAU & WHAKAPAPA

Considering the reasons why Māori entities acted in a certain way in an alliance partnership or venture, it is valuable to understand some of the key values which inform and impact the Māori entity in an alliance relationship.

The importance of whānau and whakapapa cannot be overstated, and, in conjunction, these core values were present in all interviews in some form. For Māori, the 'why' of things, or purpose, is embedded in these two concepts and principles. Understanding the principles of family and genealogy has a significant impact on the identification of potential alliance partners, considering the purpose of alliances and what type of relationship the Māori entity would develop or pursue. Māori organisations needed to consider concepts of whānau and whakapapa because whatever was actioned or decided on came from a principle of whānau collectiveness, which has an impact on others, not just including the organisation and individual but whānau, hapū, and iwi included. Neha et al. (2021) suggested that Māori values augment an interwoven perspective of values such as whānau and whakapapa which guides the overall direction of all relationships including alliances. This is an important concept in the whole structure of alliance building because organisations which are unable to recognise this and marginalise the importance of this to the Māori entity tend not to do so well in the alliance as it progresses.

Participant 3 shared a story of an alliance partner suggesting that going back to a group of trustees to support what seemed like a simple strategic directional decision was too cumbersome and not ideal for the alliance partner. The Māori alliance partner responded by indicating that while it may seem cumbersome, it was a necessary action to do to ensure that the whānau, or organisation, were aware and supported the strategic directions that both alliance parties were about to commence. Māori entities quite often reflected a community or collective approach in which value systems were a priority in all considerations. This type of approach is consistent with collective communities as opposed to an individualistic society. This becomes an important consideration because, from a foundational perspective in the development of the international business alliance, quite often, if not all the time, there is a collectivist approach being adopted. This may often impact partnership selection, according to the participants. In this case, Participant 3 was from an iwi-originated organisation with several tribes or trustees to report to and while it may have appeared cumbersome, the venture was that of providing product in an exclusive agreement which would in effect nullify other alliance partners.

An individualist society promotes personal control, autonomy and individual accomplishments, while a collectivist society, as for Māori, defaults to the importance of loyalty, cohesion, whānau, whakapapa and mutual obligations to these value systems. Kyriacou (2016) suggested that these societal ideologies impact the development of relationships between both, and that there is less flexibility on the collective side to adjust or change when values do not align. This is strongly aligned to the concept of belonging to a larger group or identifying with something much bigger than the individual.

Traditionally, the internationalisation literature has been informed by western, Eurocentric positivist approaches, with little consideration of cultural nuances when trying to understand how collective societies internationalise (Leonaviciene & Burinskiene, 2022). International business scholars have over-relied on a few notable theories to help our understanding of internationalisation. According to Surdu et al. (2021), this over-reliance does little to help understand behavioural approaches to internationalisation and, in the case of Māori, the concepts of learning by doing or vicarious learning are generally not considered. These principles are important because early Māori learnt from each other and, importantly, learnt by doing; these principles are still a big part of today's practices in working in international business, according to the participants. While the reasons for doing what Māori organisations do in working towards in international business are key to the 'why', importantly, learning from whānau was equally important. This relationship between whānau and whakapapa allowed for many of the participants to follow in the footsteps of those within the whānau network, those who are part of their whakapapa and, in some situations, it has meant they do not repeat the same mistakes that had been made prior.

Overall, the importance of whānau, whakapapa and principles being instilled in the organisation has had an impact on risk mitigation, proportion of shares, equity splits, exposure to reputation and whether to move into a joint venture, partnership, or alliance.

5.5 WHANAUNGATANGA AND WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA

The participants discussed how important the principles of whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga are when building relationships in any type of alliance or venture. If the heart of a successful alliance or partnership is the strength of the relationship, then the process of the building of that relationship is the foundation or fabric that determines how strong that relationship is. The process of establishing the relationship, according to all participants, is as important as the actual outcome, if not more important. An understanding formed because of this process, whereby they were able to assess, understand, consider, and form opinions which guided the way the alliance would develop and how they would work with the alliance partner, the participants explained.

From the perspective of Māori business entities, the development of partnerships under the principles of whakawhanaungatanga could be viewed as trust leading to commitments, which is unique in the development and establishment of relationship building. This type of co-operation or the principle of bonding becomes an undertaking in which the process of relationship formation is realised. Māori have always valued the principles of co-operation and bonding by committing to each other, and the proverb which states *"Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora te manuhuri.*

Nāu te rākau, nāku te rākau, ka mate te hoari" ("Your food basket and my food basket will satisfy the guest. Your weapon and my weapon will dispose of the enemy") exemplifies the importance of this value among Māori.

Equally there is alliance research (Ren et al., 2009) to suggest that cultural views and norms have a significant influence on the development of a relationship where the impact of culture on the business decision-making process is prominent. It is from these perspectives that we view the impact of Māori business values in the context of how a relationship forms, how an alliance develops or how a network assists in not only partner selection but also the success of the relationship. Cullen et al. (2000) supported the idea that commitments and trust, which in turn help develop bonds within a relationship, are important in problem-solving, improving productivity, and optimising alliance performance satisfaction. In this case the definition of alliance performance relates to a partner's satisfaction where performance is generally optimal in an alliance venture between two distinct cultures (Lohtia et al., 2005).

Mrabure (2019) indicated that success in a business relationship can be measured by how well the process was adhered to and that sometimes it had little to do with outcomes in Indigenous business dealings. Haar and Delaney (2009) made it clear that Māori cultural values may be important for Māori, but there may be challenges in applying these principles to economic performance. Internationalisation literature does not accommodate the importance of cultural values to firm performance for Māori entities. The participants, however, clearly indicated the importance of values and the impact they have on firm performance because a key measurement for success is how these relationships are formed, the right way or tikanga, or the process.

The actual process of establishing co-operation and the principle of bonding through the steps of relationship-building connects many of the other principles that the participants presented as being crucial in relationship building. All participants emphasised that when a process based on their Māori values was in place, the relationship from their perspective was more likely to be fruitful. Many of the participants indicated that this was the most important aspect of the relationship. As discussed, the participants have indicated that this was a measure of performance for the firm from their perspective. This principle, however, does not correlate with current positivist economic theories in internationalisation. Spiller et al. (2011) advocated for the recognition of cultural perspectives and practices in measuring organisational wisdom and performance when we consider the practices of Māori and the processes that are utilised by these entities in business.

The process of whakawhanaungatanga features principles of manaakitanga, mana, kaitiakitanga and utu. The ideals around the importance of alliances, networks, relationships and partnerships have always traditionally been concepts espoused by Māori since pre-European times. This is also

noted in the work of Henare (2011, 2016) who extended Hyden's (1980) economy of affection to encapsulate an economy of mana. Henare's work underpins a Māori world view and lends itself to explaining the importance of an exchange system that emphasises the notion of increasing, establishing, and protecting mana within people. This exchange system, with its foundations based on Māori values supported by the concepts of gift exchange, establishes a network of interactions which have significant meaning to Māori in developing relationships in business. To revisit the literature, Hotz-Hart (2000, p. 434) identified the potential benefits of networks of interaction:

> 1. Better access to information, knowledge, skills, and experience. Networks provide opportunities for learning about new ways of operating and about new forms of technology and can reduce the development time and cost of new products and production processes.
>
> 2. Improved linkages and cooperation between network members, particularly between users and suppliers. As leading firms within a network develop competencies this has the effect of creating benchmarks, where the effective network can encourage interactive learning, synergy and complementarity between key specialist groups across participating firms, such as design, production, marketing, and finance.
>
> 3. Improved response capacity. Networks allow participating firms to respond more quickly and to anticipate changing competitive circumstances, and to learn about new forms of technology.
>
> 4. Reduced risk, moral hazards, information, and transaction costs. Networks of firms with complementary assets allow resources to be shared and reduce costs. Risks can also be assessed and shared throughout the network leading to more informed decisions and further cost reductions.
>
> 5. Improved trust and social cohesion. Alliances encourage shared values, goals, norms, and ways of working which facilitate problem-solving, collective action and innovative behaviour, often through a complex combination of competition and cooperation.

The benefits of these network approaches are what Māori businesses are seeking in their narrative.

Participant 9, in a mihi prior to the pūrākau, talked at length of the story of Hongi Hika which is known by most Māori who have studied the history of Aotearoa. The participant refers to Hongi Hika as tīpuna and the narrative shared was valuable in terms of the message being presented and tells a story of this tīpuna. Hongi Hika, from a Māori perspective, is a pivotal figure and had a significant impact on Māori in the early 1800s. Hongi displayed strong leadership skills, was an excellent strategist in both war and trade, where his actions would have far-reaching consequences

in the early part of New Zealand history. Most Māori regard this Ngāpuhi leader as someone who brought war and muskets with great retribution, in the early 1800s, to their respective rohe. Ngāpuhi fought against Ngāti Whātua in 1807 or 1808, where Ngāpuhi were decisively beaten, where two of Hongi Hika's brothers and Pokaia, their leader was killed. Hongi became the rangatira of Ngāpuhi and sought utu. Over a period, Hongi saw Europeans as a means to an end, and began developing mutually beneficial relationships through the establishment of mission stations under his protection and providing potatoes in exchange for muskets and gunpowder. In travels to England in 1820 he obtained more muskets and he immediately commenced military campaigns against other iwi in the surrounding regions and, eventually, further afield. These campaigns brought significant economic advantages to Ngāpuhi, as captives were put to work and more potatoes were grown and then traded for more weapons, fuelling ongoing military campaigns. The significance of the alliance with Europeans would create havoc for many thousands of the Māori population, particularly in the North Island, where migrations occurred as displaced groups of Māori sought lands away from conflict and, eventually, as muskets became more generally available to other iwi groups, the Māori musket wars commenced. Participant 9 reflected on the history of his ancestor quite often and has tried to emulate the positive traits of this rangatira by adapting and learning from his own experiences while developing relationships in alliances.

One could posit that these networks of interaction take on significance because of their presumed importance for learning and innovation, including the consequences of these types of alliances (Tracey et al., 2002). This story also lends support to the importance of whānau and whakapapa concepts in learning from others and learning by doing. The process of establishing relationships, as shared by the participants of this study, brought to fore many other principles which are core values of Māori. These values included concepts based on tūhono, kotahitanga, kaitiakitanga, and, importantly, kanohi ki te kanohi, as discussed in the following sections. Many of these principles, including those discussed in this chapter, have some alignment to relationship-formation literature in current internationalisation literature but, in many cases, they are isolated within the bounds of a particular international business theory. The Māori principles and values are universally accepted by all participants as being part of each other, connected within the realms of whakawhanaungatanga, and they present a distinct te ao Māori.

5.6 TŪHONO & KOTAHITANGA

A key theme for discussion which evolved from the interviews and literature review is that of alignment and unity or tūhono and kotahitanga. Māori entities treasure and work towards alignment or tūhono in how they apply their own values to their respective businesses, while

attempting to build unity with partners, where an alliance is designed to build profitability and become economically successful while maintaining value systems. Dunning's (1997) seminal work on globalisation discussed the adoption of a new form of capitalism, alliance capitalism, that has strong elements of alignment. The distinctive feature of alliance capitalism is that its success depends upon the harmonious interaction between firms in society and with governments, where competition and cooperation become a focal point and comparative advantage and sustainable competitive advantage are the focal points for this phenomenon.

It would appear from the data that the capabilities found in a Māori business can provide benefits over competitors in terms of firm performance, amplifying the importance of Māori values and, in the case of alliances, the strength of the alliance is quite often relative to the alignment and unity of the partnership. Manaakitanga, according to the participants, when applied, is a precursor to alignment and develops a level of respect to make it possible to work towards unity.

Another key aspect of tūhono and kotahitanga was that of Māori decision-makers knowing that they were individually in alignment with whānau, business stakeholders and shareholders because these groups shared the same value systems as the Māori decision-maker working on behalf of the business. This was unique in the sense that many of the participants indicated that this was not the case for the partner decision-makers in an alliance, because of the need quite often for their respective opposites to have to continually check with senior executives, boards or external advisors. It was felt by almost all the participants that this alignment within their own organisation led to the ability to be nimble, make commitments in a timely manner and give the alliance partner confidence in the Māori partner they were working with. Hsu and Chen (2023) suggested that managers who were leading the internationalisation of the firm experienced some challenges with boards who were not as internationally experienced or when there was an obvious misalignment in objectives and goals between the organisation and the organisation's representative. It was also noted that decision-making in the internationalisation process is laborious, with the need to go through many internal processes before decisions could be made (Rivas, 2012).

A key theme that continually arose with the participants was that, when challenges did arise or issues had to be dealt with, if alignment and unity with the alliance partner was strong then there was a good likelihood that the corresponding issues and challenges could be dealt with. Participant 1 talked about a situation in which the key contact for an organisation with whom an alliance had been in place for more than 10 years had left the company. The new key contact from the partnering organisation did not get on well or was unable to build a good relationship with the Māori entity at first. This became problematic over a short period of time as relations began to strain in communications between both alliance partners and it was thought by the Māori entity that the relationship might end. However, to the credit of the key contact for the Māori entity,

they reached out and decided to hold a few key meetings, inviting the new key contact to meet with executives and experience Māori manaaki to reestablish the relationship and talk about why they were aligned and would continue to do well together. This was a good strategy, according to the participant, and the alliance partnership is still in place today, with this relationship going for more than 18 years in total.

It is worth nothing that another participant indicated that an alliance partner had changed their priorities, and these new priorities did not match with the Māori entity's overall strategy and values. As a result, the alliance ceased and both entities moved on. This is important in the overall scheme of internationalisation, because when both entities realised they were not suited, they both moved on. Many organisations do not do this and quite often it becomes a complicated, if not tangled process of exiting from the alliance with each other. This is something to consider, because values or misalignment of values is a key reason a Māori entity may not go forward with or continue an alliance, as opposed to problems with transactional or contractual obligations, where companies will remain with each other longer than they should.

While alliances are seen as popular mechanisms for new market entry or for accessing technology, knowledge and resources, the failure rate remains high. According to Smith (2022), the reasons for alliance failure are wrong cultural fit, a lack of shared values, misalignment of expectations and inability to develop alignment and unity through the forming stages because of non-commitment. The participants in the present study seemed to be aware of the challenges associated with alliances and understood the importance of trust, along with alignment of values, up front. The experiences of other Māori entities were known by the participants and there appeared to be a good knowledge of these challenges, or at least an awareness. This knowledge or learning is addressed as mātauranga in the next section.

5.7 MĀTAURANGA

Knowledge and learning are highly valued by Māori and the principle of mātauranga plays a pivotal part in how all participants navigated the development of trusting relationships in international business alliances. Almost all participants acknowledged that a positive transactional outcome was a key target but, equally, if knowledge, learning and experience could be obtained from the alliance development then this was as important as a positive transactional outcome. Petrie (2006) referred to early trade between Māori and settlers or visitors to Aotearoa as not only beneficial in terms of an exchange of goods and services, but in the importance of knowledge that was shared between different groups of people. Furthermore, we are aware that many Māori encouraged intermarriage with Europeans, not only for building alliances but also having access to Europeans whose knowledge of the world beyond Aotearoa was highly valued.

The participants referred quite often to the learnings or experiences of past interactions and what they were able to learn from these relationship-development opportunities, both good and bad.

Participant 6 related an experience in which entry into China had not gone well initially when they began working with an alliance partner. There were issues in understanding each other, communication issues that arose despite support from New Zealand Government agencies, and clear differences in expectations. The initial venture with an alliance partner failed and it would be for another four years before they ventured back into the market. However, this time the experience they had before and the markers they were able to identify as problematic were avoided with this knowledge. This experience has allowed for the Māori entity to utilise the knowledge obtained and assist in future alliance opportunities. It was the requirement to adapt, take an opportunity, adjust, recognise ways to extract value and be entrepreneurial which has been an important part of the knowledge and learning principle that mātauranga represents. The second entry into China has gone well and there is an acknowledgement that experience, learning and understanding has only allowed for the Māori entity to do it much better and avoid the mistakes of the first experience. Participant 6 also indicated that the first time they began working in China, many of the relationship development values which are a part of the Māori culture such as manaaki and kaitiaki were not in place. The second time around, there were careful and well thought out strategies to present the cultural strengths of Māori in the alliance, with positive results.

As mentioned previously, Māori entrepreneurial activity pre-dates European arrival in Aotearoa when bartering systems or regular trading patterns among whānau and hapū, and within and between iwi existed (Te Ara, 2010). These activities continued with the arrival of European contact and were an important part of how communities interacted economically with Europeans. This is evident in how whole communities adjusted their activities to providing products for these early Europeans in trade (Henry, 2007, p. 547; Petrie, 2006). The associated challenges and trauma which occurred post-European contact in the form of disease, land alienation, war and overall colonisation, helped Māori to be resilient, adapt, transform and learn from these experiences (Kawharu et al., 2012).

Māori learnt and adjusted to the point where opportunity recognition was elevated from an entrepreneurial perspective (Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Kizner, 1973). It is not mātauranga itself, which is deemed as the end destination for Māori; rather, it is what one can learn and apply in future or current situations in alliance development, according to several of the participants. The characteristics, attitudes and behaviours of entrepreneurs, or anyone working in the space of international business alliances, is what is valued, and whether these learnings can be applied and

embedded in activities which support relationship development in international business alliances.

As has been discussed in section 2.3.5 and set out in Table 4, there are core characteristics of an entrepreneur identified as being distinctive, such as having the entrepreneur's ability to be innovative (Schumpeter, 1983); being the organiser who takes initiative (Shapero, 1975); being strategic in thought (Carland et al., 1974); being a value creator, opportunity aware (Kao & Stevenson, 1985); and being a leader, holistic, persistent, and committed (Timmons & Spinelli, 2004). In considering Māori or Indigenous entrepreneurs, their activities tend to be centred on tino rangatiratanga or self-determination, collectiveness, kinship ties, and community well-being (Dana, 2007; Foley, 2008; Henry, 2007; Henry & Dana, 2019). Māori entities in this study acknowledged that mātauranga was the basis of determining their own ability to act the way they acted according to their own value systems. There was a distinct decolonising aspect to the way all participants thought of this paradigm. This ties in with concepts of emancipatory entrepreneurship discussed earlier in this study. Rendova et al. (2009) suggested emancipatory entrepreneurship can be encompassing of three core elements, namely seeking autonomy, authoring, and making declarations, which reflect the overall view of the Māori entities in this study.

Table 16. Core Elements of Emancipatory Entrepreneurship

Core Element	Views from Emancipatory Perspective
Seeking Autonomy	• Actors seek to escape from or remove perceived constraints in their environment. • Constraints are perceived in a variety of environments – economic, social, technological, cultural, and institutional.
Authoring	• The rules of engagement with key resources providers should reflect change-creating intent. • Organisational arrangements can be designed to preserve emancipatory potential.
Making Declarations	• Making declarations about intended change is essential to mobilise support and generate change effects.

Note. Adapted from Rendova et al. (2009, p. 480).

Furthermore Henry et al. (2017) drew the connection between Māori entrepreneurship and emancipatory entrepreneurship, describing the participants of their study as people from diverse backgrounds and outlooks who shared common views about the importance of revitalising Māori culture and language.

Finally, as referred to in section 4.1.6, Participant 3 echoed how they apply mātauranga:

"And he could tell the young fulla was a bit worried, and he just said to him, no it's not, the answers are all around you, mātauranga they're everything, they're in the ocean, they're in the, yes they're in the skies, but they're in the tides, they're in the wind. And said now all you have to do is just go lie in the hull of the waka and feel it, she'll show you. Just, just be aware of where you are and what Tangaroa is telling you. You know, I don't know he's telling you one thing, Tangaroa's telling you another, bring them together. So he went down and he said, the guy came up a few hours later and goes ... I now know where we are. And, it occurred to me when he told me that story, I'd never likened myself to the celestial navigators, they're incredible. But if I was to take that, from our ancestors and apply it to what is happening in my business, I realise that perhaps… my company has been my waka for the last 30 years and although I've never written a business plan, it was quite clear to me that there are lots of times where I wasn't quite sure where we were going, so I just lie in the hull of the waka and just feel where she was taking us."

This type of thinking or contemplating resonates with the Māori entities that took part in this study, because there was an element of te ao Māori philosophical thinking which was not purely rational. This was quite often related to being Māori. The sense of pride in doing things Māori, being Māori, applying Māori knowledge and being able to express the beautiful values that Māori adhere to, these things permeated responses from all participants. There is an unconventional aspect to this in the way Māori plan and how knowledge guides the decisions for alliance formation or development, yet it is accepted by Māori and fits in the right place. Prahalad and Hamel (1990) made the point that core competencies as developed in early publications on business organisations were referred to as a messy accumulation of things and that, over a period of time, they became more structured or defined through experience and interactions gained from knowledge. Māori consider knowledge as a taonga and it is therefore treated with the highest respect and regard; both good and bad experiences are acknowledged, and future actions or plans are impacted by what has been learnt.

5.8 TIKANGA

The findings of this study would suggest that Māori who have successfully internationalised their businesses have shown the importance of tikanga in the way that they have fostered relationship formation and alliances. Tikanga in this instance is not dominated by Māori practices and customs; however, it creates room to manaaki and share in the tikanga. The essence of tikanga does not exclude the tikanga or practices and customs of other cultures in the international arena. Tikanga, then, is not static, as has been argued before. We know from Mead (2003) that tikanga

is that 'right thing' based on the accumulation of our past, present, and future, which would suggest that tikanga is ever evolving. The way in which it evolves, and based on the findings of this study, would suggest that there is a spirit of endearment and openness to the cultures of foreign parties in international relationship formation and alliance. There are tenets in the way tikanga is applied which extrapolate into behaviours, thinking, a way of doing and a way of being as identified in Table 17.

Table 17. Tenets of International Tikanga Business Alliance

Tenets of International Tikanga Business Alliance	Detail
Whānau & Whakapapa – The foundation for relationship formation and international business alliances	**Self-awareness:** Know where you come from – family history, whānau connections, keeping in mind that Indigenous homelands, rivers, mountains, oceans, waka or seafaring vessel, tribes, and environment are also considered part of our ancestry. **Make space, be open:** Being self-aware of personal whānau and whakapapa links should also be complemented with a mutual respect for the whānau and whakapapa of foreign partners. For many international partners, these values are equally important, and presented in different ways: be open to how this may be realised.
Whanaungatanga & Whakawhanaungatanga – Processes and attributes of successful relationship formation	**Connection:** Based on whānau and whakapapa links, find ways to connect – these do not necessarily need to be directly related to business and can often be cultivated in informal spaces. **Endearing oneself to another in ways that are mana-enhancing:** Being open to learn from partners about their culture, customs. Ways of doing business should be centred on reciprocity, humility, and understanding. **Members of the network should be treated as taonga (treasured):** The very act of sharing ones whānau and whakapapa can be an opportunity to communicate on a deep level with members of the business alliance. This can sustain a relationship and has proven immune to economic disruptions if members of the network and their mana are intact and truly valued. Understanding that a foreign partner represents a wider whānau, whakapapa, and history, aids in ensuring continual reciprocity as business leaders seek to strengthen bonds between members of the network.
Tūhono/alignment & Kotahitanga/unity	**Alliance partners are aligned:** This unity in goals, objectives and strategies recognises the strength of the relationship and equally ensures that resilient behaviours are strong
Mātauranga/Indigenous knowledge	**Learning & growth:** Knowledge and experience is shared and valued, the importance of knowledge and learning means they are recognised as gifts, thus the exchange of knowledge helps to bind and build relationships towards insidership.
Kanohi ki te Kanohi – Face to Face	**Practices in relationship building:** Face-to-face meetings are very important for context and mauri (life force/presence). The ability to understand intentions, and give context to nuances and environment, is crucial to help avoid uncertainty, misunderstanding and ignorance.

Māori emphasise the process of building relationships as one of the most important elements of relationship development or formation in international business alliances. This process or way of

building relationships is rooted in Māori values and belief systems. As this study has considered whānau, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono, kotahitanga, mātauranga and tikanga as key tenets of relationship formation, we have begun to see a framework built on values for relationship development. These principles build on trust and tikanga as a guide to all of these principles or values.

Tikanga requires the protecting and preservation of natural assets, protecting the environment, improving the lot of Māori socially and economically, and strengthening the culture as a bottom-line approach. Tikanga, doing it the right way and the Māori way, is an ontological approach held by all the participants in this study. As discussed, tikanga as an overarching principle, encompassing the principles of whānau, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono, kotahitanga, mātauranga, and kanohi ki te kanohi. This connection to all the principles outlined in this study amplified the importance of each of the values and principles. It also confirmed the te ao perspective that a Māori world view connects all. Participants 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 specifically indicated that tikanga fashions, influences, overlays and guides all activities in the building of alliances and Participant 7 articulated this clearly:

> *"Tikanga is huge. I guess it fashions what we do on a day-to-day basis. We live by tikanga and kawa here on the daily, here in my environment, my work environment. … We begin and end every day with karakia, with waiata, because it informs everything that we do; it is who we are, but it's even more important to retain these cultural practices when we are offshore to keep us humble, to always acknowledge that te ao kikokiko, the physical world, and te ao wairua go hand in hand. … There is no separation in everything we do; it always has a physical and a spiritual element to it and we acknowledge that even more so when … we're more conscious of that when we're away from home because we're outside of our bubble if you like; we're outside of our tribal boundaries and we make sure we protect ourselves, we protect our group and all those that are with us and make sure that we don't do things that would detriment or belittle the tikanga and the kawa of the people whose whenua we're going into."*

5.9 KANOHI KI TE KANOHI

All participants talked about the importance of meeting face to face or kanohi ki te kanohi. In fact, several of the interviews were impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and it was decided that as opposed to doing these meetings via Zoom, the participants involved asked if we could postpone until restrictions had been lifted. It was discussed how meeting face to face introduced the principles of experiencing another person's wairua, understanding the mauri of that person and going through the process of establishing the relationship from a values perspective. This almost

spiritual perspective was held in high regard by all, and all the participants indicated that, through the process of building alliances, it was the face-to-face meeting which allowed for better and stronger relationship development than anything else.

Another notable advantage perceived by the participants was that when meetings between organisations were being held for the first time, this was a great opportunity to expose potential alliance partners to the culture of Māori. These first meetings almost always included mihimihi, waiata, manaaki, te reo, kai, and karakia, and clearly indicated to the alliance partner the values-based orientation of the Māori entity. All participants indicated that the reception of these types of meetings were met most favourably by potential alliance partners and that, in these face-to-face meetings, gift exchange was applied.

The face-to-face meeting, gift exchange and elevating values in the early stages were seen by the participants as key principles which should be utilised in successful relationship development within the international alliance and were viewed by the participants as a competitive advantage. As noted, research streams are beginning to find links between national, organisational, and other cultural values which assist with competitive advantage. The case studies reviewed have illustrated that applying culture in developing individual relationships is an important aspect of how these relationships form in international business alliances and the simple act of face-to-face meetings elevates culture significantly. It is worth recalling Henare's (2011) gift exchange model, articulated in section 5.2:

- It emanates from a Māori world view and is informed by traditional Māori economics
- It is inspired by four well-beings – spiritual, ecological, kinship, economic
- It is embedded in the ecological system that sustains it
- It requires multidisciplinary approach to its research
- It is a system that can reorganise itself to created new futures
- It manifests as reciprocity and gift exchange

These characteristics of the gift exchange appeared, as per Henare (2011), in the ways Māori businesses engaged with international business alliance partners and, most prominently, in face-to-face meetings, where these principles were exemplified.

Participant 8 indicated that his business is reliant upon that face-to-face contact and the experience in entertainment he provides can only be achieved in the presence of people. Part of this is because of his ability to read and understand the audiences he is engaging with. This participant emphasised the mauri – the life essence that everyone shares together when they are with each

other. It is a big part of the performance to indicate to all that people share a life force or essence as part of his product delivery. Elevating culture in this way was more meaningful for the participant and the alliance partners who have booked him out for the last 20 years. Covid-19 had a significant impact on his business, and it has only been in the last 18 months or 2023 that he has been able to go back to the same level of bookings he experienced prior to the end of 2019. Importantly, the booking agents or alliance partners were affected by the impact that remote working under Covid-19 had on business engagement and the participant had to meet with these agents face-to-face before they would book events.

5.10 MĀORI VALUES IN RELATIONSHIP FORMATION – INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS THEORIES

The study has considered seven principles:

- Whakawhirinaki
- Whānau, Whakapapa
- Whanaungatanga, Whakawhanaungatanga
- Tūhono, Kotahitanga
- Mātauranga
- Tikanga
- Kanohi ki te Kanohi

These values are at the heart of relationship development for Māori building international business alliances. The current environment in international business has been subject to significant change in the last 20 to 30 years. Technology has had a significant impact and technology development has most likely been the largest factor impacting the process of globalisation. The international trading environment has seen the advent or emergence of economies such as China, India, Brazil and Russia, and the reduction of barriers to world trade has been assisted by organisations such as World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), corporations trading internationally, and trade agreements. Notably, the increasing cultural de-territorialisation that occurs as each culture is penetrated by the influences of other cultures' way of doing business has had a major influence on how partnerships or alliances form. International business theories show limitations in addressing or trying to understand these types of changes, and developing models are considering the importance of cultural values in internationalisation.

Applying Māori principles in business paves way for a process or framework for developing relationships in international business. The process or tikanga of building a relationship, as outlined earlier in this chapter, when Māori engage in establishing the relationship, include the principles listed above. A key aspect of the success of the relationship formation is how the relationship has been developed. The outcome or commercial benefits are important but of equal

if not greater importance is how the relationship was established. The process then becomes a focal point for Māori; this is primarily because they have adhered to tikanga. Another important aspect is the mātauranga or knowledge and experience obtained. As Surdu et al. (2021) stated, current international business theories are limited when considering the impact of behavioural approaches and this is relevent to Māori business views on relationship formation within internationalisation.

In the Māori world, knowledge and experience are gifts or taonga, and highly valued. While many of these principles can be cross-referenced to parts of theories in international business, the reality is that no one theory appropriately explains or considers the constructs of relationship formation by applying Māori values in international business.

5.11 TIKANGA BUSINESS ALLIANCE FRAMEWORK

This study proposes the **Tikanga Business Alliance Framework** as a guiding model for understanding and shaping Māori alliances in international business. This framework is built upon core Māori values with interconnected themes and relational principles, which have been identified as instrumental in forming and sustaining effective international alliances.

The importance of interconnected themes or relational principles appeared throughout the interviews: whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga, the principles of tūhono and kotahitanga and as stated prior whānau and whakapapa. Tūhono was discussed by all participants as being central in the alliance and the process of establishing relationships from a cultural values perspective which was so important to all. Kanohi ki te kanohi was valued in terms of holding meetings face-to-face and this was in almost all cases the preference of participants, despite the limitations and challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Another key tenet of the kōrero was mātauranga or the principle of learning from experience: applying knowledge was the basis of the value of learnings from building relationships in international business alliances. All participants in the interviews referred to tikanga and whakawhirinaki as key tenets or navigational tools in the process of building relationships and alliances which is an umbrella to all the approaches mentioned above. Each principle, when applied correctly or following principles of tikanga, enhanced trust in the relationship and helped the alliance to solidify, while also assisting alliances which experienced challenges.

Tikanga was the guiding standard or the right way of doing something in the actual meetings, with karakia, koha, acknowledgement of taonga, mātauranga and manaakitanga fully embedded in all interviews.

Overall, when these principles and values were applied in business relationships there was a clear indication from all participants that this was a desired outcome. As a foundational base of any international business alliance, the development and presence of trust was very important to the participants. It was agreed by all participants that the presence of trust was non-negotiable in the potential or actual success of relationships. The participants indicated that they had to ensure the partners could also trust them and this supported the concept of utu or reciprocation.

Māori principles in via international business alliances formation were woven into key theoretical perspectives in international business. The experiences and pūrākau shared by participants shed light on processes involved in attaining successful international business alliances. These alliances generally featured relationship development, negotiations which characterise shared expectations while mitigating risk, building trust through sense making, and formal bargaining.

Another key emerging theme and discussion was strongly associated with the overarching theme of tikanga. An international tikanga business alliance theory should be developed.

These values allow for strong associations with theories on alliances, relationship formation and networks which are worthy of mention. As an example, the revised Uppsala Model (Johanson & Valne, 2009) works through a process of state to change, where a knowledge opportunity leads on to relationship commitment decisions, and then traverses from change to state, where learning, creating, and trust building lead to a network position. The value and practice of whakawhanaungatanga are based on the establishment of relationships and more or less follows the ideals as outlined in the Uppsala Model, where a desire for knowledge becomes the foundation, learnings evolve from the experience, a relationship of trust is developed, and a sense of whānau represents the network relationship where decisions are made based on the relationship and the alignment of shared values.

There is anecdotal evidence, as discussed in the literature review, to suggest that Māori values and the practice of these values assist in the building of successful relationships. Puriri and McIntosh (2019) espoused a Māori view, stating that those who apply and practice these relationship building values within a cultural framework consider the process as important as the outcome, if not more important. As the Māori economy has become more prominent and the impact of internationalisation has driven change, growth, development and engagement, an understanding of how to operate effectively globally has become essential knowledge.

Relationship formation and the understanding required to work effectively internationally is crucial for both Māori and for those wanting to engage with Māori. There are aspects of Māori culture which are appealing to those wanting to consider ways of gaining an edge, and non-Māori entities should consider the following when working with Māori:

- Māori-centred businesses are intergenerational; they will be there for the long term. This needs to be considered when entering into business relationships with Māori;
- The environment is a key focus and sustainability or protection for future generations is a key principle. A triple-bottom-line approach to business would be ideal if entering into business relationships with Māori;
- Māori are entrepreneurial and there is a willingness to give things a go and to profit. Being entrepreneurial is also a Māori practice;
- Māori have a strong sense of social, cultural, and spiritual responsibilities and the need to be aware of others is strong.

These principles align with modern business in most cultures. It is interesting to note that there has been a transition of major corporations' strategies and objectives within western business in the last 20 years towards a quadruple-bottom-line (people, planet, profit, spiritual culture). Notions of a quadruple-bottom-line have been practiced by Māori for hundreds of years. The quadruple-bottom-line approach reflects the principles outlined above and there may be more in common between Māori aspirations, and value systems, and the modern measures of success than acknowledged. Table 18 below identifies similarities, associations and connections between theories on alliances, relationship formation, networks and Māori business values.

Table 18. Extended Māori Business Values and Theoretical Alignment

Core Values	Definitions	Relationship formation literature	Internationalisation Theoretical alignment
Puāwaitanga	Best outcomes	Leadership, transformational guardianship, responsibility	**The Innovation-Related Internationalisation Models (**Bikley & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Reid, 1981)
Tūhono	Alignment	Respect, learnings	**Uppsala Model** (Johanson & Vahlne 2009) **Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Pūroru	Transparency	Ethical considerations	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Whakaritenga	Balanced motives	Purpose and legacy	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Paiheretia	Integrated goals	Values, purpose and legacy	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Whanaungatanga	Relationship building	Relationship development	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009) **Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Kotahitanga	Unity & alliance	Team and unity	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009) **The Innovation-Related Internationalisation Models (**Bikley & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Reid,1981)
Whakawhirinaki	Trust	Trust building	**Uppsala Model** (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)
Manaakitanga	Hospitality, respect	Respect within teams and business	**A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)
Kaitiakitanga	Stewardship, Guardianship	Guardianship, responsibility	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Wairuatanga	Spirituality, ethical	Ethical considerations	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)

Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face-to-face meetings preferred, curiosity and engagement	Face-to-face meetings	**Aharoni Decision-Making Model** (Aharoni, 1966; 2004) **A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)
Aroha ki te tangata	Love for people, show respect	Respect	**Behavioural Approach** (Andersen, 1993; Andersson, 2000). **A relational perspective (**Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)
Titiro, whakarongo, kōrero	Observe, listen, then talk, learnings	Listening development	**Uppsala Model** (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009)
Mana	Honour, authority, respect	Respect and recognising authority	**The Innovation-Related Internationalisation Models (**Bikley & Tesar 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Reid, 1981) **Behavioural Approach** (Andersen, 1993; Andersson, 2000).
Tikanga	Customs, our way, values	Values	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Whakapapa	Ancestry, the why of things, legacy	Purpose and legacy	**Alliance Capital** (Dunning, 1995)
Rangatiratanga	Effective leadership, inspiring	Leadership, transformational	**The Innovation-Related Internationalisation Models (**Bikley & Tesar 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Reid, 1981)

These key themes provide a pathway for successful international tikanga business alliances which have been discussed and presented. A framework begins to evolve based on these values and principles for Māori, where at the centre of internationalisation for these Māori entities are key values in relationship formation, which in effect impact the way alliances negotiate, maintain expectations, overcome risks, build trust, commit psychologically, then contractually, and ultimately execute these commitments to each other.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the participants felt that the values espoused and elevated in their interactions with alliance partners were a source of competitive advantage. These elements of advantage stemmed from a strong values base, a clarity in the way Māori business were to ensure the alliance partner knew exactly who the partner was, and a strong sense of ongoing relationship enhancement by adhering to values which had the effect of enhancing mana. It was acknowledged by all participants that the Māori or Indigenous belief systems, which promotesustainability, environment, guardianship and the importance of the future, were seen as very favourable by alliance partners. These focused strategies were viewed as great initiatives to help mitigate resource scarcity for SMEs and entrepreneurial entities which are internationalising.

Finally, within the emerging field of Indigenous entrepreneurship, research has shown that social and cultural capital are important conceptual foundations for understanding entrepreneurship within Indigenous communities (Henry et al., 2017; McKeever et al., 2014). Henry et al. (2017) argued that, most often, the social and economic changes that benefit Indigenous communities because of entrepreneurial activities are informed by cultural and social capital. As a result, Henry et al. (2017) proposed a two-part framework (consisting of cultural and social capital) for explaining Indigenous entrepreneurial activity. Cultural capital or a "sense of one's place" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 113) refers to education, cultural skills and refinement, and a command of

high culture (Goffman, 1951, p. 239). Social capital as a construct within the field of entrepreneurship, refers to the stock of diverse resources derived from an entrepreneurs' network, acquaintances, relationships, and group memberships (Bourdieu, 1986). Furthermore, Wdowiak et al. (2012) suggested that the entrepreneur's cultural-background profile has a stronger influence on new venture performance than education or industry experience. Their findings supported the assumption that entrepreneurial performance in new ventures is culture-driven and suggested that economic analyses of entrepreneurial actions should encompass cultural values as well.

Figure 6 presents the motivations, processes and desired outcomes of alliance formation based on the principles identified in this study. This framework suggests a process for forming robust long-term relationships for internationalisation that respect and are guided by Māori values, but also the values identified in the international business literature as critical for improving international alliance formation and a focus on longer-term and both financial and non-financial objectives. In summary figure 6 emphasises:

- **Role in Alliance Formation**:
    - Figure 6 outlines how Māori values like tikanga, whanaungatanga, and whakapapa shape the motivations for entering alliances. These values emphasise the importance of building relationships based on mutual respect, trust, and shared goals.
    - The process integrates Māori cultural tenets to navigate risks, establish trust, align expectations, and build long-term partnerships. This approach contrasts with conventional business models that often prioritize immediate financial outcomes.
- **Process-Oriented Approach**:
    - It demonstrates a stepwise process starting with trust-building (whakawhirinaki), followed by psychological and contractual commitment, and culminating in the execution of shared goals.
    - By embedding tikanga (doing things the right way), the framework ensures that alliances are not just transactional but relational, focusing on enhancing mana (prestige and integrity) for all parties.
- **Desired Outcomes**:
    - The figure underscores both financial and non-financial objectives, such as sustainability, cultural preservation, and community well-being. This reflects a holistic view of success, deeply rooted in Māori cultural frameworks.

Figure 7 then integrates these values into a principles-led process framework for the development of alliances and relationship formation which could be termed a tikanga business alliance process framework. This is summarised:

- **Guidance for Development**:
    - Figure 7 builds on the insights of Figure 6 by offering a principles-led framework for developing alliances. It highlights the integration of Māori values like mātauranga (knowledge), kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face engagement), and kotahitanga (unity).
    - This framework emphasises the role of cultural alignment and shared learning in relationship formation, ensuring that alliances are grounded in mutual understanding and respect.
- **Cultural Distinction**:
    - It provides a unique Māori perspective by embedding tikanga at every stage of the alliance lifecycle. For example, face-to-face interactions and the exchange of mātauranga are identified as critical practices that foster trust and understanding in diverse cultural settings.
- **Practical Implications**:
    - This process-based framework guides Māori businesses in systematically applying their cultural values to international alliances. It ensures that Māori values are not compromised while navigating global markets and emphasises adaptability to different cultural contexts without losing cultural authenticity.

Contributions to Māori Values in International Business and Alliance Formation

1. **Integration of Māori Values**:
    - Both figures highlight how values like whakapapa (genealogy), whanaungatanga (relationships), and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) create a foundation for ethical and sustainable alliance practices.
2. **Competency Development**:
    - The frameworks emphasise the role of cultural competencies in strengthening organisational capacities, such as trust-building, conflict resolution, and cross-cultural communication.
3. **Competitive Advantage**:
    - Māori values provide a distinctive edge in forming alliances by appealing to partners who value authenticity, sustainability, and long-term relationship-

building. This aligns well with global trends emphasizing ethical and sustainable business practices.

By presenting a culturally grounded yet globally relevant approach to international business, Figures 6 and 7 serve as a guide for incorporating indigenous values into alliance formation, fostering both economic and cultural success.

Figure 6. Motivation, Processes, Desired Outcomes of International Tikanga Business Alliance

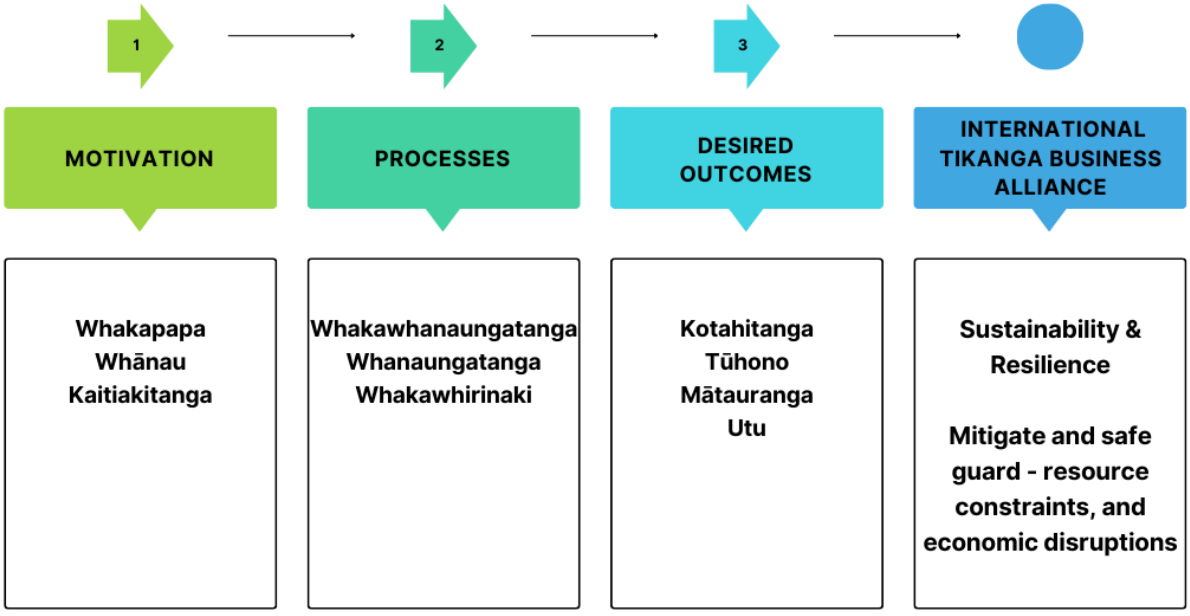
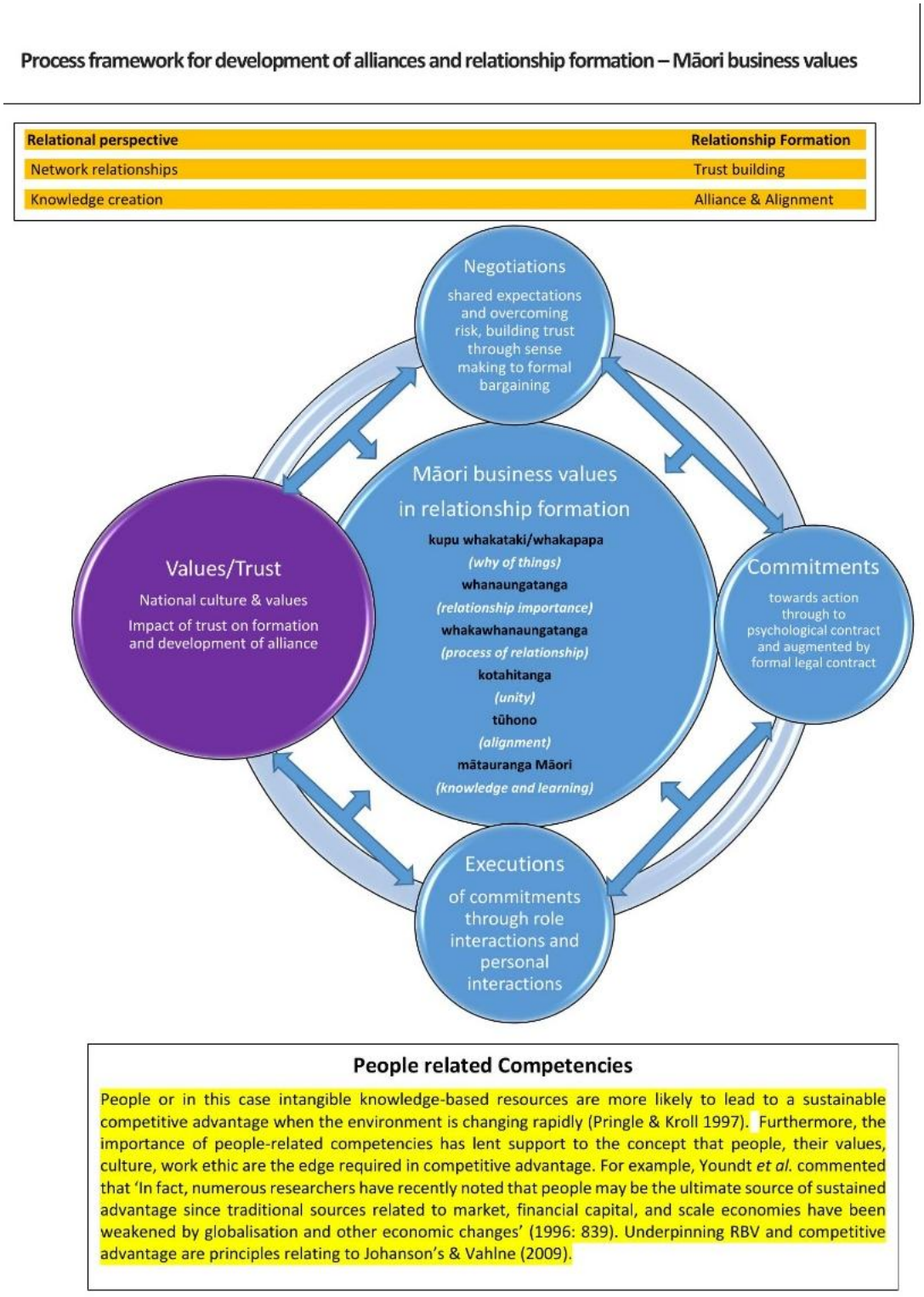


Figure 7. Process Framework for Development of Alliances and Relationship Formation – Māori Business Values



5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings of the study reviewed against literature. The findings of this study shed light on key areas of focus including but not limited to: the development of relationship formation in international business alliances; attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances; and the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances. The findings of this study reflect the way of thinking of Māori who apply values-based systems when developing relationships in international business alliances. Several of the participants were media figures who had received New Zealand honours, including a few participants who had received honours from the Queen and are notable commentators in their field of expertise with large social media followings. Importantly all participants were at the forefront of interfacing with international partners and are primarily responsible for building relationships and maintaining them as part of an alliance. From this perspective, a process-based framework was proposed which suggests how Māori businesses form international business alliances guided by the principles derived from the data analysis.

This study proposes the **Tikanga Business Alliance Framework** as a guiding model for understanding and shaping Māori alliances in international business. This framework is built upon core Māori values and relational principles, which have been identified as instrumental in forming and sustaining effective international alliances.

The Tikanga Business Alliance Framework is distinguished by a set of interrelated Māori principles that shape how relationships are formed and sustained within international business alliances. At the heart of the framework is *whakawhirinaki*, or trust—an essential element that reduces uncertainty and fosters dependable, long-term relationships. Trust operates as both a foundational and dynamic feature of alliances, developing over time through consistent, culturally grounded engagement.

Complementing this is the emphasis on *whanaungatanga* and *whakawhanaungatanga*, which focus not only on the presence of strong interpersonal relationships but also on the processes through which these are cultivated. These principles highlight the importance of initial connection and the sustained effort required to nurture those ties over time. In Māori business practice, the act of relationship-building is not a preliminary step to "real" business but a central and ongoing component of alliance success.

Ūhono and *kotahitanga*—representing alignment and unity—bring a strategic dimension to the framework, guiding partners to pursue shared objectives and to act collectively. These concepts underscore the importance of working together with purpose and cohesion, ensuring that the

alliance reflects a collective vision rather than fragmented or individualised goals. This is especially significant in cross-cultural partnerships where aligning values and intentions can prevent future conflict.

Mātauranga, or knowledge, is another integral feature, recognising the importance of both traditional and contemporary Indigenous knowledge in shaping strategic direction. Māori firms draw on mātauranga not only to inform business decisions but also to ensure that cultural integrity is maintained throughout the process. It serves as a vital epistemological foundation for innovation, learning, and adaptive thinking within the context of global engagement.

Central to the framework is also *tikanga*—the overarching concept of customary practices that guide ethical behaviour and relational conduct. Tikanga provides a culturally coherent structure for engaging in alliances, helping to ensure that business activities align with Māori values of respect, reciprocity, and sustainability. It sets the ethical parameters within which relationships are negotiated and maintained, anchoring alliances in a shared moral and cultural compass.

Finally, *kanohi ki te kanohi*, or face-to-face engagement, reinforces the importance of physical presence and direct interaction in developing meaningful relationships. For Māori businesses, being present in person is not a mere formality; it is a demonstration of commitment, integrity, and relational responsibility. These engagements allow for a depth of connection that digital or indirect methods cannot replicate, often serving as a turning point in building mutual trust and understanding.

Together, these principles form a relational, process-based framework that moves beyond transactional models of business. The Tikanga Business Alliance Framework offers a culturally grounded alternative, where partnerships are shaped not just by economic incentives but by values, relationships, and shared aspirations. It affirms that for Māori businesses, successful international alliances must be as much about people and culture as they are about profit and performance.

CHAPTER 6 / KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA / CONCLUSION

Tūngia te ururoa kia tupu whakaritorito te tutū o te harakeke

Set the overgrown bush alight, and the new flax shoots will spring up

6.1 KEY FINDINGS

This study examined relationship formation in international business alliances from a Māori values perspective, with a focus on the processes of the development of the related competencies for the formation of international business alliances. The two research questions were:

- What are the attributes of successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances from the perspective of Māori businesses?
- What is the role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances?

These questions are important to the development of the New Zealand economy in general, because, as Chapter 1 outlined, the contribution Māori businesses and entities are making to the economy of Aotearoa is both significant and growing, in particular in international business: not only in terms of (important) export earnings, but in finding new markets and knowledge, and acting to further spread and normalise Māori culture. As alliances are increasingly important in internationalisation, and particularly important for Māori organisations, understanding how alliances can be formed successfully was a primary focus. The literature, and the empirical world, however, show that alliance formation is problematic, and that this is a causal factor in the low success rate of many alliances. Therefore, the intention has been to understand how Māori organisations in international business alliances utilise values in the processes which impact alliance formation, and therefore could be assumed to lead to successful outcomes and improved firm-level performance. An issue which is considered in this conclusion is whether there are advantages derived the processes for alliance formation guided by Māori principles which suggest some form of advantage. Suggestions are also put forward for theory, policy and practice.

The research questions were answered together, in a holistic way, and a CR research philosophy was employed within a Kaupapa Māori, tikanga-based approach to the research. To examine the issues, nine case studies were conducted and analysed. The findings presented in Chapter 4 identified how key Māori values contributed to successful relationship formation while developing international business alliances, from the perspective of Māori businesses, and the

also identified the important role of Māori business values in the development of competencies for the formation of international business alliances. These themes were conceptualised as two core overarching principles, tikanga (customs, right way) and whakawhirinaki; and five supporting principles of whānau and whakapapa, whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono and kotahitanga, mātauranga, and kanohi ki te kanohi.

Collectively, these values emerge as the foundation or framework from which Māori businesses achieve successful relationships in international business alliances and develop competencies in the formation of international business alliances. The importance of these values to Māori who have participated in this study cannot be overstated as these principles are at the core of all business engagement, according to the participants of this study. These values are often prioritised over traditional organisational values, or a short-term goal orientation, because of their centrality and because they act as a moral code of conduct that obligates Māori to act or behave in a certain way when building relationships, according to many of the participants in this study. Whilst similar findings have been reported by researchers such as Henry and Pene (2001), this study further refines an understanding of key values and the role of the principles in guiding international alliance formation, highlighting a slightly different emphasis on some values than previous studies, and offers a fine-grained examination of how they are used in practice. For example, it would be expected from the literature that the whakapapa of participants reflected a significant motivation for Māori in Māori businesses to act the way they do, and that their behaviours and actions are rooted in a sense that they are doing all things based on their connections to the past, present and the future. The research revealed how these connections guided many of the participants in the decisions around relationships, transactions, strategies and overall activities in and around international business alliance formation towards long-term intergenerational goals.

There are several key themes which have emerged in researching the values of Māori businesses internationalising, such as the importance of tikanga, kawa and whakawhirinaki. Considering these values as being the constructs of principles guiding alliance formation provides further insight and each can be examined in turn.

6.1.1 Tikanga

It is clear from this study that, for Māori organisations engaging in international business, tikanga is an important principle which impacts the way a business will develop a relationship towards an alliance. In extending this research and other similar studies, an emphasis on understanding how tikanga informs Māori businesses in relationship development towards alliances could guide action research in the identification of alliance partners, market development, data collection and

analysis, the drawing of conclusions and the adjustment of theory to understand the importance of this topic. Furthermore, research could be extended to examine the implementation or existing frameworks of tikanga which are embedded into organisations which apply this principle for alliance building with a view to competitive advantage. This leads to an opportunity to research how Māori business organisations that are working internationally to build alliances map out how tikanga is practiced and implemented, how it guides decisions and, ultimately, how it is embedded strategically into the everyday running of these businesses. Further research could also work to understand why the practice of tikanga is valued in such a way when building alliances in international business settings. This deeper understanding could then provide a framework for dissemination and further implementation for Māori businesses wanting to enter international business for the first time.

Another key aspect of tikanga in the relationship-building process is that tikanga is flexible and can adjust to a situation or the context of that environment. While tikanga identifies the right or correct way of doing that informs a way of life, these protocols are informed by world views in conjunction with context and environment. For example, a traditional Māori weapon is put aside for a musket or a traditional tool to till the earth for a technologically better tool such as a shovel or pitchfork; thus, tikanga considers new developments, context and changing environment. As such, tikanga applied in the right context can only complement relationship development in international business alliance formation because of the fluid nature of international business.

The influence of tikanga on Māori businesses engaging in internationalisation is deeply embedded in their approach to relationship formation, alliance building, and strategic orientation. Rather than adopting a purely transactional mindset, Māori businesses privilege values-based engagement, where principles such as whakawhanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and kaitiakitanga underpin every stage of international interaction.

A core component of this process is whakawhanaungatanga—the active formation and nurturing of relationships. Māori businesses often begin international engagements with culturally grounded practices such as mihimihi (formal introductions) and pūrākau (storytelling). Through these, they convey whakapapa (genealogical ties) and historical narratives that foster mutual respect and a deeper sense of connection. This relational initiation contrasts with the often impersonal nature of standard corporate networking, establishing early on that Māori enterprises are not merely looking for commercial exchanges, but for enduring, values-aligned partnerships.

Manaakitanga, the practice of hospitality and generosity, is another tikanga principle that plays a significant role in international business. Māori firms typically host their international partners with genuine care—providing meals, offering taonga such as pounamu (greenstone), and creating spaces of cultural engagement. This generosity not only affirms the mana (prestige) of both parties

but also serves as a tangible expression of reciprocity, which is foundational in Māori cultural logic.

Aligned with this relational ethic is the principle of kaitiakitanga, which centres environmental stewardship and sustainability. Māori businesses often integrate kaitiakitanga into their product development and marketing, making sustainability a core value proposition in their international branding. This resonates with global trends favouring ethical consumption and demonstrates how Indigenous values can provide a competitive advantage in global supply chains.

Kotahitanga, or unity, informs the way Māori businesses seek out and maintain international alliances. Rather than aligning with any available partner, they are intentional about finding those who share similar values—particularly those who also prioritise community, sustainability, and intergenerational wellbeing. Such alignment reduces conflict and enhances collaboration, setting the stage for resilient partnerships.

Decision-making processes within Māori firms further illustrate the community-oriented nature of their international business strategy. Major decisions, including the establishment of global partnerships, are often made through consultation with iwi or hapū. This consensus-based approach ensures that initiatives reflect the aspirations and values of the wider collective, reinforcing both internal cohesion and external legitimacy.

Spiritual values, or wairuatanga, also find a place in the internationalisation efforts of Māori firms. Practices such as karakia (prayers) are incorporated into meetings and formal agreements, acknowledging the spiritual dimensions of business relationships. This elevation of the sacred alongside the commercial contributes to a distinctive cultural context that resonates with partners seeking more meaningful modes of engagement.

In branding and marketing, tikanga continues to guide strategy. Māori businesses frequently weave pūrākau, te reo Māori, and traditional design into their products and messaging. This not only communicates authenticity but also positions their offerings within a broader narrative of cultural identity and resilience. International consumers increasingly value such depth and integrity in brand storytelling.

Importantly, tikanga also establishes ethical boundaries, as seen in the principles of tapu and noa. Māori businesses are cautious not to commodify or misuse sacred knowledge or practices in international forums. This ethical stance protects cultural integrity and signals to global partners that Māori businesses operate with a high degree of cultural responsibility.

Together, these practices reveal that Māori internationalisation is not simply about economic expansion—it is a culturally grounded process of building enduring, ethical, and mutually

beneficial relationships. Māori businesses are demonstrating that tikanga is not only a philosophical anchor but also a practical guide, enabling them to navigate complex global environments with integrity and strength. This values-driven approach to internationalisation offers unique lessons for other businesses and may serve as a model for inclusive and sustainable global commerce.

6.1.2 Kawa

The research has distinguished how important the process of relationship building in international business alliances is for Māori businesses, and the way it is done. It is important to differentiate between the tikanga and the kawa of how a relationship is developed. The way of doing forms the process and quite often is characterised by steps in the development phases such as manaakitanga, or gift exchange, respect, mana enhancement, kaitiaki and meaningful activities which are connected to whakapapa to establish the 'why' of these processes, including the tikanga associated with all activities. While tikanga identifies what is right, the kawa of doing is so crucial in the processes of establishing the relationship in international business alliances. It is these processes that Māori businesses sometimes meticulously maintain in developing relationships – it is a unique characteristic which is values based. These processes amplify how tikanga should be applied appropriately, with the consistent approach that embeds these practices into the way relationship development is applied. This is exemplified in the way manaakitanga is extended and utilised as a tool in the relationship development phases. Māori businesses in this study elevated the importance of this principle in that if one followed the process correctly then this was viewed as being a success and almost became more important than the outcome, because of the importance of the kawa.

6.1.3 Whakawhirinaki

The Māori businesses participating in this study viewed the principle of trust as one of the most important aspects of international business alliances. Whilst trust has been researched and accepted as a core enabler of successful alliances, this research adds evidence of the process of how trust is developed and maintained in alliance formation from the perspective of Māori business leaders and their organisations. It was noted by several of the iwi entities that were part of the study that their respective municipal councils had worked hard together to build trust relationships to support each other. In fact, one council strongly endorses the work of the iwi entity with the net result that the Māori entity's international alliance partners perceive another level of credibility. The encouraging aspect for the Māori business was that non-Māori/Europeans who trust Māori businesses try to understand the tikanga which in turn helps to build understanding and establish good practice for more effective relationships in almost all settings,

including business. Māori also reciprocate by learning the values of those they may work with in developing business partnerships and respecting these customs in turn. Throughout the case studies there were many examples of Māori businesses engaging with their partners in understanding their culture and values, which led to high-trust relationships. It is notable that this orientation led to the examples where Māori businesses' confidence in the structures underpinning the reciprocity of their relationships enabled them to assist their partners when they experienced problems, beyond the scope of a usual business arrangement, confirming the authenticity of their principles in action.

Different cultures become more familiar with each other and there is a level of open engagement and trust which converts into the ability for these cultures to adapt to each other and accept different ways of doing and thinking.

6.1.4 Māori Business Values and International Business Alliances

The need to build alliances which are sustainable substantively reflects the changing environment a firm finds itself in while internationalising. In considering Māori business values and international business alliances, relational capital features prominently in how these values support competencies in relationship formation. Relational capital has added to the impetus to conduct the research in this project. As discussed, we can see that Māori businesses developing competitive advantage are suitably recognised as utilising values and cultural philosophies in the way they conduct business in international business alliances (Mrabure et al., 2021).

It appears competitive advantage is derived from the rich narratives of Māori or Indigenous beliefs in the way they market themselves in areas around sustainability, environment, guardianship, and the importance of the future. This helps to mitigate resource scarcity for SMEs and entrepreneurial entities which are internationalising. Māori businesses view whakawhirinaki, whānau, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, whakawhanaungatanga, tūhono, kotahitanga, mātauranga, tikanga and kanohi ki te kanohi as the key tenets of establishing competitive advantage. Challenges around uncertainty, misalignment of alliance partners' goals and objectives, and communication, are addressed by Māori businesses as they incorporate the values discussed in this study into international business alliance formation.

Māori businesses internationalising have considered transaction cost approaches where drivers tend to be relational, while elevating the importance of cultural alignment towards international business alliances. This study has also highlighted that Māori businesses are highly entrepreneurial, despite the companies examined having little or no firm-level advantage within country. To offset this disadvantage in terms of firm-level advantage, these Māori businesses are utilising other assets to create competitive advantage and build competencies within an

international business alliance. The Māori businesses in this study which have internationalised by building alliances tend to be culturally nuanced, providing new insights into micro-level processes and the role of values. An examination of the scale or capabilities of organisations which are internationalising finds distinct advantages in cultural values, which again help to build competencies in international business alliances.

While the Māori businesses in this study are at various internationalisation stages and their progress is partially reflected in innovation-related models in international business alliances, there are opportunities to build on the impact of Māori business values. The innovation-related models provide some explanations of how the process starts and of the role of key decision-makers, but there are many variables that may influence their decisions, and this is acknowledged as a key part of most models. There is an opportunity to consider culture, values and the processes involved in building alliances, which supports some of the main factors influencing enterprises' export initiation and behaviour patterns.

Māori business values and how they are applied by Māori businesses internationalising have a positive impact when we consider relationship formation. The attributes which support the strength of alliances are rooted in these values and they become competencies in the formation of international business alliances. When we consider the reasons why alliances fail, such as incompatible goals and objectives, poor partner selection or assessment, a lack of commitment by executives, or low resilience to challenges in the alliance or in the leaders of the partner organisations, then there is scope to address these foundational rules of alliance in how Māori businesses elevate their business values. The Māori businesses which were part of this study emphasised the importance of partner selection, which was driven by perceived alignment of the values of both parties. In the pūrākau that were shared, we see many examples of the power of these aligned objectives or values in the way that the alliance partners worked through challenges or issues, and the demonstration of real commitment by the executives of the international business alliances. The alliance partners that did not seek for immediate payment and continued to work with each other were a testimony to this phenomenon and, as the alliance partners discussed, it was all about the connection between both sides, largely because of their similar value systems.

6.2 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

This study contributes to a burgeoning field of research in international business moving beyond firm-level and network-level studies to examining the role of values at the micro-level of alliance formation. It answered the call to adopt a CR approach to case study research to gain rich insights into internationalisation and network processes, linking micro-level managerial actions to firm-

level outcomes around the development of capabilities. This included a novel Kaupapa Māori story-telling approach to data collection within an international business case-study context. This study emphasises the role and focus of managerial performance in the field of international business alliances when managers are impacted by guiding principles such as tikanga. The study has indicated that Māori business representatives or managers of international business alliances are connected to community and value systems which are culturally based and, while commercial success is an important aspect of the alliance, there are other indicators which are culturally skewed. Value systems held by these managers or representatives which are culturally based and incorporated into Indigenous entities and their alliances provide an opportunity for alliance partners to understand key commercial imperatives which are intermingled with concepts of the tikanga-values-based cultural priorities and imperatives of the Indigenous partner. This type of understanding and knowledge may impact uncertainty, reduce risks and transaction costs in the alliance, and ultimately support the overall success of the international business alliance.

To understand this, this study adopts some of the approaches from Indigenous entrepreneurship and adds an understanding of how tikanga values systems give voice to whānau, community and organisations, including the whakapapa, or generations yet to come, within alliance formation. As we examine this contribution, we can expand and consider Indigenous value systems which are culturally based and the impact they have on an international business alliance. Indigenous values systems influenced by principles which are culturally based, such as tikanga, offer significant theoretical contributions, such as the importance of:

- *Cultural Authenticity and Quality*: Indigenous values based on cultural influences bring authenticity to alliance formation. Their unique perspectives and traditional practices create a point of difference that resonates with alliance partners. This authenticity not only enhances the alliance offerings, but also fosters genuine relationships with international business partners, including those who utilise the products and services.
- *Sustainable Practices*: Indigenous communities often have a deep respect for nature and the environment. Their traditional ecological knowledge contributes to sustainable practices.
- *Capacity Building*: Indigenous businesses generally nurture cultural arts, language revitalisation, and traditions. This counters negative narratives and empowers Indigenous communities. For an alliance partner this positive collateral may have an impact in terms of positive perceptions of the alliance entity.
- *Social and Economic Empowerment*: Indigenous businesses play a crucial role in their communities' social and economic well-being. By understanding and supporting these businesses, international alliances can contribute to inclusive growth and empowerment.

- *Indigenous Perspectives on Learning and Knowledge*: Indigenous knowledge systems offer alternative views on learning and knowledge. These perspectives benefit not only Indigenous peoples but also have broader implications for all. Recognising and integrating these perspectives can lead to more inclusive and holistic business approaches.
- *Different Views on Nature and Science*: Indigenous knowledge challenges western scientific paradigms. It introduces diverse perspectives on nature, human–environment relationships, and sustainability. Incorporating these viewpoints enriches theoretical discussions and practices in various fields.

In summary, Indigenous values systems which are based on culture and people-related competencies provide a fresh lens through which we can examine international business alliances. Their contributions extend beyond economic gains, emphasising sustainability, authenticity, and community well-being. A process framework for development of alliances and relationship formation is outlined in section 5.11 figure 7. This framework emphasises the unique nature of relationship formation in the context of Māori business values. It is the people-related competencies or intangible knowledge-based resources which reflect the way Māori live their values in international business alliances, and this is an important theoretical contribution to consider. This affirms the importance of people-related competencies and has lent support to the concept that people, and their values, culture, and work ethic, are the edge required in competitive advantage.

6.3 THE TIKANGA BUSINESS ALLIANCE FRAMEWORK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

International business alliances are a common part of a global business environment, and of particular importance for the Māori and wider New Zealand economy. This study has considered some of the challenges which exist in how international business alliances are formed. International business alliance theory has traversed from industry- to firm-level and is progressively moving towards managerial-level decision-making integrating cultural factors. This research has answered the call in the literature by examining how alliances are formed from the perspective of the individual level of a managerial decision-maker within a firm. While research conducted in the domain of entrepreneurship has focused on looking at an entrepreneur as an individual at this micro-level, this research may not fully capture the firm-level issues of how values are systematically embedded in organisations and the competencies of the firm. Māori businesses in this study have entered markets by developing strategies which are at the manager relationship level and maintain these relationships of trust in the international business alliance

by being Māori values driven. These paths that Māori businesses have taken in internationalising are intuitively right and resonate with how these entities participate in international business alliances. But, as noted above, it is generally an individual, leader or executive who is building these relationships from the perspective of the values they and the organisation adhere to, particularly in Māori businesses.

While we have identified many aspects of how international business alliances are formed, it would be a recommendation to develop an International Tikanga Business Alliance framework. The key word here is tikanga, to indicate that conducting international business alliances is influenced by a right way, with tikanga being central to this framework, and with the concepts of whakawhirinaki and kawa guiding the framework. The framework would feature some of the key tenets discussed in this study and would have room to include other principles which may be relative to an organisation more so than other values, for example kaitiakitanga, utu and mana.

The benefits associated with a framework based on an international tikanga business alliance would feature the ability to improve partner selection, better communications, aligned values and objectives, better participation from alliance partner executives and resilience through challenging periods. Should the framework be applied by Māori entities to elevate Māori business values in doing business internationally within alliances, there is every opportunity for Māori businesses to develop successful international business alliances and improve competencies within the international business alliance.

Māori businesses working in international business alliances have been subjected to the way the world does business; here there is an opportunity to bring Māori business values to the world, Māori values based on building competencies for those organisations internationalising. The Māori businesses which participated in this study indicated that, from their perspective, Māori values did provide some advantage and improved the competency of their respective organisations. They also indicated that these values were important in developing and building effective relationships in international business alliances when their respective partners in the alliances were aware of these values. These key values and concepts are interwoven and could form a framework for the process or tikanga of relationship formation. In terms of a framework we begin to connect motivation, processes, desired outcomes and, ultimately, relationship formation through international tikanga business alliances. Figure 6 in section 5.11 illustrates this Māori principles-led process framework for development of alliances and relationship formation which could be termed a tikanga business alliance process framework.

Whilst prior research had indicated that cultural fit was important, and there was some fit between Maori principles and Chinese cultural expectations and values in alliances, my daughter, who is

a PhD candidate at AUT (Tonumaipe'a, 2018), found the principles aligned with many constructs underpinning successful alliance formation, and therefore could have much wider applicability.

In conclusion, Māori businesses working in international business alliances have been subjected to the way the world does business; here there is an opportunity to bring Māori business values, Māori values based on building competencies for those organisations internationalising. The Māori businesses which participated in this study indicated that, from their perspective, Māori values did provide some advantage and improved the competency of their respective organisations. Additionally, there is some evidence to indicate that when Māori values are embedded in the decisions that Māori make, Māori will flourish and there is growth overall for the Māori economy (Rolleston et al., 2022). Participants in this study also indicated that these values were important in developing and building effective relationships in international business alliances when their respective partners in the alliances were aware of these values. These key values and concepts are interwoven and could form a framework for the process or tikanga of relationship formation. In terms of a framework we begin to connect motivation, processes, desired outcomes, and ultimately attaining relationship formation through international tikanga business alliances. An international tikanga business alliance would still be dependent upon the people who applied these values. It is probably fitting to emphasise the importance ofpeople-related competencies or intangible knowledge-based resources are very important in relationship formation towards successful alliances. It needs to be continually affirmed that people-related competencies which are connected to values, culture and work ethic may provide an edge required in gaining a competitive advantage in international business alliances, as in the case of Māori values.

In summary, Indigenous values systems which are based on culture and people-related competencies provide a fresh lens through which we can examine international business alliances. Their contributions extend beyond economic gains, emphasising sustainability, authenticity, and community well-being. It is people-related competencies or intangible knowledge-based resources which reflect the way Māori live their values in international business alliances, which is an important theoretical contribution to consider. This affirms the importance of people-related competencies and has lent support to the concept that people, their values, culture, and work ethic support competitive advantage.

6.4 POLICY CONTRIBUTION

The development of supporting policies to enhance the alliance performance of both Māori organisations and New Zealand-based firms and gain the benefits of managing to internationalise through this mode successfully is important to policymakers, and institutions such as NZTE and

MFAT. However, the formalisation of a process of values based on tikanga and a Māori world view applied to the improvement of competencies for Māori businesses internationalising may pose some challenges. This is because of the nature of tikanga, which demands that things are done a certain way; however, as context and experience impact the way that Māori engage, then certain processes or actions in building trust relationships may have to change as the alliance is developed. As an example, prior to Covid-19 face-to-face meetings were always the preference in developing the relationship, sharing kai, practicing hongi, and acknowledging whakapapa and whānau on the whenua. Whilst the context and environment may have changed because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the concept of tikanga remains central but can be adapted.

Some practical actions which policymakers could consider include adopting the tikanga business alliance process framework into cross-cultural and internationalisation training programmes designed to support and enhance New Zealand and Māori firm internationalisation. This could include developing comprehensive cross-cultural training programmes for businesses engaging in international alliances, and integrating teachings on Māori values such as whanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga, and manaakitanga and the principles of the framework. This could be supported by cultural consultation with experienced stakeholders to ensure cultural authenticity and relevance in training materials and programmes.

These initiatives could be supported by actions such as incentives or subsidies, which could initially encourage businesses to participate in such training programmes, recognising the long-term benefits of cultural competence in international collaboration. Other actions could be establishing support networks for Indigenous-owned businesses and others seeking to form international business alliances. Support could take the form of providing funding, mentorship, and capacity-building initiatives such as workshops. Policymakers could foster collaboration between Māori and non-Māori businesses, leveraging Māori principles in international business.

Despite the noted success of many of the Māori companies or businesses participating in this study, they are comparatively new to international business and developing alliances in comparison to more established non-Māori companies that have been working internationally for many years. This is not surprising given the recent development and economic growth of Māori business and organisations over the last 30 years, and so the focus should be on ensuring the policymakers and Māori learn the lessons of success, to ensure future opportunities are also taken for long-term benefit. Finally, it would be important to ensure the just recognition of the contributions of intellectual property rights and traditional Māori knowledge for these initiatives, and to embed the principles in the discussions around future national competitiveness and trade discussions.

6.5 PRACTICE CONTRIBUTION

This research has some practical implications for Māori businesses developing international business alliances. There is an opportunity to facilitate organisational wānanga to develop a shared knowledge and teaching of the value systems discussed in this research, to assist Māori and non-Māori entities who are going through the internationalisation process. There are also opportunities to create modules based on value systems and processes which are utilised in relationship formation in international business alliances. NZTE currently presents online testimonials and short stories of Aotearoa companies that are having some success in internationalisation. In a similar way, government agencies, educational institutions, consultancies, and organisations which facilitate and support the internationalisation of Aotearoa companies could learn about the framework of principles which the participants in this study have shared.

A framework of Māori entities applying Indigenous values in the process of internationalisation could be of great value to other Indigenous communities, not to mention the value this type of framework would have for interested partners who are forming relationships of trust in building towards alliances and preparing to work with Māori businesses.

Importantly, it is crucial that the findings of this study are taken back to iwi, ahu whenua organisations and the Māori entities who have participated in this study, either through wānanga, publications or one-on-one presentations to ensure that, from a Kaupapa Māori perspective, the findings, discussions and conclusions of this research are acknowledged as belonging not only to the researcher, but all those who participated in this study.

It is also important to note that while we discuss tikanga as a major influence on the values framework designed to assist Māori and non-Māori organisations in developing alliances, and despite tikanga being flexible, tikanga should not be applied with wanton and frivolous interpretation. The protocols, customs, and correctness of tikanga should not be misappropriated, but when applied correctly they should only enhance the international business alliance formation.

With this important caveat in mind, it is clear that forming successful international business alliances is essential for companies seeking growth and expansion. However, the effectiveness of such alliances often depends not only on economic factors, but also on the cultural compatibility and relationship dynamics among partnering entities. In this context, Māori values offer valuable insights into fostering meaningful and sustainable business alliances, and the tikanga business alliance process framework could form the starting point for business organisations' discussions when approaching these partnerships. As in the previous section on policy recommendations, some of these learnings could be disseminated via workshops or training programmes, or as part

of partnership learning engagements. Additionally, Māori decision-makers and business leaders can review their own practice, consulting with mentors, to find ways to embed their tikanga into their operations as they seek to internationalise.

The Tikanga Business Alliance Framework presents a significant step forward in embedding Māori values within the sphere of international business. Its benefits are far-reaching, impacting not only Māori enterprises but also their international partners, policymakers, and the broader indigenous business community.

For Māori businesses, the framework offers a structured pathway to incorporate core values such as whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, and kaitiakitanga into the practical processes of alliance formation. This structured integration assists with critical areas such as partner selection, communication protocols, and ensuring strategic alignment between values and objectives. Rather than adapting to dominant Western business norms, Māori businesses are instead offered a way to assert their cultural identity as a strength—using tikanga not only to maintain relational integrity but also as a tool to navigate the complexities of internationalisation. The framework validates Indigenous approaches as legitimate and competitive, allowing Māori businesses to operate authentically on the global stage.

International alliance partners also stand to benefit. By engaging with the relational ethos at the heart of tikanga, non-Māori partners are introduced to a model of partnership grounded in trust, reciprocity, and mutual respect. This shift from a transactional to a relational paradigm can open the door to more meaningful and resilient business collaborations. Exposure to Māori values may also challenge partners to reflect on their own practices and adopt more inclusive and sustainable approaches within their own systems.

The utility of the framework extends to institutions and policymakers, particularly those involved in trade and economic development. Agencies such as New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) are in a position to incorporate the framework into their internationalisation strategies, thereby offering targeted, culturally responsive support for Māori enterprises entering global markets. Moreover, the framework can serve as a policy lever for strengthening Māori economic development in ways that remain grounded in cultural integrity.

Beyond Aotearoa, the Tikanga Business Alliance Framework offers insights for other Indigenous and values-based enterprises around the world. While the framework is distinctly Māori in origin, its emphasis on relationality, ethical engagement, and sustainability resonates with many Indigenous philosophies globally. This opens possibilities for adaptation and

comparative use, encouraging a shift in international business thinking toward models that honour culture and community.

Looking ahead, several avenues for future research could enhance the impact and adaptability of the framework. One key direction involves expanding cross-cultural perspectives to better understand how international partners interpret and engage with tikanga within alliances. This would provide valuable insight into the relational dynamics of cross-cultural business and the degree to which Māori values are transferable or adaptable.

Another promising area lies in empirically measuring the business outcomes associated with the application of tikanga. While anecdotal and qualitative insights already suggest positive relational and reputational outcomes, systematic studies could assess impacts on alliance longevity, trust levels, market performance, and sustainability indicators. Such research would strengthen the business case for values-based models.

Furthermore, there is great potential in extending the framework's principles to other Indigenous communities. Comparative studies could explore how similar relational philosophies operate in Indigenous economies across the globe, fostering intercultural dialogue and potentially informing a global Indigenous business alliance framework.

In conclusion, the Tikanga Business Alliance Framework offers more than a method for Māori to participate in global commerce—it represents a transformative shift in how business relationships can be conceptualised and enacted. Rooted in values, it challenges dominant paradigms and creates space for Indigenous worldviews to inform, enrich, and ultimately reshape international business practices. Through continued application, reflection, and research, the framework holds the promise of contributing not just to Māori economic success, but to a more relational, equitable, and sustainable global business environment.

6.6 LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

An obvious limitation in this research was as this was not a bilateral study, in that the perspective of the partners working with Māori businesses in international business alliances was only reflected in the testimony of the participants and their views. Although there is secondary feedback from the Māori businesses about the experiences, stories, events and relationships formed and the metrics around the success of the alliances reviewed, the causes of success are given from their perspective. This opens the door for further research looking at both sides of alliances in the formation process to further validate these findings.

Another combination of limitation and strength was the balance between pūrākau and the semi-structured interview process, and though we were able to follow the structure of the questions being presented, because of the Kaupapa Māori approach of allowing the participant to share a complete holistic story, there is the possibility that not all themes could be addressed sufficiently in a structured way. An interview which was scheduled for 90 minutes, but quite often went for 180 minutes, still provided important data that responded to the questions being posed through Māori storytelling or pūrākau.

The Tikanga Business Alliance Framework offers a powerful foundation grounded in Māori relational and cultural principles, enabling alliance formation that is both ethically robust and deeply human-centred. However, while its strengths are clear, there are certain limitations that warrant discussion, particularly in terms of contextual adaptability, cross-cultural alignment, and the scope of perspectives captured.

One significant challenge lies in the adaptability of tikanga across diverse international contexts. Tikanga provides clear ethical and relational guidelines for Māori businesses, but its application is not uniform. The way values such as manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and kaitiakitanga are interpreted or enacted may differ based on the nature of the alliance, the cultural literacy of the international partner, and the broader commercial environment. For instance, in settings where time is rigidly structured or business engagements are strictly formal, the expansive and relationship-first approach of Māori tikanga may be misinterpreted as inefficient or lacking urgency. This can create tensions or misalignments, especially when there is little cultural preparedness or flexibility on the part of the international counterpart.

Another limitation stems from the prevailing dominance of Western business norms in many international markets. These environments often prioritise transactional relationships, short-term profitability, and competitive advantage framed through cost-benefit analysis. Such frameworks may not easily accommodate a tikanga-based approach that places emphasis on long-term relational trust, intergenerational sustainability, and community benefit. This clash of paradigms can create friction in negotiation, planning, or decision-making stages of alliances. Māori businesses may find themselves needing to bridge these differing worldviews, which can place additional strain on their leaders to act as both cultural navigators and business strategists.

Finally, while this study offers deep insight into the values, practices, and aspirations of Māori businesses within the context of alliance formation, it is primarily a one-sided perspective. The voices of international partners—those who engage with Māori businesses from different cultural and commercial traditions—are largely absent. Without their perspectives, it is difficult to fully assess how tikanga is perceived, interpreted, or potentially adapted within collaborative ventures. Future research that includes bilateral insights would not only strengthen the framework's

applicability but also reveal where alignment is most natural and where further cultural negotiation is needed.

In essence, while the Tikanga Business Alliance Framework presents a compelling model rooted in Indigenous values, it must be applied with a nuanced understanding of the complex, often contrasting realities of international business environments. Its strength lies in its ethical clarity and relational depth—but its limitations remind us that successful cross-cultural alliances also require adaptability, mutual understanding, and dialogue across worldviews.

In terms of the case studies, research participants were carefully selected but potentially could have presented their own views as opposed to those of the organisation. It is, however, fair to say that the participants who were selected were also supported by their respective organisations as being the right people to participate in this study.

Mauri ora!

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INDICATIVE QUESTIONS & PŪRĀKAU PROMPTS

Indicative Questions – mihi/preamble

Project title: ***Relationship formation in international business: The case of Māori business values.***

Project Supervisor: Associate Professor Simon Mowatt

Researcher: ***Gareth Jones***

Mihi

Tena ra koe! Mihi mai, mihi mai
Greetings to you.
Ka tu mai au i tenei wa, ki te tuku atu i taku mihi mahana ki a koe, mo to whakaurutanga i tenei akomanga.
I stand before you this day to give my warmest regards to you, for your participation in this class.
I taku kitenga atu, ma ia a tatou ki te whai i te matauranga, kia eke ai ki te taumata teitei. Waihoki, ma ia a tatou te hapaitia te mana o wa tatou whanau, o wa tatou iwi. Na reira, nei ra te mihi atu.
As i see it, it is our responsibility to pursue knowledge, so that we are able to reach the highest heights. Furthermore, it is for each of us to uphold the mana of our respective families, and communities. And i would like to acknowledge this.
Hoki whakamuri aku maumahara ki tera whakatauki rongonui " Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro, nona te ngahere, ko te manu e kai ana i te matauranga, nona te ao"!. Ana!
I recall that famous whakatauki, "The bird that consumes the miro berry owns the forest, but the bird that consumes knowledge owns the world".
Ka mutu, ano
Ka nui te mihi mahana ki a koe
me mihi mai ki nga taonga i tuku iho
me mihi hoki ki te runga rawa, nana nei nga mea katoa
Na reira
Tena ano ra koe! kai te mihi, kai te mihi!.
In summary, again i greet you warmly
We acknowledge our heritage and treasures gifted to us
And we give praise to that which is above all else, for all things are from that source

.kupu whakataki / preface, introduction, preamble, foreword.

The intention of this study is to understand how Māori businesses form relationships when internationalising through alliances. Learning from your experiences while you have built relationships in international business and hearing your stories will be invaluable to this study.

Questions - Indicative

Can you tell me about those values which characterise you as a Māori business person?

Do you see such values as providing you with a unique international business advantage?

Do your international business partners see the way you do business as unique and consequently of value/importance? How do you know?

What's the process of ensuring kotahitanga and tūhono are part of the way you build an alliance, could you please explain?

How do you build trust with partners?

What is the purpose of the alliance from your perspective and why is it important to you?

How do you select partners and what are the key influences in this process?

When facing challenges in the alliance or partnership, how do you deal with relationship or transactional issues?

What are your motivations for making commitments when forming the alliance or partnership?

What characteristics do you look for in a potential partner in international business?

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEET

Date Information Sheet Produced:

1/02/2020

Project Title

Relationship formation in international business: The case of Māori business values.

An Invitation

E te rangatira, tēnā koe.

Ka mihi nui ki a koe ki te kaupapa o tēnei Rangahau.

My name is Gareth Tamihana Jones of Tainui, Taranaki and Te Arawa descent, and I am a Doctoral Candidate at AUT University. This research project is part of my journey to complete a Doctor of Philosophy in International Business.

What is the purpose of this research?

This study is motivated by attempting to understand how alliances within internationalisation are influenced by network, relational perspectives as they engage with Māori businesses in relationship formation. In line with these Internationalisation perspectives this study seeks to examine how within the New Zealand context Māori business values can be understood within the realms of internationalisation and how these values could be understood in terms of tacit advantages or competencies.

The findings of this research will allow the researcher to complete the qualification Doctor of Philosophy and contribute to the limited body of knowledge on Māori businesses who are internationalising through alliances. The research findings will also be presented at any suitable research conferences, potentially published in academic journals, articles and presented at hui for the benefit of increased knowledge and understanding.

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

You have been identified and included as an ideal participant because of your role in establishing or managing international business alliances and relationships. I have identified you through our existing relationship or through our close mutual business network of contacts. Participation is voluntary and you are not obliged to join the study if you feel that there is any conflict of interest caused by our relationship, where you would feel obligated to be interviewed or provide information relative to this study. You may also withdraw from the study at any time up until the end of data collection.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether you choose to participate or not will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You can withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. A consent form entailing the details above will be given for your consent prior to the commencement of your interview.

What will happen in this research?

The research involves the use of semi-structured interviews. Interview questions will be based around the topic area, and you will have the opportunity to refrain from answering any questions should you feel uncomfortable to do so. It is anticipated that interviews will take up to 60 to 90 minutes in length. With your permission, interviews will be voice recorded. They will then be transcribed, after which the transcript will be sent to you for review and confirmation of responses. What are the discomforts and risks?

It is anticipated that any discomfort will be minimal as participants will have the option of refraining to answer questions at any time or withdrawing from the interview. There is a low level of risk to participants in this research as participants are requested to respond to questions relating to their experience in international business, particularly relating to relationship formation through alliances.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

Participation in this research is voluntary and participants are able to decline to answer questions that would make them feel uncomfortable.

What are the benefits?

The findings of this research will allow the researcher to complete the qualification Doctor of Philosophy, and contribute to the limited body of knowledge on Māori business values in relationship formation in international business. In the sharing of your knowledge and story, it is hoped that the outcomes of this research will be help Māori to build competencies and capabilities in relationship formation. Your contribution to the research will add to Māori knowledge and may be used as an example and guide for Māori businesses who are internationalising.

How will my privacy be protected?

You will be given limited confidentiality, as only the researcher, and primary supervisor, secondary supervisor will know of your identity. Your identity will not be disclosed in the write-up of this thesis and where appropriate the use of pseudonyms may help in conveying any quoted responses. No form of identifier will be connected to transcripts of your interview. Data and consent forms will be stored separately, so that data cannot be associated with identifiers. You will also be given the opportunity to review and make changes to your transcript. Due to the limited risk of readers being able to identify you based on your responses, and due to the small number of potential participants who may be well-known to each other, you will be offered limited confidentiality. Potential identifiers (i.e. age, names, company, iwi affiliations) will not be included in the final report. Pseudonyms will be used in the final report.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

It is anticipated that interviews will take approximately 90 to 120 minutes in length, and further discussions may take place if there is any need for clarification of responses to interview questions.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Two weeks.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

An executive summary of the findings will be sent to you after the thesis write-up via email.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Associate Professor Simon Mowatt, simon.mowatt@aut.ac.nz; 09 921 9999 ext. 5424

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz* , 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Primary Researcher: Gareth Tamihana Jones

Contact email: Gareth.jones@aut.ac.nz;

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Supervisor: Associate Professor Simon Mowatt

Contact: simon.mowatt@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 5424

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 6th of August 2018 AUTEC Reference number 18/277.

APPENDIX C: ETHICS APPROVAL

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

8 August 2018

Simon Mowatt
Faculty of Business Economics and Law
Dear Simon

Ethics Application: 18/277 **Relationship formation in international business alliances: The case of Maori business values**

I wish to advise you that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) has **approved** your ethics application at its meeting of 6 August 2018.

This approval is for three years, expiring 6 August 2021.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Confirmation that the Consent Forms will not be stored in the Postgraduate Study Room (WU215) but in the supervisors office separate from the data;
2. If the 'place of choice for interviews' is at the participants home a researcher's safety protocol will need to be provided. Advice of the location of interviews should be included in the Information Sheet.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: gareth.jones@aut.ac.nz; Pare Keiha