Māori Job Searching Behaviour: Investigating the Relationships That Māori Graduates
Develop when Transitioning from Higher Education into the Labour Market
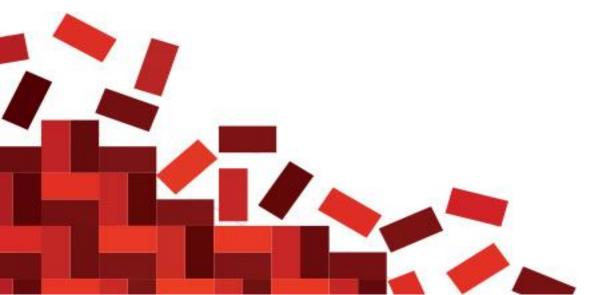
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A research report submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of the Master of Communication Studies (MCS).

This thesis is dedicated to my whāea, Te Raiti Haare Kingi
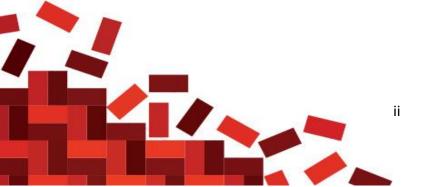
Moe mai rā tōku māmā

Ko Whakarara te maunga

Ko Matauri te moana

Ko Ngāpuhi te Whare tūpuna

Ko Tāpui te marae

Ko Ngātiruamahue te hapū

Ko Ngāpuhi te iwi

Abstract

Rapua te ara tika mōu ake!

Find the right pathway for you!

Māori job searching behaviour: What are the relationships that Māori graduates develop when transitioning from higher education into the labour market?

Decisions that are made in the labour market by Māori postgraduates can often contribute to building better futures for whānau, hapū, iwi and communities. This thesis set out to explore and investigate the relationships that Māori graduates develop when transitioning from higher education into the labour market. It aimed to appreciate how relationships develop and how this might be harnessed to better support future Māori graduates to successfully gain meaningful employment.

An ethnographic Māori-centred approach was undertaken involving five participants from within the Auckland region over a two-month timeframe comprising semi-structured interviews and supported by notes as part of field research.

Key findings indicated that decisions made in the labour market can shape Māori career pathways and influence Māori career narratives within Aotearoa New Zealand. Career aspirations and networking were determined individually, but for Māori there is an added layer of responsibility for culture. Overcoming perceived labour market constraints, such as discrimination and privilege persists as an ongoing challenge.

Acknowledgements

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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, 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, except where explicitly defined in the references and acknowledgements.

Signed:

28/12/2020

_____   Date: _____

Ethical Considerations of the Study

The ethical implications of this study were considered and discussed with the supervisor. An application was made to the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) and approval was granted on 25 February 2015, AUTEC reference number 14/384.

Chapter One: Introduction

> "All research in New Zealand is of interest to Māori, and research which includes Māori is of paramount importance to Māori".
>
> Hudson, Milne, Reynolds, Russell and Smith, (2010, p. 1)

Research Introduction

For improvement in Māori outcomes, it is essential to gain an in-depth comprehension of the approaches utilised by Māori postgraduates in the job seeking environment. This chapter introduces the scope of the study undertaken with five Māori postgraduates on their job searching patterns and whānau experiences in the labour market. It is acknowledged in the literature that job searching is a necessary step for graduates to undertake to get a job, although it is complex and time-consuming (Krueger, Mueller, Davis & Sahin, 2011) process. Still, job search plays a critical role in the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013).

Additionally, the role of whānau in the labour market in relation to Māori postgraduates is an area that needs to be investigated, given that the labour market is an environment that is constantly changing (Hipp, 2020, p. 416). While there has been much research on networking, there has been a dearth of studies on whānau networks and the effect of roles associated in this environment. This research aimed to ascertain and harness the potential in these job searching approaches to support future generations of graduates.

Background

Māori higher educated graduates are growing in number (Te Pōkai Tara Universities, New Zealand, 2010), and labour market trends suggest that demand for highly qualified jobs such as managers and professionals is expected to increase in the next three years (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment [MBIE], 2019, p. 9). On the other hand, the impact of COVID-19 on whānau and iwi in Aotearoa New Zealand has been severe in some industries (Te Puni Kokiri [TPK], 2020, p. 3). Whilst rapid development of technology is also changing the dynamics of the labour market and the way people work. According to the

New Zealand Productivity Commission [NZPC] (2020), "Technology can replace human labour, augment human labour, increase the demand for labour by reducing the cost of goods and services, create new markets and occupations, and improve matching between workers and employers" (p. 20).

Deloitte's (2016) survey of 245 executives found that work in the future is expected to be more networked, more devolved, more mobile, more team-based and more fluid in structure (p. 10). Furthermore, key drivers of change in the workplace will be millennials (p. 6), leaders will be expected to progressively work as network architects (p. 10) where the culture of companies in particular, and transparency in internal communications, becomes critically important (p. 3). The implication of this for an Aotearoa New Zealand context is that future graduates will need to be prepared for, and open to, new ways of working and learning. According to Marquardson (2020), "lifelong learning allows students to adapt to change post-graduation" (p. 28), this would be especially important in a labour market environment.

The role that higher educated graduates engage with in this environment will be important, but for Māori postgraduates and their whānau the added layer of responsibility will be culture; being Māori.

Research problem

The research problem explored in this study was to identify what influences Māori postgraduates as they transition into the labour market. Getting a job following postgraduate study is a significant event. Within the context of job search and careers literature, very little is specifically known about Māori postgraduate approaches. It has been argued by scholars that job searching (van Hooft, 2016) has a direct effect on labour market transitions, but it is not clear what influences these approaches are for Māori. The concept of whānau is somewhat different for Māori in relation to western perspectives of family. Although there is wide-ranging literature on the role of families in the labour market, very little research has been undertaken on the role of whānau in job searching approaches for Māori postgraduates. This represents the first study to date investigating this area in Aotearoa New Zealand. It brings a fresh perspective to a somewhat unknown area of

significant importance to Māori employment research. Viewing the Aotearoa New Zealand labour market from these Māori perspectives, help clarify and confirm approaches to boosting Māori job search success and achievements.

Methodology

This thesis explores the experiences of five Māori postgraduates and their engagement in the labour market. Although there is very limited literature on the job searching approaches of Māori postgraduates and the role of whānau in the labour market, the following research questions were the central focus of the investigation:

1. What are the approaches of Māori postgraduates in the labour market?
2. What is the role of whānau?

Narrative inquiry, phenomenology and ethnography were all considered qualitative research methodologies associated with discovering aspects of people's lives and telling their stories. In a Māori context pūrākau (story telling) has been commonly used to pass on information and to share knowledge (Pouwhare, 2016, p. 6), and telling the participants stories in this study will be of benefit not only to Māori but may also be of interest to indigenous communities globally.

After consideration, Ethnography was chosen as the overarching methodology to guide and inform the research and its design. It is a qualitative research approach (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 6) that investigates facets of an individual's life in a natural setting (Wolcott, 2003, p. 109). Participants provide in-depth rich data (Knechel, 2019) so that the meaning of their reality can be comprehended (Thanh & Thanh, 2015) and it was a method that was considered appropriate for this type of research. More details about the specific design of the study are provided in the *Western theoretical approaches* section in Chapter Three.

As this research is focused primarily on Māori, it is essential to comprehend concepts of Māori knowledge, values, principles, and philosophies. Both Kaupapa Māori research and Māori-Centred approaches are valid and valuable methodologies that further informed the overall methodology alongside ethnography. Within Kaupapa Māori research participants

should be involved in the design and implementation of research from the onset, as this did not occur organically in the present study, a Māori-centred approach was ultimately taken.

The participant group was drawn from a population of Māori postgraduates completing their studies in the School of Communication Studies at the Auckland University of Technology, where interviews were the primary data collection tool used. Because interviews are seen as an "interaction with people in the concepts that shape their everyday behaviours and perceptions" (Belk, Kozinets & Fischer, 201**2**, p. 4).

A transcriber was employed to convert participant audio recordings into verbatim transcripts (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006), which were then interpreted and analysed using open coding (Keyton, 2006) to develop nodes and themes (Lavery, 2019). A thematic analysis was employed which Castleberry & Nolen, (2018) described as "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within qualitative data" (p. 808). By applying Microsoft Excel, NVivo functionality, and mind mapping**,** the findings of this study were explored, identified, and categorised. Themes developed centred around the career aspirations of Māori postgraduates, networking, career challenges, career adaptability, and the role of whānau. Interestingly, these corresponded to the research questions posited in para. 1 of the *Methodology* section of this introduction chapter.

Definition of Terms

The online version of Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index [Online Māori Dictionary], (2020) has been predominantly used as a translation tool, to translate Māori words into English for this thesis. A note of caution is due here, Māori words can have different meanings which are dependent on the context of their use. For example, whānau has been defined in the Online Māori Dictionary as extended family, family group or includes people who may not have kinship ties to any family member. Yet, in some circumstances it may be referenced in conversations at times as simply referring to parents and siblings, for example, so using a direct translation of extended family may be inaccurate.

Terms in reference to the labour market such as job searching, job seeking, work force or unemployed can be used interchangeably by researchers in many studies and defined separately in some. Related employment terms can also be included as the focus in other

studies. As was interpreted from the engagement of the researcher with rōpū (group) participants in this thesis study the terms of *job* and *career* are used as synonyms. Therefore, this thesis predominantly uses the following terms: job searching, career and labour market to minimise the potential for differences of interpretation.

Significance of the study

This study contributes to the body of knowledge on job searching and career behaviours through identifying the approaches used in the labour market by Māori individuals, and the role of whānau collectives as it is explored through the perspectives of the participants. It will fill gaps that currently exist in the literature on Māori postgraduate job searching and career approaches, and the role of whānau in the labour market. It is hoped that it will also promote further research and wider dialogue informed by the findings.

The findings of this research will likely be of interest to several audiences. As a resource and tool for Māori graduates and their whānau, and as examples of role models for whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to better support "Māori potential, achievement, success and futures" (Tustin et al., 2016, p. 338). Universities could mentor Māori graduate transitions into the work force and also consider the research recommendations for future Māori staff recruitment. Ultimately, recruiters and employers in the labour market may highly benefit from this research because it will help secure a "a well-qualified workforce that incorporates indigenous knowledge" Durie (2009, p.16).

This study is significant because in an Aotearoa New Zealand context it is important to gain a more comprehensive view of Māori postgraduate job searching approaches and perceptions in order for their potential and career aspirations to be met. In the words of Hudson et al. (2010), "research which includes Māori is of paramount importance to Māori".

Limitations of the study

This study was not focused on employers or their recruitment practices in the labour market. Although this has a key role in individuals accessing meaningful employment opportunities it was considered outside of the scope of this research.

This study did not also investigate historical events associated with traditional Māori society. However, it is evident from research undertaken to date that the impact of colonization on the Māori people has been substantial, including in areas of higher education, employment and career development (Smith, L, 1993; Mikaere, 1994; Smith, G, 2000; Kukutai & Axelsson, 2013; Jackson, 2018; Moewaka-Blarnes &McCreanor, 2019; Stewart, 2021), and this is acknowledged accordingly.

Despite employment being important for identity, in a similar same way, it was also considered outside the focus of this thesis to research constructs associated with Māori identity, but rather a focus on what effect being Māori has in the labour market.

Focusing in on this study of Māori postgraduates and whānau, it is acknowledged that having a small sized sample of five participants may be a limitation. However, Knechel (2019) argued that qualitative research can be achieved with small sized samples (p. 333). This study was therefore limited to the experiences and reflections of those five Māori postgraduates in a localised Aotearoa New Zealand labour market. While these findings may not necessarily be applicable to a wider postgraduate population, it may be highly relevant to Māori and Māori postgraduates who exist across diverse realities (Durie, 1995).

Thesis structure

The structure of the research is presented in this thesis through seven chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction
- This chapter presents and outlines the scope of the study investigating Māori postgraduates approaches when seeking employment. The role of whānau in this environment has not been studied before, therefore, it will be enlightening to ascertain how this research will fill the perceived gap in the literature in this regard. An abridged version of the qualitative Ethnographic Māori-centred approach was presented.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

- A summary of the literature relevant to Māori postgraduate research on the labour market was undertaken. What was interesting about the literature is that families, and in particular parents, clearly influence decisions and activities in the labour market. What was disappointing was the limited studies undertaken on the thesis topic with Māori.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

- A theoretical framework that aimed to explore the research from both a western, and an indigenous approach, was presented. This is applied in theory, by using an Ethnographic Māori-centred approach within a qualitative research design. Drawing on the works of G. Smith (1997) and Hudson et al. (2010) comparisons of a Kaupapa Māori research and a Māori-centred approach were discussed and determined, which guided the Māori paradigm for the study.

Chapter Four: Research Design

- Illustrates the road map of how the research was conducted with the rōpū (group) of Māori postgraduates, and whānau in the labour market. It included the recruitment, data collection and analysis processes, utilizing thematic analysis and acknowledged an Ethnographic Māori-Centred approach.

Chapter Five: Research findings

- In chapter five, the findings of the research topic are presented. Three key themes were identified that developed around: career aspirations, networking and career challenges, and in addition the role of whānau was discussed.

Chapter Six: Discussion

- In this chapter an in-depth analysis of the findings in relation to the literature was discussed. What is clear from this analysis is that Māori postgraduate experiences in

this environment, will be influential for future research and narratives on Māori employment.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions and recommendations
- Conclusions are drawn from the findings and analysis of the study in chapter seven. Key recommendations are presented with the aim of improving future endeavours for Māori in the labour market. Pūrākau (story telling) of Māori postgraduate experiences has been presented and this section concludes this body of research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided an overview of the methodological procedures and structure of the study, introduced the research problem and a research design informed by an Ethnographic Māori-Centred approach. Furthermore, it introduced the critical role of job searching in the lives of Māori postgraduates, their potential, and their successes. Future Māori graduates need to utilise potential tools and resources that can enhance this transition, especially in a globally changing labour market. Whānau are key influences for Māori postgraduates and comprehending their role in job searching activities will be beneficial for Māori futures.

From the outset, it is acknowledged that limited studies have been undertaken with Māori postgraduates and whānau in the labour market, and this will permeate throughout the thesis. The findings from this study will go some way to filling the perceived gap of knowledge in this regard, and as highlighted at the start of this chapter,

> "All research in New Zealand is of interest to Māori, and research which includes Māori is of paramount importance to Māori".
>
> Hudson et al. (2010)

The following chapter will review the literature on job searching as a construct within the labour market.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

> "They [Māori] come from a particular worldview that is influenced by one's experiences of being connected to a whānau, hapū and iwi."
>
> Hollis-English and Selby, (2015, p. 6)

Introduction

It is important to ascertain how Māori postgraduates make connections in the labour market from their particular worldview (Hollis-English & Selby, 2015, p. 6) to better support future generations of Māori tertiary graduates. This chapter will investigate the literature associated with job searching and the approaches that Māori postgraduates utilise in the labour market to determine their careers. In addition, the role of whānau[1] in this environment will be explored as this has never been studied for Māori graduate elites before and may well prove to be of "paramount importance for Māori" (Hudson et al., 2010).

Labour market

The dynamic landscape in which this research was conducted is the labour market. The labour market has been described as a socio-economic partnership structure between the employer and the hired worker (Zaharov, 2017, p. 546). It is a place where job seekers and employers meet to negotiate a contract or where jobseekers find jobs and employers find staff (Rees, 1966, p. 562). This topic generates a lot of interest from scholars who continue to study the labour market from different perspectives such as areas of reform (Harbridge, R., & Walsh, P. (2002), segmentation (Herzog, 1997) and immigration (Maani, S. A., & Michael, M. H. (2020). Importantly, participating in a labour market provides not only social and economic wellbeing for graduates, but also for their families and communities.

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[1] Whānau – Extended family, family group

Job searching

There are many terms associated with job searching research, as mentioned in the Definition of Terms in the *Methodology* section of Chapter One. In this study the key terms of job searching, career and labour market will predominantly be used to describe this function.

Given the substantial number of job search studies that have been conducted to date, this study focused on job search themes connected to Māori postgraduate approaches and the role of whānau in the labour market. These concepts developed from the findings of the study, and have been conveyed in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1: Key Job Search Concepts

Job searching in the labour market is an important but stressful phase that most people go through in their lifetime. A considerable amount of attention has been paid to job searching over past years, and the scope of recent studies has covered a wide range of topics, including job search methods (Weber & Mahringer, 2008); job search and social networks (Cingano & Rosolia, 2012); multiple predicators and criteria (Saks, 2006); planned job search (van Hooft, 2016); finding work (Moleke, 2006); and occupations and industries of

employment (Theodore et al., 2018). According to van Hooft, Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Kanfer and Basbug (2020), "job search is a goal-directed, self-regulatory process in which cognitive, affect and behaviour are devoted to preparing for, identifying and pursuing opportunities" (p. 1).

There were relatively few studies that researched the approaches of Māori postgraduates in the labour market. However, literature search revealed three proximate studies which could enhance comprehension on this subject, namely, the Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (GLS, 2015, 2016-2018, 2020); Reid (2010) and Grooby (2002). Other Aotearoa New Zealand studies would also be considered to strengthen the framework of this research; like career experiences of Māori academics (Kidman, Chu, Fernandez & Abella, 2015) and career satisfaction (Haar & Brougham, 2013) for example.

Employability

Employability is about an individual's ability to get a job or become a job (self-employment) because "work and careers are such an integral part of life" (MacDonald & Hite, 2015, p. 1).

Different theories exist in the literature regarding successful factors that contribute to a graduate's employability in the labour market. Within career literature, Bandura's theory on self-efficacy (1998) recognises the trust individuals have in their own ability to achieve and affect events in their lives. Social Cognitive Career theory (SCCT), extends Bandura's theory by highlighting the influence of self-centred thought and social dynamics on what people do when job searching (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2002, p. 274).

While, other researchers have studied emotional intelligence, which Kotsou, Mikolajczak, Heeren, Gregoire and Leys (2019) defines as "the ability to identify, express, understand, manage and use emotions" (p. 151). According to Nieto-Flores, Berrios and Extremera (2019) there is a strong relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence which positively supports job search activities for unemployed people (p. 92).

Further data from several studies suggest that "self-employment" (Kostoglou, Garmpis, Kolias & Van der Heijden, 2011, p.166); "work experience" (Mason, Williams & Cranmer, 2009, p. 23) and "core transferable skills" (Shah, Pell & Brooke, 2004) positively supported

job searching in the labour market. Kostoglou et al. (2011) found that gender regulated self-employment outcomes for Greek graduates, while for higher educated graduates work experience (Mason et al., 2009) was important. Yet for some employers, core transferable skills were needed (Shah et al., 2004). Within the literature on employability and careers, there is limited research that addresses Māori postgraduate experiences. Although these studies provide valuable appreciation into the importance of employability, questions remain about the factors that Māori postgraduates utilise regarding their employability.

Higher Education

A great deal of research into higher education has focused on the associated benefits or barriers for individuals, families, communities, tertiary providers, governments, or societies (Baum et al., 2013; Bennett, 2003; Moleke, 2006; Reid (2010, 2011); Saks & Ashforth, 1999; Theodore et al., 2016; Theodore et al., 2018; Theodore et al., 2020).

To date, several studies have investigated the benefits to be gained from higher education study. Authors have suggested there is a convergence between higher education and skilled jobs (Theodore et al., 2020) with improved earnings (Saks et al., 1999; Bennett, 2003; Connor, Tyers, Modood & Hillage, 2004; Theodore et al., 2018). While others have highlighted the relevance of a better quality of life for graduates (Moleke, 2006) and their families, and being involved with community (Baum et al., 2013). Theodore et al. (2018) contends that increased wages (p. 206) and social gains for individuals, families, communities, and society (Baum et al., 2013) are the benefits that can be achieved (p. 216).

Recent studies have suggested there are various barriers that higher education students encounter in different contexts including the labour market. For example, Zeus (2011) identified that access to learning is an issue for people who are stateless (p. 263). While for Māori undergraduates having a strong cultural identity was important and as suggested by Bennett (2003), cultural identity acts as a shield to moderate the problems encountered in academic life (p. 62). In terms of the labour market, Shah et al. (2004) posits that undertaking voluntary work by graduates improved their job employability, (p. 14), which would be needed given that the labour market is a continually evolving environment.

Although the findings from all these studies are truly relevant to Māori, they have not investigated the lived experiences of higher educated Māori when they transition in the labour market. Jointly, this research will provide greater comprehension of how approaches influence decisions made in the labour market. However, the strategies that higher educated indigenous graduates utilise to transition into a job are not easily identified.

Career aspirations

A key aspect of job searching is associated with an individual's desired career destination and having a strategy to get there. Metz, Fouad & Ihle-Heddedy, (2009) suggest career aspirations are "vocational possibilities or work preferences given ideal conditions" (p. 155) while Domenico & Jones (2006) similarly advocate it is the direction towards a desired career goal under ideal conditions (p. 3).

Career planning is the process of setting goals and implementing strategies (Jackson & Tomlinson, 2020, p. 441), while Savickas (2005) implies that individuals integrate themselves into society (p. 46) when they construct their own careers (p. 43) because they are concerned with career planning and they are optimistic for the future (p. 53). He further states that individuals make career choices and try to fit their career attitudes, competencies, and skills (p. 45) into the work environment (p. 46). Conversely, SCCT asserts that when it comes to job considerations, people are more likely to compromise their interests if they perceive their environment is not supportive of their choice (Lent et al., 2002, p. 276). Therefore, it is important to recognise that career planning and career development are key factors when planning long- and short-term strategies in the labour market. For Māori postgraduates, how they utilise these approaches would be essential.

Different theories exist in the literature regarding career aspirations and can be connected to the influence of parents (Oliveira, Porfeli, do Ceu Taveira & Lee, 2020; Chifamba, 2019; Liu, McMahon & Watson, 2015; Simmons, 2008). There were several studies published of parental influences on decisions their children made. Simmons (2008) findings where parents guided career decision making processes for their children (p. 36), while Kewalramani, Phillipson and Belford, (2020) maintained that the cultural beliefs and values of parents influenced their children's' futures and career opportunities (p. 5). For example,

the influence of British Pakistani parents on emphasizing higher education and high career aspirations was to achieve social mobility for their children (Shah, Dwyer & Modood, 2010, p. 1123). In the same way, perceptions held by parental occupations were influential factors found by Wahl & Blackhurst (2000, p. 368).

The influence of culture on career aspirations were also examined. Sibson (2011) suggested that "social utility values" or a "desire to shape the future" is important (p. 6). She also argued that these aspirations were dependent on the cultural values, norms, and beliefs of the graduate (p. 6). Furthermore, Mukhalalati, Ashour and Al Noami (2020) found that by increasing the national workforce meant increased visibility for Qatari pharmacist in their own country (p. 1336) which highlighted their ethnic culture. Reflectively, Turner's (2020) study with Black American children stated that it was simply an opportunity to "give back and uplift their communities" (p. 22).

In Aotearoa New Zealand, when Māori graduates leave university, extraordinarily little is known about their labour market destinations (Theodore et al., 2020, p. 148). By drawing on the six key principles of Kaupapa Māori, G. Smith (1997) showed that these philosophies fully supported aspirations for Māori, as highlighted in Chapter Three – Indigenous theoretical approaches. Realistically, future career aspirations for Māori can also be connected to education. According to Durie (2004), access to quality education is a necessity and should be available to most Māori students, where excellence and active engagement is seen as an achievable outcome (p. 17). This is supported by findings from Steedman (2004) research with rural Māori youth, which indicated that they had determined aspirations associated with further training, training for a career or meaningful work, probably based in the cities (p. 19). Surprising, the latest statistics on education outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples from the 2018 Census indicated that "80.6 percent of Māori and 83.0 percent of Pacific 15- to 24-year-olds had at least a level 1 qualification or equivalent (such as School Certificate), compared with 85.8 percent of 15- to 24-year-olds nationally" (Stats New Zealand, June 2020), which could be viewed as a positive step for Māori futures.

On the other hand, what occupations Māori choose is another aspect of career aspiration that needs to be further explored. Grooby (2002) argues that being in a job that an

individual enjoys (p. 25) would be important when job searching and for Māori this entails "professional" roles (p. 25). This view is supported by Theodore et al. (2020) where two years after graduating from university, most Māori graduates were still employed in professional occupations (p. 149), similarly to Reid's study (2010) where just under 70% of Māori participants were in professional or community and personal worker roles (p. 91). Interestingly, these findings support careers literature associated with SCCT (Lent et al., 2002, p. 276). What this does suggest is that Māori graduates may aspire to more professional type of roles that aligned to their qualifications and values. This provides a greater comprehension where the influence of culture and occupations have upon Māori aspirations. Collectively, these studies outline a critical role that career aspirations play in the lives and wellbeing of individuals and communities. These are key perceptions which may align with Māori postgraduate aspirations when they are searching for a job in the labour market.

Yet, a New Zealand Māori study found that "essentially career referred to the work experiences of some privileged groups of people" and "career was considered by Māori to be an elitist term" (Reid, 2010, p. 2). It is worth noting that the group studied in this thesis may potentially be members of the "elitist group" cited in Reid's (2010) study.

Networking

Networking is an important behaviour that job searchers develop and use to source information about current and potential job leads. Social or informal networks are helpful when individuals are job searching and are made up of family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, co-workers, or employees for example (Arthur & Popaduik, 2013, p. 278; Trimble & Kmec, 2011, p. 165; Van Hoye, van Hooft & Lievens, 2009, p. 675; Pellizzari, 2010, p. 494; Rees, 1966, p. 559).

A large and increasing body of research has explored ties in networks, which can be described as strong or weak, heterogeneous, or homogeneous (Anthias, 2007: Donath, 2007; Granovetter, 1973, 1983). According to Donath, (2007) strong ties are close friends or family, who can be relied upon in an emergency and able to provide extensive support (p. 237), which highlights the importance that is placed on relationships amongst the network

members. Van Hoye et al. (2009) argues that opportunities can be gained as these relationships are "interconnected" and can be "potential social capital sources" (p. 663) while Donath (2007) posits that this could be because people believe in new knowledge that comes to them from individuals they trust (p. 236). Likewise, "trusted weak ties are particularly useful sources of information" (p. 236) and people in networks prefer to exchange job data through casual routine conversations (Trimble & Kmec, 2011, p. 165). However, contradictory findings in the literature suggest that strong ties may hinder the job search process (Van Hoye et al., 2009, p. 678), or be beneficial (Tortoriello, Reagans & McEvily, 2012, p. 1036) whereas Kong & Su (2020), observed that "both strong and weak ties enabled job seekers to find work" (p. 795). Further, that these ties were not influential in obtaining government jobs (Kong & Su, 2020) but were successful in the private sector (p. 798).

To date, several studies have investigated social networking for indigenous and ethnic minorities job searchers (Maru & Davies, 2011; Trimble & Kmec, 2011; Hunter & Gray, 2006; Mau & Kopischke, 2001). Trimble and Kmec (2011) posit that networks can positively contribute to labour market inequality along sex and racial/ethnic lines (p. 165). In contrast, Hunter and Gray (2006) stated that Indigenous Australians are less likely to have access to networks that can assist with finding employment opportunities, because network members may be unemployed (p. 2005). This would be detrimental because according to Maru and Davies, (2011) the most common method that Aboriginal people used to find work was "personal connections with family and kin networks" (p. 336). Unlike Trimble et al., Mau and Kopischke (2001) argued that networking was the most productive job search tool for ethnically diverse graduates in the United States of America (p. 142).

More recent attention has focused on career-oriented social network sites such as LinkedIn, as a tool for companies to find new employees and job searchers to find new jobs (Buettner, 2016; 2017). These types of social networks are important for site users when building their networks because of the functionality to self-promote users and because it supports job searching (Buettner, 2016). Ahmed, Hasan, Hoq and Adnan, (2016) extended this perspective, citing that information about users is important, because then job postings can be predicted (p. 6) by using the available data. Sia and Amiruddin (2020) argued that

professional networks prepare students who have uninformed ideas about the workforce they are about to enter (p. 172). In contrast to building networks, Carmack and Heiss (2018) highlighted the relevance of the influences of parents and friends which motivated students to access these sites (p. 154). The same can be seen where Anderson, Noar and Rogers (2013) found parental influences had in their study (p. 311). Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that "this generation of students are high-frequency social network site users" (Carmack & Heiss, 2018, p. 154).

Even though networks are seen as being supportive of job searching practices, their effectiveness does depend on the quality of the contacts and the access to appropriate opportunities because "not all personal relationships are valuable in accessing employment" (Maru & Davies, 2011, p. 336). This is supported by Mowbray and Hall's (2019) findings which identify that negative outcomes will result if individuals' networks do not have high quality contacts (p. 425). Pedulla and Pager's (2019) research offers an explanation; African American job seekers are less likely to know someone in the companies they send applications to, or where their networks will be able to facilitate essential resources on their behalf (p. 998).

Overall, there remains several aspects about network literature regarding the labour market that remain unknown for Māori when job searching. Jointly, these studies have outlined the necessary role of networks for indigenous job searching. What does appear to be lacking in the research literature is the networking behaviour of Māori postgraduates, specifically in an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Career Challenges

There are many challenges or barriers that individuals encounter when looking for employment. According to Swanson and Woitke (1997) barriers are the "events or conditions which exist in individuals or their environment that make career progress difficult" (p. 446).

Literature on the negative impacts of unemployment is extensive and includes psychological capital and displaced workers (Chen & Lim, 2012); goal theory and coping (Prussia, Fugate &

Kinicki, 2001); antecedents of underemployment (Guerrero & Rothstein, 2012); future-oriented coping and job hunting (Hu & Gan, 2011); self-efficacy (Bandura, 1998); career adaptability (Savickas, 1997); self-determination theory (Vansteenkiste, et al., 2004) and coping and adaptation mechanisms (Ncube, Bahta & Jordaan, 2019).

Within the literature on job searching emotional wellbeing has been reflected on. Defined by the UK Mental Health Foundation (as cited in Rutland Community Wellbeing Service [RCWS], n.d.) as "a positive sense of wellbeing which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life; people in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune" (para. 1). While Krueger et al. (2011) cites that the longer a person is unemployed, the more it impacts on their emotional wellbeing for example, a decline in job search activity (p. 25) and "becoming increasingly sad" (p. 37). What this does suggest is that identifying and managing emotional wellbeing, especially during a stressful period of time like when job searching is key. What has not been fully explored in the literature is how Māori regulate their emotional well-being when searching for work. Together, this research will provide a greater comprehension of this importance.

Dealing with rejection

When searchers apply for jobs, there is an anticipation of potential employment, yet is that a realistic assumption to make in today's labour market? Human Resource online statistics, (Zety.com., n.d., para. 1) suggest that only 4-5 applicants are interviewed out of 250 resumes received for corporate jobs, with 1 applicant being successful. Based on these statistics, approximately 98% of applicants will be rejected with or without notification, therefore job searchers need to factor this predicament in to their overall job search strategy. According to Fürst (2016), the number of individuals who strive to be a first-time writer varies greatly from those who eventually become one (p. 154), and this could be applied to job searching in the labour market.

There is a reasonable amount of job search literature that applies to job interviews such as non-verbal behaviour (Levine & Feldman, 2002); job interview performance (Cuddy, Wilmuth, Yap & Carney, 2015); job interview rejections (Harolds, 2015); resilience of recent

graduates (Dekker, Amsing, Hahurj & Wichgers, 2014); persistence rather than good career management (McKeown & Lindoff, 2011); counsellor visits (Hemphill & Kulik, 2019); and self-regulation when stymied during job search (Heslin & Keating, 2016).

Although different theories exist on dealing with job rejections, two concepts have been explored further: motivational behaviour and resilience. Vansteenkiste et al. (2004) research posits that when people want to do something like job search, being intrinsically motivated (autonomous motivation) is valuable in the labour market. While motivation is important (Grant, Nurmohamed, Ashford & Dekas, 2011), it can drive an individual's initiative which contributes to their effectiveness (p. 248). Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker (2000), cite resilience as an important process requiring positive adaptation when faced with considerable adversity (p. 543), a similar view is shared by Van Wormer, Sudduth, and Jackson, (2011, p. 413). Kilmister (2015) posits family or significant others provide encouragement and practical help during times of adversity (p. 66), even while research participants are dealing with trauma in their personal lives (p. 67). This support is significant "in shaping attitudes and boosting confidence" (p. 66).

While these studies do provide key insights into coping methods that could apply to job searchers, they have not explored how Māori postgraduates manage their own adversities during a stressful phase. Taken together, these studies support the notion that to successfully transition through challenging times, people need 'motivation' (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004), be 'resilient' (Luthar et al., 2000) and 'recover' (RCWS, n.d.).

Privileged connections

In a modern society there are communities who are perceived to have more privilege than others. The Online Cambridge Dictionary defines "privilege" as a benefit that an individual or group has, usually because of their status or because they are wealthy (para. 1). This is a reasonable assumption to make considering that, in an educational setting, "going to a private college matters significantly" (Brunello & Cappellari, 2008, p. 572). Subsequently, resulting in educational elites being more successful in securing top jobs in the graduate labour market (Tholen, Brown, Power & Allouch, 2013, p. 143). Whilst a recent study of migrant workers in Ireland (Joseph, 2020) concluded that some workers in the job market

were not disadvantaged by race where restricted resources were easier for them to access (p. 188). Being associated with or membership of a dominant group (Paradies, 2006, p. 146) for example white migrants in Ireland (Joseph, 2020) or white migrants in Australia (Carangio, Farquharson, Bertine & Rajendfran, 2020, p. 9), meant that privilege was conferred – having privilege by the colour of your skin, by race. According to Moreton-Robinson (2004) "*[Whiteness]* is an invisible regime of power that secures hegemony through discourse and has material effects in everyday life" (p. 75). In contrast, black migrants (Joseph, 2020) stated that race is an issue that influences the knowledge, experience, and performance of the labour market (p. 176), where they were disadvantaged by the colour of their skin, by race. Though key insights into aspects of privilege have been discussed, there are still many unanswered questions about privilege and the job searching experiences of Māori postgraduates. Collectively this study gives a greater awareness of the significance and potential impact privilege has on Māori in the labour market.

Discrimination

Discrimination in the job market has long-term implications for people, families, and communities because employment offers benefits that are related to higher pay, community engagement and a better quality of life. In Aotearoa New Zealand, it is unlawful under the Human Rights Act 1993 to discriminate against individuals based on their race, colour, ethnicity or national origins in employment and other public life situations.

A large and growing body of literature has investigated discrimination in the labour market; concerned with age, race or colour, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, religious beliefs, marital or family status, employment status, for example (Carangio et al., 2020; Cormack, Harris & Stanley, 2013; Bierman, 2006; Stuart, 2006; Madden, 2004; Borooah & Mangan, 2002, p. 46). Past research has studied people's health and their individual experiences of discrimination. Harris et al. (2013) argued that a person's ethnicity can be perceived as a health advantage when socially assigned as part of a dominant culture or a health risk when socially assigned as part of a non-European group (p. 8). It could be inferred that those people who are not part of a dominant culture, like Māori, are likely to be further disadvantaged by being perceived as a "health risk" (Harris et al., 2013). In contrast, when

an unhealthy worker's capacity is affected (Madden, 2004) minimal degree of discrimination occurs (p. 430) because this is reflected on wages. Yet Stuart (2006) argued that people with serious mental health disorders (p. 522) resulted in "direct discrimination" occurring because of employer attitudes of prejudice (p. 525).

One of the greatest challenges for job searchers, in particular indigenous, migrant, and ethnically diverse communities, is discrimination in the labour market. There has been a multitude of studies on this topic. Some authors believe that when there is a surplus of qualified candidates in a labour market, then discrimination can increase (Kass & Manger, 2012, p. 14). Whereby others maintain that race perpetuates discrimination and privilege for some people (Joseph, 2020, p. 188). Baldry (2016) argues that race is the strongest indicator of being unemployed (p. 789) for Māori (Kidman et al., 2015, p. 11), and more so for Māori women compared to Māori men (Reilly, 2019, p. 321). In the Australian labour market, disadvantaged populations of Indigenous Australians (Biddle, Howlett, Hunter & Paradies, 2013, p. 91) and indigenous men and Asians (Borooah et al., 2002, p. 46) experienced discrimination. Similarly, with Turkish ethnic minorities (Kass & Manger, 2012) in Germany (p. 11), highly skilled migrant women (Carangio et al., 2020, p. 9) and migrants in Ireland (Joseph, 2020, p. 176). The attention given to discrimination has created a literature that continues to confirm its existence in the labour market globally. Putting aside these constraints and focusing on how job searchers could proactively contribute to minimising discrimination. This may also produce more practical and sustainable outcomes, for future generations of job searchers.

Three specific topics that minimise discrimination have been explored within the literature; education, skills, and experience; identity switching and blending into the environment. Joseph (2020) points out that black workers enhanced their education, skills, and experience (p. 188) to moderate racial inequality. This is in contrast to Carangio et al., (2020) argument that non-white women experienced forms of discrimination regardless of their skill levels (p. 12). Unlike Joseph (2020), Shih, Young and Bucher (2013) research highlighted minimising negative identity features (p. 151) when coping with prejudice in the labour market. Whereas Shih et al. posit that individuals have "multiple social identities" (p. 148) and choosing one that could be valuable at a particular time is important, like a technology

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identity for example. Like Shih et al., Livengood and Stodolska (2004) findings with American Muslims was about "blending in" to their new environment (p. 183). However, according to Blank, Houkamau and Kingi (2016) "rather than understanding other cultures, the starting point for change then is understanding our own biases and mitigating their impact on our decision-making and interactions with others" (p. 3).

The experiences of labour market discrimination for higher educated Māori graduates are relatively unknown. Although discrimination in the labour market is a well-researched topic, there have been few studies undertaken with Māori graduate populations in an Aotearoa New Zealand context. This study offers a better comprehension of this importance for Māori and according to Cormack et al., (2020) "for the lived experiences of indigenous people discrimination is a pervasive common, everyday reality" (p. 106).

The role of whānau

This study of postgraduate experiences and the role of whānau in the labour market is about Māori; therefore, Māori identity in the 21st century in Aotearoa New Zealand needs to be placed at the forefront – this emphasises its importance. As previously noted in the *Limitations of the study*, this thesis was not about investigating the different identity constructs associated with being Māori, but rather how this influenced job searching in the labour market. The conceptualisation of Māori identity in this study, therefore, has been through self-identification by participants along tribal lineage associated with whānau, hapū and iwi. In comparison, the words of Mazama (2001) resonates.

> *Afrocentricity contends that our main problem as African people is our usually unconscious adoption of the Western worldview and perspective and their attendant conceptual frameworks [...] in other words we do not exist on our own terms but on borrowed, European ones (p. 387)*

Whānau as a noun translates to mean extended family, according to the Online Māori Dictionary (2020). Yet in today's society whānau can include people who have no blood ties to other members, similar to a term like the 'AUT whānau' (a popularised expression used to describe a university 'family' of colleagues connected by working for the same organisation).

A growing body of literature has investigated whānau across several different disciplines like, utilising whānau data for policy change (Durie, 2004; Waldon, 2019); being decision makers and controllers of their own health (Hikaka, Jones, Hughes & Martini, 2020); sourcing, interpreting, and advocating for resources (Graham & Masters-Awatere, 2020); and verification of biographical stories (Moeke-Maxwell, Wiles, Black, Williams & Gott, 2018).

This is augmented by literature about the role of whānau, for example Neha, Reese, Schaughency and Taumoepeau (2020) findings of whānau being story tellers in early learning education (p. 17); Berryman (2014) study on engaging with parents, whānau and communities in education (p. 17); and Penman (2014) research connecting parents, whānau and teachers in kindergarten communities (p. 13). Furthermore, Durie (2006) asserts that whānau are the "transmission of culture, knowledge, values and skills" (p. 6). This is supported by Tinirau and Gillies (2013) through using Ngā Manu Kōrero Speech contest (National Secondary school Māori speech competition) as the vehicle. Similarly, whānau can be "the driving force behind the Māori economy since they are the building blocks of every iwi where they manage incorporations and trusts and engage in the workforce" (Māori Economic Development Panel [MEDP], 2012, p. 8). However, the information available on Māori or whānau in the labour market has primarily been limited to government reports (Theodore et al., 2019, p. 141) and statistics, for example Māori in the Labour Market – June 2020 Quarter (MBIE[2], 2020); Māori Labour Market Trends, September 1999-2008, (Te Puni Kokiri[3], 2020) or Te Kupenga: 2018, (Stats New Zealand[4]). Limited research has been undertaken to date regarding Māori whānau or Māori whānau networks in relation to the labour market, apart from para. 4 of the *Job searching* section. In contrast, there were several studies that highlighted the roles of family or parents. Munford, Sanders, B. Maden and E. Maden (2007) stated roles that were developed with parents in early childhood

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[2] MBIE – Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, New Zealand
[3] Te Puni Kokiri – Ministry of Māori Development New Zealand
[4] Stats New Zealand – Tatauranga Aotearoa New Zealand

centres made a "distinct difference" (p. 79), while Donath (2007) advocated strong ties in networks from friends and family provided extensive support (p. 237). Furthermore Kilmister (2015) asserted that encouragement and practical help from family in dealing with adversity was important. Interestingly, Buhl, Noack and Kracke, (2018) found joint exploration of available jobs was most widespread support from parents, friends, and romantic partners (p. 531) which support separate findings by both Donath (2007) and Kilmister (2015).

By drawing on the concept of the role of family, the concept of role models (of family) has been investigated. An extraordinary amount of research has been published on parents as role models and the influence and impact that they have on their children's education and futures. Chifamba (2019) posited that children are influenced by the time spent with their parents (p. 1209) and exposure to job opportunities (p. 1211), while Wiese and Freund (2011) stated that it depended on if the parent's actual behaviour converged with what was desired by the child at the time (p. 223). Unlike Chifamba, Wiese and Freund, Simmons (2008) observed that if parents did not graduate from a tertiary institute, they were unable to provide their graduating children with well-informed advice (p. 38). In the same vein, Chifamba (2019) argued that parental influence alone may not be productive, as some studies have shown that most parents may not be well informed about career developments or entry criteria for careers (p. 1212). Contrastingly, Simmons (2008) found that for minority or foreign students, their parents were important in maintaining their connections with home (p. 38). Although the studies referenced here have provided key perceptions into the role of families and significant others, along with the roles of whānau, they have not specifically explored how this applied to Māori postgraduate job searching approaches. This research provides greater comprehension of the roles and approaches utilised when Māori graduates are job transitioning into the labour market.

Importance of the study

This literature review has attempted to provide an overview of the theoretical concepts associated with Māori postgraduate research in the labour market. The role of whānau in a job searching environment has not been researched yet, though whānau are the

powerhouses (MEDP, 2012, p. 8) behind a lot of successful national iwi, hapū and whānau developments, such as Kōhanga Reo (Māori early childhood education centres) and Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori language immersion secondary schools).

It is important to study Māori postgraduate job searching and career approaches in the labour market because it contributes to the growing body of research on indigenous job searching. Furthermore, research findings can encourage further discourse and research that can shape Māori career narratives and futures. It is acknowledged that job searching can be an intense and stressful phase (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004) of a person's life, yet being employed has multiple benefits for whānau, hapū, iwi and communities.

Directions for the future

Globally, job searching approaches in the labour market are recognised as a principal factor to obtaining an opportunity in the labour market or to advancing in a career. A limitation of this research was studying five key job search concepts (see Figure 1 in *Job searching* above) amongst the extensive range and depth of literature in this field. However, these concepts are important for Māori to transition in this market, and further studies could investigate the same concepts with other Māori elites in different disciplines at the same university or different universities across Aotearoa New Zealand. Furthermore, utilising a Kaupapa Māori research framework (refer to Chapter Three, *Indigenous theoretical approaches*) where participants were jointly responsible with the researcher for the planning, design, and implementation of the project would be valuable. This would further enhance the current literature on Māori employment research.

The roles that whānau undertake in the labour market against the backdrop of Māori elites needs further development as a newly introduced concept. Further studies are required to better understand the key contribution that whānau make in this environment and how this can enhance future graduate job searching approaches.

Conclusion

The previous chapter outlined the procedures and structure of the study which used an Ethnographic Māori-centred methodology approach.

This chapter analysed the literature on job searching within a labour market construct. Aspirations, employability, and networks are crucial factors alongside the challenges to transition in this environment. What may be significant is how the worldviews associated with Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā impact on this transition.

The following chapter will explore a theoretical framework which takes into considerations western and indigenous research concepts.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

> "Māori have a distinct knowledge tradition which lies outside western views of knowledge, it is still located in a cultural framework and lived by real people."
>
> L. Smith, (2015, p. 50)

Introduction

Are methods important for appreciating how relationships develop for Māori postgraduates in the labour market? Certainly, relationships are a key factor in the New Zealand government's 2013-2017 strategy for Māori education (see New Zealand Tertiary Education Ka Hikitia - Accelerating Success), and they are crucial for job searching Māori as well. Using tenets from Ethnography and a Māori-centred approach, this chapter aims to investigate how Māori postgraduates participate and transition into the labour market. It is essential to ascertain these approaches, because this rōpū can contribute to develop a well-qualified workforce that integrates indigenous awareness (Durie, 2009).

Significance of the study

This study presents new insights into the experiences of higher educated Māori graduates in an environment that provides access to careers and jobs. This is significant, considering that meaningful employment (Hamilton, 2017, p. 859) plays an important role in the quality of life for individuals and families and the associated benefits that goes with being a part of the working population, please refer to the *Higher Education* section in the Literature Review Chapter for further information. The greater demand for higher educated Māori graduates who can navigate corporate, academic, and cultural worlds justifies the need for more effective job relationship building approaches in the labour market. For Aotearoa New Zealand, universities, mainstream and tribal businesses operating in the labour market, applying the findings from this study will ensure that they are able to recruit Māori graduate staff more *effectively*.

Research aim

The overall aim of this research is to identify the approaches used in the labour market by higher educated Māori. These graduates bring a wealth of skills, experience, knowledge, and attributes that are transferable across and within a Māori, corporate or academic landscape, and in this research, they are considered the 'elite' of Māoridom. Much uncertainty exists about the role of whānau in job searching approaches in the labour market for higher educated Māori graduates. Family connections and backgrounds in the labour market are important factors in determining employment outcomes in China (Davies, Leung, Luk & Wong, 1995; Yi & Ellis, 2000,) through the development of quanxi relationships. Within an Aotearoa New Zealand labour market, strong relationships and ties may well support Māori postgraduates' transition into a job or career.

Research questions

The following research questions have formed the basis of this study and been finetuned over time. Two key concepts were identified: placing Māori at the core of the research, and a focus on the labour market. Through in-depth interviews with higher educated Māori graduates, the following research questions will be examined:

1. What are the approaches of Māori postgraduates in the labour market?
2. What is the role of whānau?

Membership

Primary inclusion criteria for participants were restricted to; postgraduates between 2005 and 2015 who studied with the School of Communication Studies at Auckland University of Technology, lived in the Auckland region after graduation and self-identified as being of Māori descent.

Theoretical framework

Like other qualitative research approaches, this study will measure the lived experiences or "everyday encounters" (Deitch et al., 2003, p. 1301) of Māori participants by applying the theoretical framework outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Theoretical Research Framework

Research approach	Qualitative research; Ontology Epistemology
Research paradigm	Constructivism; Interpretivism
Research design	Ethnographic Māori-centred approach
Data collection	Interviews
Data analysis	Thematic
Research ethics	Confidentiality and anonymity; Informed consent; Conflict of interest: Bias; Safety protocols

Researchers have utilised qualitative research to ascertain first-hand experiences (Wolcott, 2003, p. 106) of a particular study to gain "rich holistic insights into people's lives" (Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008, p. 512) in an everyday context. A major advantage of qualitative research is the importance of the researcher; because they are part of the social world that is being studied (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 14) and they are the primary data collection tool (Wolcott, 2003, p. 106). Having an interactive role (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010, p. 4) researchers introduce their own views, thoughts and perspectives which was viewed as a strength (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 106). Subjective experiences were valued (Nash, Munford & Donoghue, 2005, p. 31), where multiple accounts of reality (Braun & Clarke, 2013) existed (p. 6) and there could even be multiple versions (Crotty, 1998) formed of the same phenomena by different people (p. 9).

Ontology can be defined as the "assumptions about what there is to know" (Willig, 2019) or "what you believed is real in the world" (Wilson, 2001, p. 175), while epistemology is how individuals come to know about these assumptions (Willig, 2019) or the ways of knowing, about knowledge. The research paradigm of constructivism is associated with the social construction of realities (Appleton & King, 2002, p. 642), where meaning is not discovered but constructed (Crotty, 1998, p. 9). The epistemology of constructivists, reason that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world (Crotty, 1998, p. 9) by reflecting on their own experiences and perceptions. While the research paradigm of interpretivism is subjective and grounded in the belief that, to comprehend this world people must interpret it. According to Hay (2011), interpretivism is centrally driven to understand and describe behaviour and actions. Furthermore, this promotes ontological

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belief that actions, and practices are shaped by ideas, beliefs, understandings, and meanings (p. 168). This research approach and paradigm was appropriate for this study of Māori postgraduates and whānau in the labour market.

Western theoretical approaches

Ethnography offers an effective way to examine aspects of a culture (Van Maanen, 2006, p. 13) and their daily lives, within their social environments (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 189). By viewing a participant's world, in a "natural setting" (Wolcott, 2003, p. 109) so the meaning of their reality can be interpreted, (Thanh & Thanh, 2015, p. 24).

Interviews, surveys, observations and field notes were the methods considered for this qualitative research. Within an ethnographic approach, interviews can be time intensive but helps "identify shared values in a community" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 48). In using semi-structured interviews to ascertain meanings and perceptions of participant experiences, in the labour market for example, makes sense (Crotty, 1998, p. 7).

Two of the principal ethnography theorists, whose work has direct application to this research are Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson. Other ethnographers such as Harry Wolcott, David Fetterman, Elizabeth Campbell and Luke Lassiter have also been drawn on to augment the description of the ethnographic theoretical framework as well as qualitative researchers like Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke. The principal theory being applied is devised by Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson (1983) in the first edition of their seminal work *Ethnography, Principles in Practice*. This book describes the processes that ethnography should be primarily concerned with, despite the different influences and challenges applied within qualitative research. In Hammersley and Atkinson's third edition of their book (2007), analysis commenced with the status and characteristics of traditional ethnography research that has transformed itself in a modern methodological society. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) described this as "ethnography being reinterpreted and recontextualised in various ways" (p. 2) to adapt to the different settings. Hammersley and Atkinson's suggestion here is that ethnography connects closely to the complex and shifting dynamics associated with social sciences. I considered this qualitative methodological

approach as particularly appropriate because of its association with the recording of aspects of people's lives, like job searching relationships in the labour market.

Indigenous theoretical approaches

As part of the research design both Kaupapa Māori Research (KMR) and a Māori-centred approach was examined for this research. Although there are differences between these two approaches, major advantages are evident; like Māori are centred at the core (Hudson et al., 2010; G. Smith, 1997) of the research. Furthermore "Māori are concerned about the control and authority over what gets researched, the evaluation and construction of knowledge and how this is distributed" (Bishop, 1999, p. 1) as the quote from Linda Smith at the beginning of this chapter indicates.

Kaupapa Māori means a 'Māori way' (Cram, Pipi & Paipa, 2018, p. 65; Henry & Pene, 2001, p. 234) and KMR is a research approach; a methodology and a framework. Theory was initially based on six key Māori kaupapa (principles) which governed the way research "for Māori, by Māori and about Māori" (G. Smith, 1997) was undertaken. Other Māori Kaupapa theorist expanded and developed these principles, please refer to Rangahau Research[5] (http://www.rangahau.co.nz) for more details. KMR "acknowledge[s] indigenous teachings and learning practices that are inherently unique to Māori" (Pihama, 1993, p. 16) and best practice includes full involvement and decision making from inception of the research. Within the context of whānau, hapū[6] and iwi, KMR is highly valued, because it reinforces Te Reo me ngā Tikanga Māori[7] and supports the notion of positive outcomes for Māori (G. Smith, 1997). Durie, Hoskins and Jones (2012) posits on the other hand that Mātauranga Māori is the "evolving body of knowledge and KM is the approach to guide practice and understanding" (p. 23).

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[5] Rangahau research – www.rangahau.co.nz
[6] hapū - kinship group, clan, sub-tribe
[7] Te Reo me ngā Tikanga Māori – the Māori language and protocols

In contrast, a Māori-centred approach was identified using the Māori ethics framework (Hudson et al., 2010, p. 4) which compared three different approaches for Māori research, the differences being primarily about the 'depth' of Māori principles imbedded in the research and the level of control and participation. What is evident from the analysis is that both approaches were appropriate and could be utilised as part of the research. However, as the research participants were not invited to be involved from the outset, a Māori-centred approach would inform the study. In retrospect, it is clear that including participants as early as possible in the research process creates a more inclusive and mutually beneficial relationship and needs to be a consideration for research in an indigenous field.

Future considerations

The research questions for the study were developed by the researcher in consultation with the primary supervisor. This would be considered in line with a Māori-centred approach to ethnographic research; however, it would not have met the needs of research from a Kaupapa Māori perspective. In Kaupapa Māori research those who are to be participants in the study are involved in the creation of all aspects, including the design of research questions. They are jointly in control of the research process with the researcher, and all are part of a Māori worldview, the associated aspirations for Māori, and dependent on each member's constructed realities. A more collaborative Kaupapa Māori approach may have elicited research questions that were discussed and investigated from different and diverse perspectives before being collectively agreed upon and probably finalised in a shorter period of time. But the greatest benefit, and in some cases maybe the greatest headache, is having a rōpū working together as whānau to complete a project collectively and in a more culturally appropriate way for Māori. Applying a Māori lens to the research questions could benefit research for Māori, by Māori and about Māori (G. Smith, 1997).

Research ethics

Ethics are the ground rules associated with research which Clark (2019) defined as "the norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour" (p. 394). The following five ethical exemplars; confidentiality and anonymity, informed consent,

conflicts of interest, safety protocols and bias for example, have been discussed in this study.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality and anonymity allow for participants to disclose experiences that will not identify them in any way and are two linked processes. Confidentiality has been defined in Hammer and Schneider (2007) as "information accessible to those authorised to have access" (p. 337). In same way, anonymity is protecting the identity of research individuals, particularly if the study is illegal or sensitive, or they have revealed information that should not have been or will cause them stress should others learn of it (p. 4).

Informed consent

Informed consent in research is about providing participants with the information they need to know so they can make a knowledgeable decision. Finding out what the research is about and how participants can contribute is set out in the research information sheet. A written consent form is required because the primary role of participants is one of sharing information on a given topic. Zuckerman et al. (2007) described this as "a combination of disclosure and voluntary decision making" (p. 218).

Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest can exist in many different everyday contexts and occur when individuals have competing interests or loyalties or have an opportunity that unfairly privileges them or their families. In research, conflicts of interest (Curzer & Santillanes, 2012, p. 143) could arise when staff undertake research with student cohorts they teach or where participants feel they were coerced into being a part of a study because of knowing or belonging to the same networks as the researcher. Conflicts of interest do need to be addressed and any perceived impact or disadvantage minimised or eliminated.

Safety protocols

Safety protocols are tools that can be implemented to keep everyone safe should any unprecedented issue arise. Abiding by a universities Health, Safety & Wellbeing guidelines associated with research is one of the strategies to ensure that this happens. For this

research, a communication protocol was in place with the primary supervisor around researcher safety following completion of interviews.

Bias

Fetterman (1989) maintains that "researchers begin with biases and preconceived ideas about how people behave" which includes "the choice of what problem, geographic area or people to study is a bias in itself" (p. 11). This may be true because research starts from the premise of a problem, issue or hypothesis and researchers make the choices as to what, who, where and how to study a particular phenomenon. Biases within the research process can be identified and clarified at the beginning of an ethics application process, and during the process by utilising different techniques like triangulation (Flick, 2018) and constant comparison across participant data (Keyton, 2006).

Participants for qualitative research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) could be selected on the basis that "they had knowledge or experience" (p. 106) in a specific context, and that they were "willing to share and describe these experiences" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 139). Choosing participants for research has been widely debated by scholars (Amundsen, Msoroka & Findsen, 2017; El-Masri, 2017), however, according to El-Masri (2017), "when participants are not selected randomly, this creates a selection bias for the research validity" (p. 17). In addition, sample size and sampling are two further biases identified in qualitative research, which will be discussed in the next para. on sampling.

Sampling

Random sampling is preferred in quantitative research, because the findings can be applied to the wider population and participants have an equal opportunity to be selected (Knechel, 2019, p. 332; McIntyre, 2005, p. 95). Yet within qualitative research, non-random sampling is favoured because subjective experiences (Nash, Munford & Donoghue, 2005) are valued, especially in 'hard-to-reach populations' (Kong, Chu & Giles, 2020, p. 163). Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique that relies on the researcher's judgement as to who should be selected for the study. Researchers select participants who can generate in-depth rich data (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 56; Knechel, 2019, p. 333; Polkinghorne, 2005,

p. 140). Still, when participants "volunteer" a sampling bias occurs (Knechel, 2019) as this could lead to an over or under-representation of the population under study (p. 333).

Using snowball sampling was an opportunity to recruit further participants by asking those who had been interviewed to refer others who could meet the criteria. Ultimately, it was about access to the research group (Amundsen, Msoroka & Findsen, 2017, p. 6; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 104) and ensuring that the experiences of these participants would effectively answer the research questions being asked and advance knowledge and understanding in this area.

Sample size

Although the number and size of a sample required for valid research continues to be widely debated by researchers, it does appear to depend on the methodological and epistemological approaches that researchers undertake. The advice varies, from Baker and Edwards (2012) suggesting that "a single case may be sufficient if it is unique" (p. 16) to, on the other hand, Sadler, Lee, Lim and Fullerton (2010) that it is difficult to determine when saturation has been reached (p. 371). Knechel, (2019) described saturation as the time when no further information can be provided (p. 333) and for Guest et al. (2006) research this occurred after "12 interviews had been analysed" (p. 74). According to Knechel (2019), "sampling in qualitative research is really always accomplished with small non-random samples" (p. 333) and this is supported by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 3).

Recruiting

Estimating the number of possible Māori participants who could match the requirements for this research was arduous and is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Potential Sampling Population

Year of study	PG student population	PG Māori student population	Potential over six-years
Communication Studies	189	15	90

Note. Data retrieved on 17/9/2018 from AUT Open Access Strategy and Planning online report.

Converting these figures into actual real participants was the challenge for this researcher.

Locating potential participants and communicating with the target group was the priority. Various methods can be used to locate or invite individuals to join a research project like using publicly available and accessible data (Proferes & Walker, 2020). World-wide university websites, open access publishing platforms, university alumni and hard copies of graduation programmes can be searched for university specific graduate information. Informal networking (Rees, 1966, p. 559) across university communities and networks specific to Māori could be contacted. Social media platforms can be helpful because they are used by individuals to connect, share photos, videos or ideas, for example Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube social sites. Likewise, search engines Google, Bing and Yahoo provide public access to a range of personal information. In addition, social media platforms can be used to recruit research participants (Gelinas et al., 2017), which may prove to be valuable to access populations that maybe hard to find (p. 3) but potentially perilous to the ethics of research (p. 12). There are many methods that researchers utilise to identify and contact potential participants, like written invitations, posters, email requests and group presentations, for example. However, for this research a range of networking, researching various social media sites and utilising student cohort groups were the primary recruitment methods used. This is discussed further in the *Recruiting* section of Chapter Four.

'Te Rōpū Rangahau'

Translates to 'the research group'. Those participants remaining after recruitment had finished would become the research sample, the research group, Te Rōpū Rangahau. In this research they will be referenced as the rōpū,[8] the rōpū members,[9] the participant rōpū,[10] Māori or Māori postgraduates. There were four females and one male in the rōpū, all

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[8] Rōpū – the group
[9] Rōpū members – the group members
[10] Participant rōpū – the participant group

enrolled in a higher education programme with one member progressing towards a Doctor of Philosophy qualification. At the time of data collection all were aged between 28 and 39 years with an average participant age of 31.2 years. One was married, two were in long-term relationships, two were single, and three of the female members had children.

Future considerations

When analysing the approaches used to recruit indigenous participants for this research, I have drawn the conclusion that there must be a more effective, efficient and culturally appropriate way to do this. Particularly if the researcher is inside an organisation but is deemed an outsider in terms of research. Whatever way is used to recruit participants for research, it will rely on access to specific samples of the population that will enable the research questions to be answered. Whether this is achieved by researchers chasing up their own leads, marketing across different social media, presenting to indigenous networks or sending bulk emails to groups or organisations, perhaps it comes down to a strategy that spans all these methods to ensure adequate and appropriate coverage.

Research methods

An ethnographic Māori-centred approach forms the overarching methodology that informs the research method used in this study. Within this framework, there are different approaches to collecting and analysing relevant data from participants. These research methods can involve qualitative surveys, observations in the field, interviewing a group of people together at the same time, completing field notes, and by conducting telephone, skype or face-to-face interviews. For this research, face to face interviews were the primary data collection method used, supported by notes.

Interviews

There are many definitions of what constitutes an interview, from Campbell and Lassiter's (2014) "mutual constructions or creative collaborations" (p. 97) to Wolcott's (2003) "speech events" (p. 99) and Hammersley and Atkinson's (2007) "verbal descriptions, explanations" (p. 3). Interviewing is used as a research tool to find out information on a range of topics; they are "relatively unstructured" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 3), and a talking back

process where the voices of the silent and marginal can be heard (Moyle, 2014, p. 31). Furthermore, interviews require participants to answer questions, either in a face-to-face situation or by answering questionnaires or surveys by email, telephone, online or by post. Interview questions can range from being descriptive, structural or contrasting in type, to being open ended, closed, or semi-structured. Yet, they are time intensive, quite complicated and the way in which they are structured and presented has some bearing on the depth of data gathered from the different perspectives that researchers and participants bring to the research interview.

Observation

Watching what "other" people do in everyday situations is common practice. However, there is another dimension and intensity to this process should observers become interviewers or participants in an interview situation. Tuning into not only how questions are answered but also the context of the answer and the nuances associated with that context will generate additional rich and meaningful data. Braun and Clarke (2013) maintained that "only relying on a written transcript will result in the richness and detail of an interview being lost" (p. 92) so it is important to note observations soon after interviews have been conducted. While, in some research, direct observation is a necessary part of the evaluation, especially where "trainee physicians are undertaking competency based medical education programmes" (Gauthier, Melvin, Mylopoulos & Abdulla, 2018, p. 1249).

Notetaking

Taking notes during job interviews is part of the recruitment process (Middendorf & Macan, 2002) and can be an important tool to use when interviewing research participants. According to Boch & Piolat (2005) "note taking is an essential tool in information-transmission situations" (p. 102). Furthermore, Boch et al., maintain that "a major aim of note taking is to build up a stable external memory in a form that can be used at a later date" (p. 101). Doody & Noonan (2013) caution that writing notes at the time [when interviewing] can interfere with the interview process and notes written afterwards can miss details' (p. 31). However, for researchers it could involve the "reliving of a field experience from some amazing corner of the earth" (Greene, 2011, p. 251). In writing ethnographic

accounts, notes can become a reminder, a transportation back in time and the creation of a further opportunity to try to comprehend the experience under study.

Setting

When preparing for the interview stage of qualitative research, the setting (environment) and the equipment or resources needed in the environment are vital considerations because they may affect data collection (Doody et al., 2013, p. 31). Physical locations or settings that are utilised for research may differ across different research philosophies but can include using "a private room at a general practice" (Sha**h**ab et al., 2019, p. 318), interviewing in "family homes" (Brown, 2019, p. 273**)** or using "public facilities in the village such as libraries and community centres" (Panitsides & Kiouka, 2018, p. 600). A wide range of spaces and localities can be appropriate to meet the needs of the research, the researcher and the participants. However, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) warned that it is not always easy to find a suitable location (p. 114.), while Elwood and Martin (2000) have a broader view of being "accessible for participants and conducive for conversation" (p. 649). McGrath, Palmgren and Liljedahl (2019) described "conducive" as a convenient environment, away from potential distractions or noise (p. 1003), with Doody et al., (2013) adding one further criterion of the space being "safe" for research participants and research interviewers (p. 31).

Audio recording

In the 21st century, with the advent of digital technology, there are portable digital audio recorders and digital recording applications that can achieve the same or a more accurate recording of the same type of event. This method has evolved from the early 1920s, sociology researchers made a record of their interviews "from memory after the event" (Lee, 2004, p. 870). Although audio recordings are one of the "traditional ways of recording interview data" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 147), there are hazards associated with selecting and using audio equipment or resources in research. Doody et al., (2013) advised that it is essential to use "good quality equipment" (p. 31) while McGrath et al., (2019, p. 1003) warned that researchers need to make sure that they are familiar with using the resource. Doody et al., also highlighted that "the wishes of the participants are paramount"

in this regard and could include "being able to instruct the researcher to turn off the recorder at any time or not use it all" (p. 31). This proved difficult for Panitsides and Kiouka (2018) where "participants' unwillingness to agree to using a tape recorder was a significant barrier in conducting their interviews" (p. 600). In contrast, video recording allows researchers to not only hear the audio or verbal exchange of what is occurring in each context but also see the finer details associated with participants in a particular setting, like their facial expressions, their attire, their nuances for example (Al-Yateem, 2012). Video recording has its advantages because of its moving images and storytelling abilities, but it does depend on how this is perceived by potential participants and by the researcher. Ultimately, all researchers need to decide what will work best in their research to elicit information about the phenomena under study and answer the research questions posited. For all that, audio recordings were implemented for this research on the labour market.

Koha

Both Fetterman (1989) and Braun and Clarke (2013) argued against giving participants any form of money compensation to be part of a research project. This was based concerns associated with funding capacity and the possibility of altering the nature of the research. However, within Te Ao Māori, manaaki[11] and koha are culturally appropriate practices. Manaaki is about looking after people, about hospitality, and can take many forms from providing kai[12] to arranging convenient times and venues for research participants. Koha, on the other hand, is described by the Online Māori Dictionary (2020) as a gift, present, offering, donation or contribution. In this contemporary research context, koha was given in recognition of participants' time, travel and inconvenience. It was important to acknowledge the sharing and contribution of their experiences and knowledge for this research. Braun and Clarke (2013) acknowledged that participants gave up their time to attend interviews and this may have associated costs such as travel, childcare and providing some type of 'thank you' could be appropriate (p. 61).

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[11] Manaaki – looking after, hospitality
[12] Kai – food

Using the term koha is, in my view, appropriate as it establishes an Aotearoa New Zealand context and acknowledges the ethnic identity of the participants and the researcher, and it is a practice associated with who we are. However, within a traditional or contemporary setting, koha could be associated with and practised when manuhiri (visitors) proceed on to a marae.[13] All members of the rōpū received a petrol voucher koha to acknowledge their contribution to this research.

Transcribing

Transcribing could be described as the first step to data analysis and is described by Stuckey (2014) as simply the method of translating the spoken word into written form. For researchers and transcribers, it is about listening to an audio or viewing a video recording, probably "multiple times" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 162) and converting what transpired in that medium into written transcript. It is a "time consuming and complex process" (Belk, Fischer & Kozinets, 2012, p. 124; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 149; Hardy & Bryman, 2004, p. 6) that allow researchers to explore in detail how people create concepts and portray themselves and their worlds (Skukauskaite, 2014, p. 3). Transcriptions can be undertaken in different ways: by using speech recognition technology applications like 'Speechnotes and Transcribe' that convert audio to text, by outsourcing to an agency or freelancer, or by completing the transcripts manually. Researchers use a layout guideline to ensure the consistency of transcriptions, with the majority using a standard layout (Hepburn & Bolden (2017) "in conversation analytic work" (p. 3). Furthermore, using a conventional practice helps "researchers locate their own and one another's data sources and this is useful in conducting and sharing transcripts and analyses" (p. 8). For this research on the labour market, a transcriber was used to complete verbatim transcripts of all interviews.

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[13] Marae – courtyard in front of the meeting house

Data analysis

Data or content analysis is defined as a method that can be applied across both quantitative and qualitative data and can be broken down into two stages. According to Keyton (2006, p. 290), they are an analysis and an interpretation stage. Data analysis commences with data being collected, examined and sorted into different concepts or categories (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 162) to gain insight into what is being researched. Braun and Clarke (2013) argued that it is "about telling a story that is faithful to the data" (p. 233), while Polkinghorne (2005) further elaborated that it provides proof of the experience under review (p. 138). During this stage researchers move "back or forwards" (Hardy & Bryman, 2004**,** p. 3; Keyton, 2006, p. 290) across the data, similar to a game of pinball (Moore & Llompart, 2017), "sometimes bumping into things and sometimes struggling" (p. 404).

Whatever way that data analysis maybe defined or undertaken, in qualitative research it includes patterns, or "looking for patterns across individual and collective data" (Belk et al., 2014, p. 138). The interpretation stage involves "making sense or giving meaning to those patterns" (Keyton, 2006, p. 290) and themes that have come out of the analysis stage. It includes interpreting the significance and implications implied in local and broader contexts (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 2). Similarly, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) summarised this as a "process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (or relationships) among the categories" (p. 366) while Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) summed it up as:

> *Having to disentangle the multiple strands of social life, in order to make analytic sense of them before, reintegrating them into a synthesis of an ethnographic account. Therefore, …a coherent account that does justice to the complexities of everyday life. (p. 193)*

All these factors highlight and "make evident the characteristics of the experience" (Polkinghorne, 2005 p. 142) which can be applied to Māori postgraduates in this context.

Triangulation

According to Flick (2004) triangulation is about viewing a research problem from at least two different points (p. 178), which can then be compared and contrasted to improve the quality

of the data analysis (Reeves, Kuper & Hodges, 2008). Researchers use triangulation as a form of validation in qualitative research when analysing patterns within data and whatever form it takes, has become a staple in social science studies (Wilson, 2014).

Thematic analysis

Thematic data analysis can be achieved manually using tools like Microsoft Excel or Xmind mapping tool, or it can be undertaken electronically with software such as NVivo, which can analyse data from interviews, or Tisane, which can analyse text in 27 different languages. These tools are all intended to help researchers discover and comprehend patterns that occur in their data.

Thematic analysis is probably the most widely used qualitative method based on "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within qualitative data" (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018, p. 807). Roberts, Dowell and Nie (2019) argued that "other aspects of the research process like the research questions, context and frameworks" needed to be considered (p. 1). It does come down to the various stages associated with undertaking data analysis, from Braun, Clarke, Hayfield & Terry[14] 'six phases' to Dey's (1993, p. 8) 10 steps of analysing data. At its simplest level, it is about interpreting participants' experiences and assigning codes, labels or nodes to segments of the collected data. Lavery (2019), describes codes as being "smaller amounts of analysis" and themes being the "bigger picture concept that develops out of the code". Braun et al. (2013) agreed that themes are organised around a core theme that tells the story of a participant's experience (p. 108). Researchers use either a deductive method guided by theory or an inductive method of examining the data and developing a theory through codes and themes.

For this research on the labour market, both manual and computer software tools were utilised, but not without a mixture of positive and negative analysis outcomes. This will be discussed further in the *Data analysis* section of Chapter Four.

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[14] University of Auckland, https://www.psych.auckland.ac.nz/en/about/thematic-analysis.html

Findings

Findings could be summed up as the final outcome of research based on the data that has been collected, analysed and interpreted. Looking for a job in the labour market can be an exceptionally challenging experience to go through, irrespective of how qualified a person may be. For Māori postgraduates, will their ethnic identity be an asset or a liability in the labour market? Online internet searches list a lot of resources available to help searchers in this environment; however, this research has asked where whānau feature in the job search process used by the rōpū participants. Is it primarily as part of the 'cheer leader squad'? Or is it more complex? Key findings should shed some light on the aspirations, approaches and the role of Māori in the labour market.

Conclusion

In the previous chapter, literature pertaining to the various theories and research associated with job searching was discussed and reviewed in relation to Māori postgraduates in the labour market.

This chapter outlined the research philosophy, methodology and design that could be used to investigate Māori job searching approaches in the labour market. This is of "paramount importance to Māori" (Hudson et al., 2010), where building relationships could lead to successful transition into a job. The overarching methodology applied is an Ethnographic Māori-centred approach because it is concerned with the recording of people's lives and because this rōpū is Māori. Yet, what will be the key challenges? Will it be ethnicity or is the challenge in the tools and methods we use to undertake indigenous research.

The following chapter will outline the research design specific to a study of Māori postgraduates' experiences as they transition into the labour market.

Chapter Four: Research Design

"Māori university graduates reflect Māori potential, achievement, success and futures."

Graduate Longitudinal Study New Zealand (GLS),
First Follow-up Descriptive Report, (2016, p. 338)

Introduction

Will Māori postgraduates reflect the GLS (2016) findings of potential, achievement, success and futures in an Aotearoa New Zealand labour market? Undoubtedly, this rōpū has the qualities, values, qualifications, abilities, and experiences to meet current and future labour market needs (MBIE, 2019, p. 3).

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research design that relates to this specific study, continuing the work undertaken in the previous chapter. Principally influenced by an ethnographic Māori-centred approach about Māori postgraduate and whānau experiences in the labour market. Furthermore, meaningful employment (Hamilton, 2017, p. 859) is a pre-requisite to improving the quality of life for whānau and communities.

Table 1: Theoretical Research Framework as explained in Chapter Three Research methodology, had six threads: research approach, research paradigm, data collection, data analysis and research ethics. It is not intended to re-examine the procedure that has been outlined in the previous chapter, but to enhance comprehension from a generic to a specific focus on this topic.

Ethnographic Māori-centred approach

Qualitative research sets out to interpret text or words, not numbers, from interviews with participants using qualitative research that acknowledges a socially constructed reality (Appleton & King, 2002). While Ontology is the investigation of reality (Braun & Clarke, 2013) where epistemology deals with acquisition of knowledge (L. Smith, 2015). Comprehending what constitutes as knowledge, is not clear for Māori (Cunningham, 2000), in a predominantly Pākehā environment like the labour market. Generations of traditional

Māori learning was passed down by pūrākau[15] (Pouwhare, 2016), explained as "the mythologies, the ancient oral narratives of the Māori people" (p. 6). For the rōpū, their ways of knowing contribute to their worldviews, and how they interpret (Hay, 2011) and construct (Crotty, 1998) the world around them, by reflecting on their own experiences and perceptions. Durie (1995) contend that "Māori are far from homogenous, they are complex and diverse, and they live in diverse realities" (p. 1), which is supported by Hollis-English et al.'s (2015) research with Māori social workers (p. 6).

As part of the research design, an ethnographic Māori-centred approach has been implemented to investigate the lived experiences (Deitch et al., 2003, p. 1301) of Māori postgraduates and whānau in the labour market. Through ethnography, richly detailed accounts of these experiences and the relationships that are developed in the labour market can be viewed and interpreted. Ellis (2016) referred to richness as "the level of detail and understanding that is gained in the interview" (p. 85).

The participants, the research rōpū, all exist within diverse ranges of cultural, social and lifestyle realties (Durie, 1995). Their personal backgrounds, work histories, education and experiences differ quite considerably, which would influence how they construct and interpret their own realities (Hay, 2011). It is this diversity within the rōpū members which allows for their experiences in the labour market to be interpreted, so that aspects that are similar and those that have developed in different directions can be viewed. It can provide a platform from which future generations of Māori graduates can further learn and adapt their own strategies in this context.

Positioning the researcher

Knowing who I am and where I have come from is the starting point on my own journey to navigating this research. I grew up as the youngest child in a whānau that spanned across

[15] Pūrākau – story telling

three generations: my parents, my brother, my aunt who was my mother's youngest sister, my grandparents, and various members of our extended whānau.

My parents moved the family to Auckland to find work from rural Parengaroa, Northland, around the late 1950s, like other Māori families joining the urban drift to the cities. They believed that, to succeed in the Pākehā world "you had to have a good education", and when extended whānau moved down to Lower Hutt in 1961, we moved as well.

I was educated in Lower Hutt and started looking for work in the mid-1970's so that I could leave college. Job searching was vastly different to what happens in today's labour market. The two strategies that worked for me were talking to a Personnel Officer, (yes, that is what they were called in those days) and going into the Labour Department and enrolling for a job, which I do not think happens much today unless there is a legal requirement to do so. The environment seemed different; the Education Department was looking for cadets and, because I was Māori and had University Entrance, I was offered the job. While using a government employment agency to find work was the norm back then, it was the era of a lot of available temporary jobs being 100% subsidised by the government. There was the Temporary Employment Programme (TEP), Project Employment Programme (PEP), and the Work Skills Development Programme (WSDP); so, the chances of being employed with my work background were high. This was my introduction to supply and demand in the labour market while working at the Lower Hutt Employment Office. Six months later, back in Auckland, I went in and met the Senior Employment Officer for Manukau and was offered a job as an Employment Officer. Around five years later I became the Senior Employment Officer for the Manukau centre. Thinking back on all the years I worked for the Labour Department and the various restructures that followed, I never viewed my working life as a "career"; it was always a means to an end, to improve the quality of life for me and my whānau.

I have no idea what a conventional upbringing looks like, or even a conventional Māori upbringing looks like. I know I am Māori, and whānau is important. So not traditional or conventional mainstream and not traditional or conventional Māori either, but I am conversant with and able to operate in Te Ao Pākehā and Te Ao Māori, within the same

diverse realities mentioned by Durie (1995). I am Ngāpuhi and Ngāpuhi is in my blood, and I bring all of this to the mix as the researcher of this project.

On a finishing note, this is the most significant piece of writing that I have undertaken to date that includes aspects of my personal life. I would like to acknowledge my Rōpū Rangahau, a truly inspiring rōpū! Kia ora koutou katoa, ngā rangatira ma.[16]

Research Ethics

Research ethics are managed by university Ethics Committees. According to the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) (2019), research must be ethical and must meet the minimum criteria for research adequacy. This is explained as having clear research goals, an appropriate research design to meet those goals, and potentially contributing to the advancement of knowledge. This resonates with Resnik (2015), who posits research that is truthful, is useful to promote and advance information, and strengthens the development of public support. Research ethics have guided the processes (Hudson & Russell, 2009) used throughout this study and includes protocols on behaviour for researchers and research participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity

As part of the research design, individual participant information was carefully managed, and research safeguards and confidentiality protocols were implemented for the lifecycle of the project. Pseudonyms (Aleksiejuk, 2016) were implemented, using Māori names of native Aotearoa New Zealand birds to maintain anonymity. A transcriber protocol was introduced, and this is reviewed in the *Transcribing* paragraph below. However, it is acknowledged, that given the small size of the rōpū, their experiences discussed in this thesis may be

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[16]Kia ora koutou katoa, ngā rangatira ma – Thank you all, the leaders

recognisable by sections of the AUT Māori communities. Nevertheless, all efforts to maintain rōpū anonymity and confidentiality is a continuing priority for the researcher.

Informed consent

In line with university practice, each participant was given an information sheet outlining the research, its procedures and any risks involved, and they were invited to consider this and then sign a consent form. Participants were also invited to ask questions before the interviews took place and they could also contact the primary supervisor for further information about the research. During interviews, there were minimal significant levels of discomfort or embarrassment and there was no pressure to disclose deeply personal or potentially embarrassing information. As participants they controlled the amount of information they chose to share (Schober et al., 2015). However, in case they felt that they may have shared too much information, they were given the opportunity to view their transcript, to validate the accuracy of the information collected. Should they have wanted to withdraw from the research before the analysis was completed, they could. No significant risk or discomfort were expected since interviewer and participants were Māori, shared the same worldview and cultural understanding, and the interview was centred around everyday experiences.

Conflict of interest

There were no known conflicts of interest between the rōpū members and the researcher. The rōpū members were not related to or dependent on the researcher in an educational or personal context, and even though they shared the same cultural networks there were no competing interests or loyalties apart from this study being a research requirement for a tertiary Master of Communication Studies degree. This was stated as part of the research purpose in the Participant Information Sheet (please refer to *Appendices*) that rōpū members received during the recruitment phase. However, there were measures in place should any conflicts of interest, coercive influences or power imbalances have arisen. This study was approved by AUTEC and meant that the use of the university student management system and utilising academic staff to help with recruitment was not permitted. This was understandable, as it would have given an unfair advantage or privilege

to the researcher over other researchers, whether they were employed by a specific tertiary institution or not.

Safety protocols

To ensure an impartial decision-making process, invitations to participate in the research were sent out to prospective participants by another university staff member, a Māori Academic. Potential participants could decide if they wanted to participate without undue pressure or coercion. In line with university Health, Safety and Wellbeing guidelines, a communication protocol between the researcher and the primary supervisor was set up and could be implemented if needed. This was not required during the data capture phase of the research.

Scheduling rooms that were conducive for in-depth conversations (Elwood and Martin, 2000), accessible to the rōpū and in a safe environment was achieved using on campus meeting rooms. Further information can be found in the *Research method* section, (setting) below.

Bias

It is acknowledged that bias exists within the research process (Fetterman, 1989). This research determined Māori postgraduate elites as the target group and in a specific environment, like the labour market and by default this could be viewed as a bias. However, it is important to make these decisions because access and benefits associated with jobs, salaries (Theodore et al., 2018) and health provides a better quality of life (Moleke, 2006) for whānau and families. Furthermore, judgements are made by researchers on what gets studied, interpreted and analysed and what does not. While researchers bring their own bias to the study under investigation, this may have some bearing on the outcomes or findings. As the researcher of this thesis, having had previous work experience with unemployed jobseekers, in particular Māori jobseekers to find employment, has been a driver for undertaking study. This may influence or inform my personal perceptions or judgements as a researcher but ultimately this research is about telling the participants' stories.

Sampling

For this research, purposive and snowball sampling were implemented. These two approaches are explained as researchers using their own judgement (Campbell et al., 2020) to recruit participants and asking participants if they know of potential referrals. Both approaches are non-random and qualitative research literature has argued that this is preferred because researchers select participants who can answer the research questions and respond with rich narratives of their experiences. Although non-random sampling may not be representative of the population that is being studied, this research was not about generalisations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 106) that could apply to every Māori postgraduate in the labour market. It sought to interpret and highlight the experiences of this rōpū and the relationships that developed in this environment, to better guide and benefit individuals and collectives in the future. Similarly, sample size is another contested area. Having an eventual sample size of five does illustrate that sampling in qualitative research (Knechel, 2019) is often performed with small non-random samples (p. 333).

Recruiting

Referring to *Table 2: Potential Sampling Population* in Chapter Three, estimated around 90 potential participants. However, factoring in the 75.5% completion rate of Māori postgraduates in 2017 (AUTUNI) and an estimate of 30% of Māori graduates who did not reside in Auckland post-graduation a more realistic target of 44 was conceived in Table 3.

Table 3: Revised Sampling Population

	PG Māori student population	Identified PG Māori students	Contacted PG Māori students
Communication Studies	44	23 (52%)	8 (35%)
Māori postgraduates in the labour market research			5 (62%)

There were three recruitment sources utilised: researching, networking and student cohorts. The first involved researching and scanning physical information (university Graduation Ceremony books); online (university website; Alumni site); and university open access sites

(Thesis and Dissertation graduates). Secondly networking, (Rees, 1966) with informal and social networks (Māori staff kumara[17] vine: Māori staff individually and collectively) which provided information on similar research theses (Staniland, 2017; Reid, 2010) with Māori and (Pole, 2014) with Tongan graduates. Lastly, as identified in the literature on the supportive nature of networks (Donath, 2007), I was inundated with offers of help, practical suggestions about chapters to read, ideas about prioritising time and workshops to attend. As a researcher, I never personally used an email pānui[18] to Māori networks as my preference was kanohi-ki-te-kanohi.[19] The downside is that information received could be outside the scope of the research project, which proved the case on more than one occasion. Thirdly, student cohorts known to the researcher, students enrolled in postgraduate, honours or master's programmes in Communication Studies were pursued.

 With a possibility of 23 Māori postgraduate students identified, social media and specific industry sties were searched matching these students to the research requirements. Eight participants were confirmed to meet the full criteria and these names formed the basis of the recruitment database for this research.

Invitation to research participation

Participants were selected on the basis that "they had knowledge or experience" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 106) in the labour market, and that they were "willing to share and describe these experiences" (p. 139). All eight Māori postgraduates were invited to participate in the study; five accepted and the other three did not respond after a subsequent reminder email was sent. To recruit further participants, snowball sampling was applied. Two "snowball" (Audemard, 2020, p. 32) referrals were advised to the researcher, but unfortunately one Māori postgraduate did not meet the criteria for membership and the other was already confirmed as a research participant.

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[17] Kumara vine – Communication network used by Māori
[18] Pānui – announcement, notice
[19] Kanohi ki te kanohi – face to face, in person

Te Rōpū Rangahau, the research group, was created with five members, and in today's modern society where education and culture can converge, they could be representative of the "best" that Māoridom has to offer. They collectively reinforce the notion advocated by GLS (2016), of "Māori potential, achievement, success and futures" (p. 338). Who they are and where they have come from personally has a huge impact on why they are attending university, what they hope to achieve, and their aspirations are related to more than just their individual selves, they relate to their whānau, hapū and iwi.

They are unique and versatile, as they can operate within Te Ao Pākehā and Te Ao Māori and, in one case, also within a Pacific worldview. Their individual and collective data incorporates Māori concepts, views and values connected with Te Ao Māori, they live in urban areas and yet they are affiliated to their own iwi, and this is acknowledged in Table 4, below.

Table 4: Rōpū Rangahau by iwi affiliations

Rōpū mema	Iwi	
Weka	Ngāpuhi	Cook Islands
Kiwi	Tainui	Ngāti Tahinga
Tui	Ngāti Tuwharetoa	Ngāpuhi
Whio	Ngāti Tuwharetoa	Whakatohea
Kea	Ngāti Maniapoto	Tainui

Their combined work experience before university depended upon the priorities that they set for themselves and their whānau at that time. One member was working as a production assistant for a national television company in Auckland and wanted to get into a career for herself and be a role model for her young sons. Another was in a lucrative job in England as a personal assistant and wanted to bring her young family home to New Zealand. A third member was studying fulltime and working in a Māori student support role in Wellington and came to Auckland without a job, to finish his qualification. He set up his own small business to generate income during this period. Although these are specific examples, there

were characteristics which they all had in common; a career was important, being a role model for whānau and being Māori and/or Pacific-focused mattered now and in the future.

All rōpū members lived in Auckland Tāmaki Makaurau prior to, during and after tertiary study. However, dependent on their personal family commitments, three out of the five were prepared to move to another location to gain meaningful employment, which was part of their "career plan" (Livingston, 2003).

During the research interviewing stage, it was confirmed that one of the members had found professional employment with local government in a graduate role. Within six months of the data collection stage, a further three had found employment and, on returning to Aotearoa New Zealand, the final member found professional employment with a national television company. It is acknowledged that all rōpū members found employment which could progress their desired careers. However, it was hard work and not without struggle even for Māori postgraduates with masters, postgraduate or honours qualifications.

In summary, these graduates are the "elite" for Māori whānau, hapū and iwi. They are conversant in Māori, business and academic worlds and, ultimately, they are "ngā rangatira mō apōpō". In a Māori worldview, this translates to mean they are "the leaders of tomorrow". They are the present and the future for the benefit of Māori. They are all linked by networks, by whānau to their tribal ancestry, and predominantly they want to work with or for the improvement of Māori in society. They definitely exhibit potential, achievement, success and futures for Māori (GLS, 2016, p. 338)

Research method

Interviews were predominantly used as the data collection method for this study, supported by notes, because they are tools that can be used to elicit "rich" information on research participants' experiences.

Interviews

For this research, it was anticipated that semi-structured face-to-face interviews of approximately an hour would be sufficient to collect enough data for the study's analysis. A research interview guide was designed and approved by AUTEC with open-ended,

contrasting and descriptive questions being asked followed by a set of scoping queries. As the primary researcher undertaking research for the first time, kanohi-ki-te-kanohi interviews was about the personal connection, who we were, where we came from, our whānau, our hapū and our iwi. It was about being Māori. Importantly, interviews provide an opportunity to observe the similarities and differences associated with "diverse realities" from both sides. This method appealed because for Māori telling stories "live in our house, our marae (mostly in the kitchen), our sports clubs, in our kapa haka teams, in groups of our friends and acquaintances" (Wilson, 2020, p. 1). Essentially it is a part of Māori everyday fabric of life.

Revisiting the interview questions

An interview guide was created to scope several topics in the labour market that would allow the rōpū to interpret the questions however they wanted to. "Adjusting the questions" after the first interview was part of the fine-tuning process for researchers (McGrath et al., 2019) and this was required in this study. Interview questions were reviewed, refined and renumbered so that interpretation for the participant could become clearer during the interview (Bowden, Fox-Rushby, Nyandieka & Wanjau, 2002, p. 323). These refinements were categorised in three areas: breaking questions down into more manageable chunks, adding to existing questions and removing a less relevant question. Questions which ask participants to interpret multiple elements at the same time can become cumbersome and easily misunderstood. An example of this is "What skills are employers looking for and did you meet the requirements?" which had a subset of possible prompts: generic skills, specialised skills, academic skills, core skills and transferable skills. In its entirety this is a huge question, especially considering the diversity of meanings that could be conceived for all the individual prompts. When the question was revised it became "Generally what skills do employers look for?" and each probe had a standard classification for what that was meant in this interview.

Adding further questions or soliciting further information in semi-structured interviews is an acceptable part of the process that allows "for topics to be explored in depth" (Mahama & Khalifa, 2017, p. 322) and to probe further when needed. The first question asked of all

participants was "What is your understanding of the term 'labour market'?" and two follow-up questions (McGrath et al., 2019, p. 1004) were added. They were "What particular part of the labour market are you interested in?" and "What is the situation like in that area?". These are two very relevant and significant topics that are indicative of a participant's knowledge in their own area of focus in the labour market.

The last category to note is when a question was removed from the original interview guide and not replaced. This research is about job searching in the labour market, so it is implied that at some point within the interview participants will talk about their searching experiences and the jobs they have applied for. Asking "What type of jobs have you applied for?" to probe within the industry relevant to their qualification became somewhat redundant because this research is built around experiences of this nature in the labour market. This question was not asked after the first interview.

In summary, making sense of participants' experiences in this research context required a holistic approach to reviewing the interview question guide after the first interview was completed. This involved looking at the questions, reviewing the responses from the first participant and ascertaining what responses were needed in answering the research questions. Alongside this was the notion of making sure the questions were clear, concise and comprehensible to all parties involved.

Note-taking

For this research, notes were taken intermittently after most interviews but in a less structured way. Therefore, because of the lack of consistency in the use of this method available notes were predominantly used to provide additional information that could be applied to the specific participant transcript.

Setting

In setting up the interview schedule, the researcher worked around the individual participants' commitments and availabilities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 116; McGrath et al., 2019, p. 1003), ensuring minimal disruption to their daily lives. The five interviews were set up over a five-month period from April to August 2015, and were

conducted on university premises, in a faculty meeting room. In hindsight, the setting in one situation was inappropriate due to an unannounced interruption. Despite all efforts to minimise the possibility of interruptions, bold signage on a door stating "Interview in progress, please do NOT enter" was not enough of a deterrent. According to Ellis (2016), this should have been an important consideration as it "reflected on the nature of the interview and the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee" (p. 84) and could have potentially "affect[ed] the data collection" (McGrath et al., 2019, p. 1003). To ensure that this did not happen again, future participant interviews were moved to another room at the opposite end of the building and, in one instance, to another campus.

Audio recordings

Audio recordings (Britten, 2006) were considered appropriate for this research because it was a less intrusive method than video recording and the questions were about everyday experiences. For this research, all of the rōpū members were advised from the outset that audio recording was going to be used when they were given a copy of the Participant Information Sheet, and all agreed to it when they signed the research Consent Form. However, there are a multitude of audio or voice recording options that researchers can choose from. Final decision made for this study, was the electronic application "Voice Recorder" because it was easy to use, and the range of coverage and clarity of sound was suitable.

Transcribing

Knowing what and how much to transcribe starts with the first audio recording, the first interview, and the conversion of audio conversations into text is the first step to data analysis. As the researcher, listening to all the audio recordings multiple times to become familiar with the data was important to gain an overall appreciation and awareness of the labour market experiences for the Māori postgraduates. A transcriber was employed to complete verbatim transcription of responses to the interview questions asked (Guest et al., 2006, p. 64). A standard conversation analysis layout (Hepburn et al., 2017, p. 15) was used for this study and included speaker identification, pauses and any other verbal responses like laughter and utterances like "umm", etc. When the transcription task was completed, all

hard and soft copies of the transcript and electronic drives were returned to the researcher. From this point onwards, the transcriber had no further input into the research. Hard copy transcripts were then checked against the audio recordings to potentially identify and eliminate any transcription errors and confirm reliability. There was one major amendment made, single spacing was substituted for double spacing from the commencement of the second transcription.

Data analysis

Data analysis is a process in which "data transcribed from interviews is analysed and interpreted" (Keyton, 2006, p. 290). For this research on the labour market, two different methods were used to analyse the data: the NVivo software analysis programme and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. An inductive approach was applied to the analysis, utilising "open coding" to create labels of information describing small snippets of data commonly called codes or nodes which, when they are sorted into larger groups, become themes (Lavery, 2019). However, using a software analysis programme like NVivo was not without its drawbacks. Firstly, the auto coding function on NVivo was not used across the transcribed data, because 40% of the transcribed interviews were not recognised as having any themes. Secondly, there were many occurrences of two voices being transcribed during individual responses from the rōpū to the research questions. Primarily, they were iterations of confirmation from the researcher and these were removed for coding purposes. Three concepts were identified by manual coding on NVivo: a focus on the searcher, their attitude, actions and knowledge; response from the labour market; and whānau networks.

Microsoft excel spreadsheet function was next utilised to ascertain themes, but importantly to view the data in one setting. Data was analysed by questions asked of all participants and it produced a very large spreadsheet of data. Areas of similarity across the collective rōpū experiences were quickly identifiable, there were noticeable differences, and a few interesting concepts arose.

Thematic analysis ultimately tells a story about the lived experiences of participants in a particular context which involves "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns" (Castleberry et al., 2018, p. 808). While searching for connections between the themes (Keyton, 2006) or "other concepts that don't easily fit in anywhere" (p. 290).

Search query functions on the NVivo programme were used to ascertain patterns and create themes. The word frequency query was utilised to ascertain what words were regularly mentioned across the participant rōpū. This identified nouns; jobs, things, people, Māori and adverbs; yeah, just, really and likely which makes sense in everyday language that individuals use. What is interesting is that job, people and Māori appeared in the top six mentions, which aligns with the research questions for this thesis. Matrix coding was also used to look at patterns between two lists of items, the rōpū responses and the coded themes created in the project, which were career aspirations, getting a job, gate keeper and whānau. Taking the key threads from each matrix query and creating a visual mind map finetuned and identified the key relationships for this rōpū of Māori postgraduates in the labour market. Built around a central concept of Māori postgraduate career aspirations the experiences and perceptions of this rōpū were highlighted.

Findings

The findings for this research on the labour market were based on the interview data as analysed by using NVivo, Microsoft Excel and mind mapping tools. Concepts were coded and identified with relationships established between and across the various themes. Utilising this analysed data, the key *Job searching* concepts were created as noted in Figure 1, of the Literature Review Chapter.

Conclusions

The previous chapter outlined the research philosophy, methodology and design that could be applied to Māori research in the labour market.

This chapter investigated the specific research design in relation to this cohort of Māori postgraduates in this context. While they do reflect "Māori potential, achievement, success

and futures" (GLS, 2016, p. 613), the rōpū needed to develop relationships in the labour market that met their future aspirations. So, key challenges may have been associated with ethnicity, and with limited literature on whānau, but they are also evident in the tools and methods that researchers use when undertaking research, including indigenous research.

The following chapter examines the research findings based on Māori elite experiences in the labour market.

Chapter Five: Research Findings

"The need for a well-qualified workforce that incorporates indigenous knowledge, disciplines attributed to subject knowledge and generic skills."

Durie, (2009, p. 16)

Introduction

Having a skilled Māori workforce has become increasingly necessary (Theodore et al., 2020, p. 140), not only for government strategies (MBIE, 2019) but for whānau, hapū, iwi and communities. This rōpū can contribute to the development of a well-qualified workforce that integrates indigenous awareness (Durie, 2009) within an Aotearoa New Zealand environment. This chapter presented the findings from the study.

Themes emerged

In this study, Māori used a variety of job searching and career approaches in the labour market when looking for opportunities to gain meaningful work. They were guided by future career aspirations and career employability, as well as the roles of whānau in this arena. The multitude of these approaches has been outlined in Figure 2 below.

Although there were numerous themes that arose, three key findings developed:

- Career aspirations are important for Māori in the labour market.
- Use of informal networks by Māori postgraduates.
- Coping with the challenges during a job seeking phase.

It is expected that the experiences of Māori postgraduates in the labour market will address the research questions of this thesis. What was noteworthy, is that the rōpū experiences of the role of whānau in this context was not defined to one specific research theme but was viewed as important factors across their job search strategies. This will be factored into the findings of this chapter accordingly.

Figure 2: Māori Career Approaches

Job search

Ascertaining what opportunities existed in an everchanging environment can be tough:

> *They're looking for journalists that can do everything; that can write, do the video – Do the audio, everything, online, […] those jobs get kind of consolidated into one journalist's [job]. (Weka)*

However, to be successful in this environment, "you basically need exactly what the ad says. You just reproduce and you're just like 'I am the ad'" (Whio).

Career aspirations

Māori postgraduate aspirations indicated that a career and having long-term plans and goals in place were important:

> *That's my passion. So, owning my own production company – But I know there's a lot of steps to – and, and, and that comes with working as a journalist, working as a producer, working as a manager – so there's, there's a lot of steps but [um] that's the end game to me. (Weka)*

These career plans involved maintaining contact with cultural links:

> *A few of my friends that I mentioned before are currently on Maniapoto trust-board. So, I always keep abreast of what's happening because my long-term goal is to work for Iwi – so I want to keep in there and know what they're doing, I guess I wanted to make sure that I build the skill[s] first, before doing that. (Kea)*

Concepts of values were important as well:

> *I've found that [um] the way that the company's run or the way the work is worked there doesn't really [um] fit with the who I am and my morals and what I stand for [..]. I want a place where I feel like I can belong, where I feel like what the work that I'm producing is going towards some kind of good for Pacific and Māori people. (Weka)*

Career aspirations aligned to their educational qualifications and values and were focused on occupations predominantly in the highly skilled categories.

> *I feel like for me to actually get an academic job it would have to just, for reason be, the right job that my talents met. There are probably not a lot of jobs that I would be able to get, I don't think, in academia – because I research in a kind of developing methodology. I do sort of education stuff, but I couldn't get a lecturing role in education. (Whio)*

Although all were focused on their own preferences for a career, and were higher educated graduates, this didn't guarantee an easy transition into the labour market. As observed by Tui, "I don't actually think the qualifications were as highly sought after as having experience in a similar role". However, this rōpū was not seeking server roles related to the fast food or retail industries, but rather leadership, graduate or professional roles.

Networking

Informal networks were generally made up of family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Māori postgraduates talked about the benefits of using informal networks as a key determinant to find a job:

> *Through the internships obviously you gain experience, but you meet fantastic people along the way. Some who are doing the same thing as you and you kind of get among – you get beside them and you learn from each other. That's what I love, too. (Weka)*

Networks were utilised to source current and future opportunities in 'desired' industries, occupations and companies locally and globally:

> *Yeah, I do keep in touch with people that I know in different industries that I might wanna work with. I remind them. (Kea)*

This took place alongside tertiary networks built up during study:

> *So, I talk to my lecturers, I talk to people I've met in the industry about certain opportunities. [Um] or opportunities that might, might, lead to jobs [ah] that are coming up. It's knowing people. (Weka)*

There was an expectation that parts of their networks would have direct link to the intended sector of the labour market being pursued: *"I do have quite a good network of friends that are in professional type roles"* (Kea)

Professional networks like LinkedIn were used:

> *Maybe it's those kind of loose connections, maybe people they're connected to might see my skill set and you know think they might need someone like me. So, sometimes it's not directly through my own friends. It might be a friend of a friend. (Kea)*

Informal network connections supported Māori job searching: "That's how I got my production role, I was really looking for work and I told my friend, and she said work for this person, gave him my CV and I got the job" (Kiwi); contacts would activate business leads in a desired arena: "My Mum has connections with Vic Uni, she's worked there. She doesn't anymore but she knows lots of people there" (Whio).

Rōpū members talked about the multiplicity of roles whānau undertook in a labour market context, like when scoping overseas opportunities:

> *When I talked to my friends, talked to my friend who lives there, I am always telling them, man I need a job, can you keep an ear out for me. And she is like, sis, apply for jobs here in Brisbane. (Kiwi)*

For parents, siblings and close whānau relationships this extended out to being support advocates: "whānau around you who are constantly telling you 'don't worry something will come up, you know you have got what it takes, don't give up, dah dah dah. I was very lucky to have so much whānau support and my son" (Tui); it also meant being family living support hosts: "I have looked in Melbourne. I have a possible option in Melbourne, my sister lives there. I mean, it makes it easier that I have family there, the only reason I've found this option is because I have family there" (Whio).

Parents as role models were important;

> *Because I remember mum, three jobs, single mum she worked right through, had twin girls, we would go to babysitters before and after school, she was working three jobs and we saw that it was kinda instilled in us, from a very young age. (Tui)*

Network contacts may also have the technical expertise required in the labour market:

> *My sister, definitely, she's like my second Mum [chuckle] so my sister gives me a lot of advice, on job-hunting. She's a graphic designer, so, she was like perfect for it (website creation, design). You've got all your body of work in one place. You don't need to do anything but chuck people the link. And then they know everything about you. (Weka)*

At times, close whānau networks were not viewed as an asset: "So, in my own whānau there's not very many who actually do have good jobs – or only my Mum who has attended Uni" (Kea).

However, individually and collectively, whānau were important:

> *Yea whānau definitely inspire me, you know, they are the be all and end all for me. (Tui)*

Career Challenges

Searching for a job was a stressful and tense process for Māori postgraduates:

> *It was frigging hard. It was not at all easy, then as time went on, […] like you know constantly seeing 'experience required', 'experience required', 'experience required', you get so, you know disheartened I guess, and you end up just trying to go for anything really. (Tui)*

Although this maybe a "self-regulated process" (van Hooft et al., 2020) members of the rōpū needed to reach out:

> *I think maybe I was too shy to [ask friends for help] yea and a couple of my friends who have been in the same position, they are too shy to ask or maybe too proud to ask, they don't want someone else to, look down at them. (Kiwi)*

But, for Kea, one of the "biggest barrier was thinking, no, they've got a zillion Australians to choose from. I think it's highly unlikely that they would choose me. So, I didn't, […] but I guess I console myself by thinking 'ah, they're gonna choose an Australian person. Why would they need someone from New Zealand?"

Career adaptability

Regardless of how strategically planned a job search goal may be, there will always be the inevitable need for Māori to adapt to meet a new challenge:

> *I went and made myself a website, I have to do something extra because what I am doing now is not working, so I made myself a website. (Kiwi)*

Sometimes the decisions that needed to be made may not have been expected:

> *I always kinda naturally assumed that television would be kind of the place for me, or within an independent production company or something along those lines, but I found that actually it wasn't, it wasn't what I really loved, it was something like a hobby definitely wasn't something that I thought that I wanted to do every single day. (Tui)*

And when the plan didn't pan out, "I have got standards and I know what I want, and I am going to get a job in the next week and then that week went and then I thought oh my god what's happening?" (Kiwi). Then again, when experience was necessary, even for some graduate roles, "this is what's happening when positions are available for us graduates, it is bloody hard for us to find anything anyway, but we actually got something for graduates and then you are cutting graduates out because they don't have any experience, so what's the bloody point you know" (Tui).

Dealing with rejection

In referring back to the *Dealing with rejection* section of the literature review chapter, the current number of applicants for each vacancy in the corporate world was around 250; consequently, it is likely that 249 will get rejected:

> *I applied for a job in [xxx] TV as media, it is a standard job, I got the email back saying I didn't get shortlisted for that, but they would keep me on the list, if those interviews don't go through, they will have a second round, so I am like the backup. I am thinking, I have a first-class honours, and I can't even, get shortlisted for this job? What kind of people are they shortlisting? (Kiwi)*

One of the approaches used by Māori job searchers after an interview outcome;

> *When I was rejected – used to really focus on why you were reject[ed], why you were rejected and but honestly it's something that you just need to pick [yourself] up and move on to the next one. (Weka)*

Ultimately, it is crucial to acknowledge that "you've gotta be selective because it takes a lot of effort to apply for things and if you don't apply properly, if you're not careful, then you'll never get considered anyway, you know. So, there's no point applying for ten things with a crappy application" (Whio).

Privileged connections

This rōpū of Māori postgraduates acknowledged that there was privilege in the labour market:

> *I've got other friends who are lawyers and, you know, one of their parents is a lawyer or their Uncle's a lawyer – or some kind of connection like that – and that does help them get their first job. Like, totally. They get connections and they also know how to pursue connections; I think. (Whio)*

On the other hand, Tui observed, "the whole preference, you know someone's sister-in-law, you know get her in this job – I don't think that is any better for Māori organisations because there might be someone else better."

Then there were comparable situations like, "I know people that have got positions whereby – say, for example – a PhD might be required, and they've managed to get full-time work

without having that" (Kea) and "I have seen it in front of me happen and I am like – how did you get that job? Because your nana works here aye? Nepotism." (Kiwi)

Discrimination

The Human Rights Act 1993 prohibits grounds of discrimination in Aotearoa New Zealand, including in employment. Yet Māori postgraduates experienced discrimination in the labour market despite it being more than 20 years after this legislation had been passed into law:

> *I would say that there's a sort of a discrimination against – hiring Māori and Pacific. […] I think getting people to see past the fact that I'm Pacific or Māori. Yeah. I think I'd find I would have to explain my [ahh] prove myself a little bit more, so it's that kind of struggle. […] Or like the way that they would comment on my C.V. like – oh wow, for a Pacific person you've done a lot. (Weka)*

In an effort to mitigate the effects of perceived discrimination in the labour market informal network contacts advised caution:

> *I have heard from people I am asking advice from. Like I have had someone tell me don't put in your address because it is south Auckland, don't put in your last name because it is Māori, and I am like what? So, she would say all this stuff to me. Take out the fact that you kōrero Māori, like that might become threatening to an employe(r), that you are so proud to say it, so don't put it in. So, I have had people say that to me, and I have actually changed my CV. (Kiwi)*

However, job searching advice may be construed, for Māori postgraduates' privilege and discrimination appeared to be ongoing parts of their job search experience.

For Māori do their family connections or background matter in the labour market?

> *No. [Family background or connections do not matter to employers], other than me being Māori and that probably helping their diversity ratings, or something. But I don't think anyone would know who my family was or anything like that – those kinds of connections. My family background obviously has a big impact on who I am, so, I guess in that sense then it does. (Whio)*

If family connections do not matter in Aotearoa New Zealand, then what about the Pacific?

Family kind of ties and connections and values don't really have, have a say, or aren't, aren't really important to employers. In the Pacific it's quite different because everything's so localised. [Um] so, yeh, whether you get a job or not – it's more who you know, I would say family matters more in the Pacific. (Weka)

Ultimately, Māori postgraduates believed that "Well, that's the thing, I absolutely think it [family connections] does apply but I don't think that we should let that define what we can and can't do" (Kea).

Māori postgraduate questions

In talking about their experiences in the labour market, Māori postgraduates raised the following questions and suggestions:

- "I would like to see, you know, some information on how exactly they (employers) go about their recruitment processes."
- "How [do] they (tertiary institutions) cater for those students (because they know very well there is a lot of Māori media students coming out of places like AUT) and so why aren't they utilising those skills more, why aren't they tapping into that?"
- "Suggestion: They (tertiary organisations) should actually have a couple of designated (paid internship) positions so that, it might not be a lot, but a couple, but, hey, it is an opportunity."
- "I do think that there needs to be an understanding of whānau, hapū, iwi connections and the significance of that in terms of what it would mean to them (labour market employers) in a work environment."
- "Whānau obligations is a huge thing, huge and so that […] is not taken into consideration (in the labour market) anyway. Having ongoing discussions (with current employer) about ways that we can be more accommodating to Māori and Pasifika values and then hopefully if we are more accepting of those then hopefully it may change."

Conclusion

The previous chapter described how the research was conducted in the labour market with the participant rōpū and whānau. It included the processes of recruitment, data collection and interpretation, using thematic analysis and recognising an Ethnographic Māori-centred approach.

This chapter set out to present findings from the experiences of Māori postgraduates and the roles of whānau in the labour market. As this rōpū is Māori, it is important to hear their voices and the contribution they collectively make to comprehending the labour market from their individual worldviews. These findings highlight the importance of career aspirations and informal networks for Māori, while recognising that barriers exist when transitioning into employment.

The following chapter will undertake an in-depth analysis of the findings in relation to the literature.

Chapter Six: Discussion

> "He aha te kai ō te Rangatira? He kōrero, he kōrero, he kōrero.
> What is the food of the leader? It is knowledge, it is communication".
>
> Whakataukī

Introduction

This chapter is about kōrero, discussion of the findings in relation to the literature review and theoretical framework to address the research questions. This study set out to identify job searching approaches of Māori postgraduates and uncover the role of whānau in the labour market. Although the concept of family or whānau in different settings like health has been researched, the concept of whānau in the labour market is a new and emerging research area. It is important to ascertain these methods, to best support future Māori graduates gain meaningful employment. Cunningham (2011) posited that "at least three models of explaining differential (and poorer) outcomes for Māori existed" (p. 145), yet it is important that deficit "indigenous narratives are challenged" (Thomas, 2008, p. 228). This thesis argues that the current literature and narrative on Māori in the workforce within Aotearoa New Zealand can be enhanced by the experiences of the participant rōpū.

Career Aspirations

As mentioned in the literature review, *Career aspirations* of graduates are important because they are linked to a career (Dominco & Jones, 2006). The rōpū agreed with this sentiment and described being abreast of the labour market as well as having identified future steps being important in their career reflections. They had also identified long-term goals and the skills needed to build their future careers, in line with the findings of Jackson & Tomlinson, (2020) on career planning. Interestingly, this finding highlights the role career aspirations add to the continuing dialogue of Māori in the labour market.

Values

Several studies have shown that values can strongly influence career aspirations for graduates. Likewise, for Māori graduates, where career aspirations have another layer that include the collectiveness of whānau, hapū, iwi (Hollis-English et al., 2015, p. 6) and community. Although limited research was found in the literature on Māori career aspirations, this study confirmed that the influence of altruism was highly relevant to the participant rōpū. Similar to the findings of Thoman, Brown, Mason, Harmsen and Smith, 2015 with "students from cultural backgrounds" (p. 187) Māori postgraduates placed high importance on helping other Māori and Pacific communities. These findings strongly signal that by contributing to society, this rōpū can influence and improve the social wellbeing of current and future generations within the industries they transition into (Sibson, 2011, p. 58). Likewise, with students in the Mukhalalati et al. (2020) study who were motivated to increasing the national workforce and achieved a similar result to the participants in this thesis. Furthermore, what this does suggest is that values and career aspirations are important for Māori whānau, hapū and iwi futures. In reviewing the literature, no conflicting views were found on altruistic or cultural values in reference to Māori postgraduate career aspirations. A possible explanation might be the limited number of research studies undertaken on Māori or even Pacific postgraduate career destinations.

Occupations

There is a great deal of research pertaining to how career aspirations are influenced by job occupations (Grooby, 2002). Career aspirations for Māori were aligned to professional (GLS, 2020) and government jobs (Lewis & Frank, 2002), which lined up with future predictions and trends in Aotearoa New Zealand (MBIE, 2019, p. 3). This finding was not unexpected as Māori elites were not seeking similar roles to their whānau, parents, or relatives. This rōpū were focused on higher skilled roles that matched their postgraduate qualifications, higher ambitions, and values alignment. Contrary to Reid's (2010) study, this rōpū did not consider having a career as being privileged or being an elitist term, it was simply a long-term goal to build their individual careers. Yet, if this was not immediately imminent, Tui commented

that; *"I always had it in my mind if I found something, where I can really progress as a career, then that would take precedence over just a job"*.

Unexpectedly, was Kidman et al.'s (2015) research with Māori scholars. By graduating with higher qualifications and seeking highly skilled roles, this rōpū could "more likely identify with a Māori middle class" (p. 10). Although Kidman referenced Māori academic whānau, the similarities between the two groups were comparable and does suggest a strong link to western society values. A further interpretation could be found in McNicholas et al. (2004) findings and whether "assimilation will solve problems of dissonance experienced by Māori women" (p. 87). The implications for Māori are thought provoking and will depend on the definition of Māori middle class. This is an important aspect that needs to be further studied, and how it relates to the continuing construction of Māori identities and its relationship in the labour market.

Overall, these findings respond to the first research question of this study and contributes to the literature pertaining to Māori job searching. By linking Māori to having highly skilled career aspirations that aligned to values and qualifications, depicts a forward-moving role model for future generations.

Networking

Within the multiple approaches used by this rōpū, informal network experiences of the rōpū address both of the research questions of this thesis. Extending previous network research, the present study found that networking for Māori postgraduates was vitally important. This is consistent with what we know from the *Networking* studies cited in the literature review, where networks are effective methods to locate job opportunities. As acknowledged by the rōpū and from observations by Weka;

> *"You know, so networking is a huge thing. Even if it just means going to have a tour of Television NZ; going to have a tour of, I don't know [um], wherever you wanna work – and just getting people's cards and meeting them. And then letting them know, hey, I'm graduating next year, here's my C.V. – you know, so networks is, just such, such an important part."*

Social networks

As noted in the literature review chapter on *Networking*, a further finding supports the work on informal networks and the development of relationships that nurture the transmission of different kinds of information. Social media sites can be helpful in strengthening friendships (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie & Purcell, 2011) and for Kiwi, this proved extremely beneficial in securing a production role, as cited in *Networking* of the research findings chapter. In the same way Donath (2007) posited that knowledge from people who are trusted will be believed. Furthermore, the findings contribute a fresh explanation of this similarity in terms of a Māori worldview on the role of whānau networks in the labour market, as strong social ties with extended whānau (Haar et al., 2012) can influence decisions made in the labour market (p. 2557).

However, it is acknowledged that the strong ties identified in this present study did not translate directly into securing a job for Māori postgraduates, which supports Van Hoye et al.'s (2009) findings. This may be explained by the multifaceted roles of whānau in networks, as explained by Tui that whānau provide positive reaffirmations and *"… constantly telling you don't worry something will come up"* or explained in the fact that "educated job-seekers […] are less likely to use friends and relatives in job searching" (Ioannides et al., 2004, p. 1058), or simply a matter of translation of the term *whānau networks*.

This study confirmed that professional and social networks are used by Māori postgraduates to self- promote their skills, education, and work experiences. The participant rōpū utilised various industry networks, for example professional network platforms which Kea observed as, *"I have a LinkedIn account. So, I make sure that I put all my relevant skills in there […] my friends visit my page and rate me".* Networks were also used to build their access and reach to appropriate job leads, similar to Buettner, 2016 research. Although a number of these networks were mostly online communities, the rōpū also utilised face to face networking contacts. As highlighted in the research findings chapter *Networking* section, through internship opportunities to gain practical experience in a chosen field and visiting industry work sites as recommended by Weka at the start of the networking section above.

Quality contacts

The current study found that having quality contacts in networks enhanced indigenous job searching approaches. In contrast to previous studies, which have suggested that unemployed contacts (Hunter & Gray, 2006, p. 4) or contacts who may be unable to activate valuable resources (Pedulla & Pager, 2019, p. 998) are constraints for indigenous communities when transitioning into a job. Yet even though parents of Māori participants were in paid employment at an intermediate level, for example, Whio commented, *"My mum has connections with Vic Uni [...]"*; they also had access to quality contacts, *"So I know that my Mum has quite a few friends over at Auckland Uni, because she went there herself"* (Kea), this did not actually result directly in securing a job for any of the rōpū members. However, it can be argued that quality networking contacts did improve Māori job searching approaches, given that the rōpū all found employment post-graduation.

Whānau networks

It could be assumed, that whānau networks are an essential part of the wider indigenous networking structure because of its associated cultural constructs and historical experiences of colonization. However, limited information has been found in the literature on informal whānau networks apart from the works of Houkamau and Sibley (2017) to boost financial literacy with Māori (p. 408) and Durie (2004), with "flourishing networks of Māori centred educational institutions" (p. 9). Unfortunately, no studies have been located of whānau networks in relation to the labour market. Utilising the current study on this topic supplemented by informal networking literature may provide a better comprehension of whānau network concepts. Further studies are needed that explore the construction and purpose of the different types of whānau networks including their role in the labour market and how they might be best articulated as a coherent concept and referred to in literature.

As observed from conversations with the rōpū, Māori words are used interchangeably. Biggs and Arawa (1952) describe "the connotation of Māori words is often very wide and the same word in different contexts will often require a different English equivalent" (p. 178). Equally, use of whānau in reference to a network in the labour market could have various meanings dependent on the context. Could translate to refer to just parents, or parents and siblings or

alternatively could refer more widely to the Online Māori Dictionary translation of whānau as;

> *Extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people - the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society. In the modern context the term is sometimes used to include friends who may not have any kinship ties to other members. (2020)*

In contrast, whānau networks were not utilised to maintain customary law or kinship relationships as observed by the Māori postgraduates in the present study, which is somewhat contrary to the findings of Maru et al.'s (2011) study. Possible explanations for this might be that whānau are highly mobile (Durie, 2011) or hapū connections are located outside the residential area in which these Māori postgraduates exist, as opined by Tui, *"Whānau yea, not really wider hapū because our hapū is based down in Marton so, we see them fairly often, like as much as we can."*

These findings contribute in several ways to our comprehension of networks and Māori job searching behaviours. What is interesting about whānau networks and the participant rōpū, is when compared to their friends' parent networks (i.e., those working as lawyers as mentioned in Chapter Five), or even the highly skilled jobs they aspire to attain, then whānau networks were perceived not to be advantageous. This lies in contrast when compared to other indigenous networks, such as in Australia, for example.

Whānau roles in networking

The present study set out to ascertain the role of whānau in the labour market, however, there was a dearth of published information on this specific topic. Drawing on the substantial literature findings of Pākehā concepts on *family* roles in the labour market, it is reasoned that whānau would also undertake similar roles augmented by research on whānau in other contexts.

While this thesis was not able to examine the role of parents as members of whānau networks in any detail, *The role of whānau* in research was explored and acknowledged as noted in the literature review chapter. In particular, significance was noted as parents being educators (Durie, 2006, p. 6); the driving force in communities (MEDP, 2012, p. 8); and as

role models (Wiese & Freund, 2011, p. 223). The role of parents in the labour market was clearly important to the participant rōpū. As observed by Kea, "*So, Mum did a degree as a mature student and I notice how her life is different. You know, she's able to get a job even in her 70's and she always has work".* These findings of influence are consistent with those of Durie et al. (2010) who supported that "whānau are conduits to society" (p. 32) and often in leadership roles managing trusts and incorporations (MEDP, 2012, p. 8). These findings can be explained by the fact that strong ties exist between whānau members because of the relationship they have with one another. Furthermore, literature posits that parents were considered key influencers in their children's career decision making and in maintaining connections with home (Simmons, 2020, p. 38).

Whānau parents are influential for this rōpū, however this study was not able to demonstrate if this extended to career decision making in the labour market. By drawing on the findings of Simmons, (2008, p. 38) and Chifamba, (2019, p. 122) it can be argued that parents who do not graduate are considered less able to provide beneficial advice and career guidance for their children. This finding may be somewhat limited to children under a certain age and dependency. As the rōpū for this study were all adults, (medium age of 31.2 years at time of data collection) it is probably less likely that this finding would have impacted on them. Besides, two out of the five participants had parents who graduated with a degree, one was brought up by her two grandmothers, and the other two sets of parents were definitely influential in career aspirations of their adult children.

On the other hand, the findings of Buhl et al. (2018) asserted a more practical application of support from parents (p. 531). The participant rōpū supported this finding affirming that job leads were provided and " … *the way that they contributed mostly was just that ongoing support and encouragement" (Tui).* In one example, utilising the technology skills of whānau could broaden the marketing reach to prospective employers and organisations or by providing both technical and emotional support during a stressful period of the job searching process.

Overall, the findings noted here support the view that informal networks are essential for Māori to transition into the labour market, and whānau undertake multiple roles in

networks which are important. These findings have important implications for the development of whānau networks and whānau roles in the labour market. Further research should be undertaken to establish a deeper understanding of how they function and contribute to a gap in the literature on these types of informal indigenous networks. Questions need to be asked to fully comprehend the relationships of these unique types of networks and how the roles operate that could be utilised for future generations of Māori graduates. It appears that both strong and weak social ties are beneficial, while weak ties may provide a direct link to a desired role, strong ties are important to sustain individuals during the journey. In the words of Alho, (2020) "you need to know someone who knows someone" (p. 1).

Career Challenges

Job searching and career building can be stressful and not without its challenges. The findings of this study indicated that Māori postgraduate's inherent belief and trust in their own abilities to procure a job was fundamental, which is consistent with Bandura (1995) self-efficacy theory. These findings may partly be explained by higher education qualifications and the highly skilled career aspirations of the rōpū. One of the participant rōpū observed this as *"I feel for me to actually get an academic job it would have to just, for reason be, the right job that my talents met […] because I research in a kind of developing methodology"* (Whio)*.*

Career Adaptability

On the matter of career adaptability, this study found that there were two concepts which proved important for job searching Māori postgraduates. The first finding was that self-reflection featured prominently in the job search process. In line with Wanberg, Basbug, van Hooft and Samtani (2012) research, self-reflection and dealing with negative emotions helped reduce perceived barriers. Kiwi's approach was *"I went and made myself a website, I have to do something extra because what I am doing now is not working, so I made myself a website"*. This would have been provoked by a perception of past, possibly negative responses from employers in the labour market.

The second finding was the ability of individuals to moderate effects of challenges or obstacles in this context by utilizing whānau ties and psychological resources during the search period. Whānau, or close family ties (Mau & Kopischke, 2001) clearly were instrumental in mitigating emotional stress like being discouraged for example. Weka observed this as *"so it's been difficult at times, but then there's also times, also times that people kind of reach in and give you a hand".* This can be comparable to the literature on psychological resources (Zhang, Guan, Zhou and Lu, 2019) that help people overcome perceived challenges (p. 45). Yet in a highly competitive labour market, adaptability, employability, and endurance were the keys to successfully transition (Maree, 2016). For Māori postgraduates, their job searching experiences and achievements in the labour market are a testament to their own adaptability, employability, and endurance. These findings suggest that job searcher coping skills and the strong ties of whānau, possibly whānau networks will help shape the adaptability of Māori careers.

Dealing with Rejection

Further to the findings on career adaptability, several scholars have shown that individuals with resilience can "overcome adversity by successfully adapting to negative events" (Van Wormer et al., 2011, p. 413). The rōpū agreed, that high levels of resilience was necessary, in line with Jackson and Tomlinson (2020) findings. This was especially needed when dealing with rejections from employers. However, Harolds (2015) suggested that individuals "should not get too overly discouraged or take it personally" (p. 36) when they were rejected for a job. Further stating that "it may not be the fault of the job seeker, for example, in a tough labour market" (p. 37). Contrary to Harold's findings, most of the rōpū did take it personally when being rejected, perhaps this is human nature to do so. Furthermore, one of the rōpū clearly was affronted when advised of a prospective employer's interpretation of the term "graduate role". Interestingly, having strong social ties in an organisation where individuals are rejected, does support Levin & Cross's (2004) findings on the "transfer of information built on relationship trust". However, this may be detrimental for employers because in contrast to Montgomery's (1991) findings, employees don't always "help with the screening of potential applicants" (p. 1409). In line with what is known in the Research Findings Chapter (*Dealing with rejection)* as cited by Weka, Harolds recommended that individuals

"should learn from the experience and move on" (p. 36). A note of caution is due here, to alleviate the impact of "rejections" one of the participants recommended that job searchers should be selective and apply properly for jobs because "…there's no point applying for ten things with a crappy application" (Whio).

This study found that resilience and adaptability as being important strategies to find and acquire a role in the labour market. Further studies could include the importance of future career planning for Māori graduates.

Privilege and discrimination

One consistent challenge in the labour market for Māori postgraduates was the notion of their own identity and how this is perceived by employers in the environment. This study supports evidence from previous scholars (for example Alexander et al., 2001, and Joseph, 2020) on discrimination as a current and continuing determinant to being unemployed (Cormack, et al. 2020). The findings from the participant rōpū about experiences of discrimination are somewhat disappointing given this day and age. The main discrimination theme was associated with race, which does suggest a higher need for cultural literacy awareness in the Aotearoa New Zealand labour market. Including Māori perspectives and representation (Frame, 2018) is important, but when "Māori customs and stewardship (kaitiakitanga) are included, […] provide[s] a link to a deeper consideration of values" (p. 54). Future research question that could be asked of employers include, how to effectively mitigate discrimination in their workforce and recruitment practices?

Attaining a postgraduate qualification implies aspects of privilege in the workforce, however this didn't necessarily translate into strong privilege for the Māori job searchers in this study. This is contrary to the findings of Tholen et al. (2013) where higher education has been shown to demonstrate a significant advantage to most job seekers. Drawing on the findings presented in the Discrimination section of the findings in chapter five, it is argued that discrimination contributes an explanation for this difference, when compared to literature involving the general population.

While Māori may still face aspects of discrimination in the job market, they do still have significant benefits as postgraduates, such as, developing connections to highly qualified and

networked academic staff, development of relationships with important decision makers and having access to teaching opportunities within an academic setting, which is observed by Kea, "*like, a few years ago – if you said that I'd be teaching the classes that I attended, I just feel like that's crazy, I could never do that*". This finding of postgraduate advantage was not unexpected given the strong relationship ties that can be established with staff over three-four years of tertiary education. What is somewhat surprising is that Māori postgraduates experienced both privilege and discrimination when searching for a job. This may be explained by the diverse and complex nature of the labour market or where race facilitates discrimination, like it facilitates privilege even for the same group.

A further interesting finding was that having friends with privilege didn't necessarily mean that this privilege was transferred across to assist Māori in the labour market. For example, "*A good friend whose Dad is a Judge, and he was saying – he was trying to help someone that had just graduated with a law degree, you know, meet someone and have coffee with someone from a law firm – that kind of thing*" (Whio). Although this theme was not investigated further, a possible explanation for this lies in the nature of the different occupations, or the particular culture of the profession involved, or simply it hadn't occurred to either party. Yet, if this were a similar *quanxi* connection in China, then it could be assumed that this friendship connection would very likely transfer across to benefit the recipient in a labour market context (Davies et al., 1995; Yi & Ellis, 2000). However, acknowledgement by one of the rōpū, that if individuals were from a *"well-connected family that they can absolutely assist you"* (Kea). Yet, one huge challenge for Māori, and Pacific communities would be to ascertain how to become a "well-connected whānau" in the job searching environment.

To mitigate the effects of discrimination, Blank et al., (2016) suggested the solution was about comprehending individuals own "unconscious bias" rather than endeavouring to better "understand other cultures" (p. 3). The implication of this concept for Māori would be both wide-ranging, as well as difficult to implement in the labour market from a job searchers point of view. In all cases reported on discrimination in this thesis the perceived discrimination emanated from the employer in a position of power.

In responding to labour market challenges, these findings illustrate relationships and dealing effectively with negative emotions as being crucial, not only for Māori but by default other job searchers as well. Privilege and discrimination continue to be an important issue for future research, and further studies could investigate cultural literacy with employers in their recruitment practices. Furthermore, these concepts could also be explored within a Māori or tribal labour market in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Māori postgraduate questions

It is not my intention as the researcher of this thesis, to specifically address the labour market questions raised by the participant rōpū when they were outside the scope of the study. There were three themes raised which included; employer recruitment practices, tertiary responsibility to Māori communications and media graduates and defining concepts and practices associated with whānau, hapū and iwi in the labour market.

There is a substantial quantity of literature pertaining to employer recruitment in the labour market (Cai, 2020) and includes research with Māori employers (Fitzgerald & McLaren, 2006). The literature may successfully respond to the question posited by Māori postgraduates; however, this study was not about employer experiences or perceptions. While tertiary institutions are key stakeholders (Pham & Jackson, 2020) and determinants of graduate destinations (para. 7), a valid question to be asked is what are the responsibilities or obligations of tertiary providers in providing targeted career support for Māori graduates? As a final point, this thesis has explored whānau concepts in relation to job searching in the labour market by the rōpū Māori and acknowledged there are other contexts that should also be investigated. It could start with the findings of Haar, Roche & Taylor (2012) "understanding the potential importance of whānau may be highly beneficial for organizations seeking to recruit and retain Māori employees, especially given the growing rate of the Māori population in New Zealand" (p. 2557).

Summary of Discussions

Overall, this chapter set out to explore what approaches Māori postgraduates used to transition into a career and what role whānau undertook in these labour market

approaches. The findings confirmed that career aspirations, networking, and aptly responding to challenges in the labour market positively contribute to transitioning into a career and reflect "Māori potential, achievement success and futures" (GLS, 2016, p. 613).

This study has identified key methods that potentially link Māori postgraduates to highly skilled careers. For Māori graduates envisioning the future is key, where career aspirations (Tovar-Murray et al., 2012) for Māori also incorporate cultural and altruistic values (Sibson, 2011). Of importance is that Māori career aspirations met current and future trends of the labour market (MBIE, 2019, p. 3).

Discrimination and privilege in the labour market is an ongoing constraint for Māori. Asking pertinent questions of employers in the labour market on cultural literacy and mitigating discrimination may improve outcomes for Māori in the future.

Of most significance to emerge from this study, was when Māori elites transition into highly skilled careers, career narratives for Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand can be improved. This is in addition to the multi-beneficial advantages that have been discussed throughout this thesis for Māori whānau, hapū, iwi and communities.

In addition, this study strengthens the concept of networks as being influential (Durie, 2004), where significance is placed on trust (Donath, 2007) within relationships, or the ties advocated in informal networks (Granovetter, 1973). These discussions respond to answering the first research question of the study and contribute to the literature in these key areas for Māori.

On the question of whānau roles in the labour market, this study extends our existing knowledge of the role of families in a Māori context by advocating that whānau roles are multifaceted and can be linked to several research findings undertaken to date. They include parents who are influential in career decisions (Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000, p. 371), and they also provide extensive support to their children in the job seeking environment (Buhl et al., 2018, p. 531). As reported in the networking section of this chapter, further studies are needed on the construction and function of the concept of whānau networks. These discussions have responded to the second research question associated with this study.

This study offers valuable insights into Māori approaches in the labour market from the viewpoints of the participant rōpū and offer fresh perspectives on the role of whānau and the aspects that are considered important to them in this context.

Limitations

Certain limitations have been identified across the study. Firstly, having a small sized participant rōpū of five is a limitation, however, this study did not intend to be extensively representative of the Māori postgraduate population in Aotearoa New Zealand. Māori are not a homogenous culture (Durie, 1995) as we know even though they may share similar beliefs, values or philosophies and qualitative research is achievable (Knechel, 2019) with a small sample (p. 333).

In addition, these findings may be somewhat limited by the translation of Māori words from conversations with Māori participants into western or pākeha concepts. Such an interesting challenge to navigate the language, context and interpretations of distinct cultures, and although Spiller, Pio, Erakovic and Henare (2011) refer to this as "defining the undefinable" (p. 225), Haar, Roche & Brougham (2019) utilised the wording of establishing "touchpoints" between cultures where similarities in knowledge systems and language could be identified rather than purely on direct translations.

It has been acknowledged throughout this thesis that the literature on whānau networks and whānau roles in the labour market in particular, has been very limited to date. Networking is a method that Māori engage in their daily lives and in particular when job seeking. Comprehensively, whānau in this context have been observed to be of paramount importance to Māori postgraduates. Further in-depth investigation into these two concepts is highly recommended.

Future research directions

The findings in this study are tools that can assist whānau, hapū, iwi and communities to navigate the labour market when searching for employment. As a determinant to employment, privilege and discrimination continued to present an enduring challenge for Māori postgraduates. Perhaps the best strategy to move forward would be to explore these

dynamics within large corporate entities or middle-sized employers in the workforce, focusing on aspects of cultural literacy.

Within a continually evolving labour market and the advent of new technologies, higher learning organisations like universities could better prepare future graduates for new ways of working and lifelong learning. Investigating labour market connections that align with Māori aspirations, futures and success would be beneficial for students, and their whānau, hapū and iwi.

This study has highlighted the concept of whānau networks as an extension, or sub-set, of indigenous or informal networking, yet whānau networks as an extension of tribal networks in the labour market would be an exciting prospect to explore further and expand the knowledge base accordingly. The roles that whānau undertake in whānau networks have only been touched on in this thesis and further studies in this area would make this more explicit. Furthermore, in defining terms for future studies on whānau networks, particular attention to the use of Māori words by participants and their translations would be encouraged.

Although this research has another layer associated with Māori identity and culture, the aspirations of graduates, career challenges and solutions maybe common across indigenous graduates throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Transitioning into employment continues to be an important factor for graduates, and further studies could be expanded to include Māori graduates from other schools beyond communication studies, and with graduates from other universities or wananga.

Conclusion

The previous chapter presented the findings of the experiences of Māori postgraduates in the labour market. It is important to hear these voices, as they collectively contribute to the literature of Māori employment research.

This chapter analysed and discussed the implications of the rōpū findings. It presented a narrative for Māori in an Aotearoa context, which will be influential for future research, and Māori success. It tells the story of Māori postgraduates, their pūrākau and gives voice to

their experiences (Moyle, 2014, p. 31). This thesis argued that the rōpū job searching experiences enhanced the literature and narratives of Māori in the labour market.

In the final chapter, conclusions are drawn from the findings and analysis of the study with key recommendations being presented.

Chapter Seven: Research Conclusion

"Whāia e koe te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe, me he maunga teitei
Seek the treasure you value most dearly, if you bow your head let it be to a
lofty mountain".

Whakataukī

Introduction

By analysing the experiences of five Māori postgraduates and their whānau in the labour
market, this thesis has shown how directly and indirectly the discourse on Māori career
narratives and outcomes can be shaped. Drawing on a qualitative analysis of career
aspirations, networking, and constructive responses to challenges in the job-seeking
environment, it can be concluded that whānau and whānau networks are important factors
for Māori job searchers. Furthermore, this research clearly indicates that discrimination and
privilege continue to be determinants to employment, but it also raises the question of how
the labour market can respond to mitigate these challenging aspects.

Pūrākau

This thesis set out to convey its own pūrākau (storytelling) from the experiences of Māori
postgraduates in the labour market. It was about searching for the right pathway for Māori
whānau in this environment as mentioned in the Abstract. Acknowledging that for Māori,
research (Chapter One), worldviews (Chapter Two) and knowledge (Chapter Three) are
important aspects of living in 21st century Aotearoa New Zealand. The journey depicted that
"Māori university graduates reflect Māori potential, achievement, success and futures" (GLS,
2016, p. 338), and implied that there is a *"… need for a well-qualified workforce that
incorporates indigenous knowledge, disciplines attributed to subject knowledge and generic
skills"* (Durie, 2009 p. 16), where oratory (Chapter Six) became the communication tool. In
reaching its conclusion, recognition that the reality of job searching can be challenging, as
the whakataukī suggests at the beginning of this chapter.

Recommendations

In addition to the future research directions mentioned in the discussion and the literature reviews chapters of this thesis, further recommendations for theory and practice are presented;

- Discrimination is a major theme that has prominently featured in the job searching experiences of the participant rōpū. As suggested in the *Future research directions* of the previous chapter, cultural literacy (Frame, 2018) maybe an approach to mitigate the effect of discrimination and privilege in the workforce.
- The future of work for graduates is transforming within an everchanging labour market. To heighten graduate engagement in the job market, educational practitioners and policy makers could foster concepts on career flexibility and the need for lifelong learning (Marquardson, 2020). Māori Alumni networks, for example, could be used to expand *collective* labour market connections for graduates.
- Whānau, hapū, iwi and communities are key to enhancing Māori labour market outcomes and can be pivotal networks for Māori graduates when job searching. The challenge would be how best to activate strong complimentary networks that can be multi-disciplinary where "network architects" are grown and developed (Deloitte, 2016, p. 10).

Conclusion

Finally, in communicating the career searching experiences of this rōpū, the factors that influence their transition into the labour market became apparent. As noted in the *Research problem* section of the first chapter, getting a job following postgraduate study is a significant event, and this was achieved by all of them. Whānau and whānau networks are important because it acknowledges culture and observed by the rōpū as being valuable resources. Further research on these two concepts would be beneficial for Māori in the labour market.

Māori futures are enhanced by this rōpū, these five Māori role models who collectively contribute to a better vision for Māori in the labour market. Yet perhaps it will be the ability to work differently in the future, as reflected by Whio "I want to be able to get up in the morning, do my writing – whatever I'm interested in working on – 'til about eleven or twelve o'clock and then go for a swim [chuckle]". In closing this thesis, *"Ko te kai a te rangatira, he kōrero: the sustenance of chiefs is communication", Dewes, (1975).*

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Glossary

Kupu Māori	English translation
Aotearoa	New Zealand
Hāhi	Church, religion
Hapū	kinship group, clan, tribe, subtribe
Iwi	extended kinship group, tribe
Kai	Food, sustenance
Kaupapa Māori	Māori way, Māori approach, Māori ideology
Kanohi ki te kanohi	Face to face, in person
Koha	gift, present, donation
Kumara vine	Communication network used by Māori
Kupu	word, vocabulary
Manaaki	Looking after, hospitality
Marae	Courtyard in front of a meeting house
Mema	Member
Pānui	Announcement, notice
Pūrākau	Legend, ancient legend, story
Rangahau	search out, pursue, research
Rangatira	chief, high rank, leader
Rōpū	group, party of people
Whānau	extended family, family group
Whanaungatanga	relationship, kinship, sense of family connection

[Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index]. https://maoridictionary.co.nz/

Appendices

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:
27th January 2015

Project Title

Maori job searching behaviour: the relationship between postgraduate Maori education and the labour market.

An Invitation

Kia ora, my name is Mere Kingi and I am a part-time Master of Communication Studies student at AUT University, undertaking this research as part of my Masters studies. I would like to invite you to participate in this research and provide your job searching experiences as a Maori postgraduate student.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study and change your mind later, you may withdraw at any time prior to the analysis of the data.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research is a requirement of my Master of Communication Studies. The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which Maori postgraduates search for jobs and identify factors that influence these approaches in the labour market. The research findings will provide a better understanding of the job search processes Maori use in their endeavours to find an opportunity in the labour market. In addition to the final report and thesis, the information that you provide may also be used for a journal article, conference paper and a booklet summary.

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

You have been identified as a potential research participant because you have identified yourself as being of Maori descent, have graduated from the School of Communication Studies postgraduate programmes within the last ten years, and reside in Auckland. You were identified through the researcher's personal networks, recommended by a current research participant or by a third party associated with the School of Communication Studies. Your personal contact details have been sourced from AUT Alumni Network or known, and publicly available, social media networks including Facebook and Twitter. As this research is focused on Maori experiences, those who are not of Maori descent have been excluded. Similarly, those Maori postgraduates who did not graduate within the last ten years from the School of Communication Studies and resided in Auckland have also been excluded.

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What will happen in this research?

The researcher will meet with you and ask questions about your job search experiences in the labour market. The interview may take up to one hour and will be recorded. The audio recording will be transcribed by an independent transcriber. You may choose to receive copies of the interview transcripts to verify thatthe information collected is an accurate summary of your responses.

What are the discomforts and risks?

The interview and the questions asked will be about your everyday experiences, and you will be in controlof the amount of information you share or how you choose to answer. You should not experience any significant level of discomfort, embarrassment or risk.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

You will also be able to view your transcript to verify the accuracy of the information collected or request information to be removed, or should you prefer, you may withdraw from the research before the analysisis completed.

What are the benefits?

This research will assist me in completing my Master of Communication Studies. It will provide a voice to your experiences, and will identify some of the shared challenges, obstacles and successes on your journey. The study will contribute to the knowledge of how best to support future Maori postgraduates in their endeavours in the labour market.

How will my privacy be protected?

All information pertaining to you will remain private and confidential. Your name will not be used in any transcript, as codes will be used to distinguish you from any other participant. Care will be taken to ensure that your personal details and individual characteristics are not recorded. Access to the data will only be available to the researcher and my supervisor. Once this research is completed, all information will be stored in a locked cabinet on AUT premises.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There are no associated costs to participating in this research apart from the one-hour interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have one week to review this information sheet.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research, please let me know and I will send you out a consent form prior to the interview taking place. My contact details are below.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you wish to receive a copy of the final research report, please indicate this on the consent form.

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

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Petra Theunissen, petra.theunissen@aut.ac.nz, 09 921-9999 ext. 7854.

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?

Researcher Contact Details:

Mere Kingi, mere.kingi@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 6568.

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Petra Theunissen, petra.theunissen@aut.ac.nz, 09 921-9999 ext. 7854

Research Interview Guide

AUT
UNIVERSITY
TE WAN.A.NGA ARONU! 0 TAMAK! MAK.AU RAU

Name: ....……...........……............ Date: ....

Location of interview: ....

Academic qualification: ....… ... .   Year graduated: ....

lwi affiliation/s: ....

Preamble: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Our goal is to learn more about what kinds of job searching approaches seem useful (or not useful) for Maori postgraduates and why. My questions are designed to get a sense of what you think about job searching in the labour market. Before we start, can you confirm - What is your current qualification? When did you graduate? What is your iwi affiliation?

Q1. What is your understanding of the term "labour market"?

Probe: Job market, employers and employees, work opportunities, careers, work experienceetc.

Q2. What was your primary motivation for searching for a job?Probe: Money, family, location, relationships, opportunity etc.

What were your goals and have your achieved them?

Q3. How did you identify what skills or strengths you needed to search for a job? Probe: Skills, knowledge, experience paid and unpaid, beliefs, style, personal qualities

Q4. Is there a difference between searching for any job and searching for a specific role? How is that difference determined?

How did you go about searching for jobs?

Probe: Newspapers, recruitment agencies, online job search, WINZ, NZ government jobs I GradConnection I Trade Me I Seek I Industry focused search I career fairs I references I Networking

Q5. How did you go about marketing yourself to prospective employers?

Probe: Online profiles, LinkedIn I Trade Me I Seek I specialised graduate profiles, networking, social, tribal and family networks I Written profiles - resumes, letters I work experience I internships I cooperative experiences etc.

What type of jobs have you applied for?

Probe: within the industry of their qualification

Q6. What skills were these employers looking for and did you meet their requirements?
Probe: Generic skills, specialised skills, academic skills, core skills, transferable skills

Q7. Did family and friends contribute to your job search? In what way did or did that not happen?

Probe: Whanau, hapu and iwi connections

Q8. Did you find that family background or connections mattered to employers, within the job search process? What would be the reason for this?

Q9. What has been the outcome of your job search activity?

Probe: A job, an opportunity, further training, further education, career

Q10. What was the most effective job search tool you used to find a job?

Probe: Networking? Resumes? Family? Opportunity?

Q11. Where do you hope your outcome will lead to short term? And long

term?Probe: Career verses job

Q12. Is there anything that you would like to add regarding your job search?
Probe: Anything that I haven't covered but you think I should know about or that comes tomind?